Guy Tchibozo *Editor*

Cultural and Social Diversity and the Transition from Education to Work

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from Education to Work

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Editor

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Editor
Guy Tchibozo
Université de Limoges
France

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Preface

This book addresses the issue of the role of social and cultural diversity in the transition from education to work. Over the last two decades, demographic representation and multicultural competence have gained momentum in the administration and strategies of profit and non-profit organisations. In an era when schools are challenged by their own public's social, cultural and linguistic diversity, a crucial question is that of how the educational system can turn that diversity into an asset to address organisations' demand and thus leverage diversity to promote the school achievers' transition from education to the working life.

Eighteen authors from nine countries have contributed to this book. The approach is multidisciplinary. The whole research project was designed and conducted from April 2010 to April 2012 under the auspices of DYNADIV – Dynamiques et Enjeux de la Diversité, a research group at the Université de Limoges, France. The project was funded by the Conseil Général du Limousin.

The organisation of the volume is as follows. Part I provides an overview of the issue, defines the main concepts and presents a general approach of the demand for diversity and the ways for the school-to-work transition system to address it.

Part II proposes detailed analyses on the demand for diversity. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 present aspects of the demand for cultural diversity in the United States, the European Union and Oman. Chapter 5 focuses on the demand for social diversity, especially the persons with disabilities, in Malaysia.

Part III examines experiences of responses to the demand. National and institutional approaches of leveraging diversity for successful school-to-work transition are theoretically and empirically analysed in Australia (Chaps. 6 and 7), Sweden (Chap. 8), Malaysia (Chap. 9) and Canada (Chaps. 10 and 11).

The conclusion outlines some remaining directions for future research.

This research certainly does not exhaust the issue of diversity in the transition from education to work. It nevertheless represents a progress which should be of interest to researchers, practitioners, administrators and policymakers in the fields of multicultural education, employment and management.

I thank the publisher, Springer, Professor Rupert Maclean and Ms. Bernadette Ohmer and her colleagues for supporting this project.

Guy Tchibozo

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Introduction by the Series Editor

School-to-work transition usually refers to the socio-economic life changing event that happens between around 15 and 24 years of age. This is a time when young people develop skills, based on their education and training, that help them become productive and functional members of society. This is the period in a young person's life which has considerable economic and social importance including issues related to skills development for employability, the need to search for a job, job selection and labour market considerations in the quest to achieve stable employment and an adequate income.

Analysing the transition from school to work is a complex process because many young people begin thinking about and preparing for employment when they are young and possibly still in the education system. They may move away from home and migrate out of their communities. They may also perform casual work that is not within the formal system and/or may get disillusioned and disheartened as a result of unsuccessful job searching. Those people who are engaged in informal employment are difficult to include in such studies.

Tchibozo analyses school-to-work transition in terms of four stages: the time when a person first thinks about what future job they want to enter; the time when choices need to be made with regard to appropriate education pathways; the entry process into the job market; and integration into a workplace, which completes the transition process.

This comprehensive and insightful book considers social and cultural diversity issues as they relate to school-to-work transitions. Many countries have experienced demographic changes since the early 1990s which have resulted in them evolving

into multicultural societies. Education systems are now faced with the challenge of turning such diversity into a positive force that can be harnessed to assist school leavers in their search for jobs. Included in this group are those with physical disabilities who face particular difficulties when trying to participate in the job market.

The book raises important and interesting issues such as the legitimacy of 'equal opportunities', where the point is made that equity also embraces the need to allow for differences in treatment in order to fill and meet gaps in individual or societal needs. In the specific case of the USA, the 'democratic principle' is expressed with regard to people being represented in the governance of the country. This implies the need for diversity, and a representative bureaucracy, as a means to successfully realise this objective.

The important matter of how best to accommodate people with disabilities is discussed with regard to the Malaysian context. There is clearly a difficulty for employers many of whom believe that there would be additional costs involved and who have preconceived (often negative) ideas about the abilities of people with disabilities. These are perceptions that largely arise from employers that have never worked with people with disabilities. The idea of a 'smart partnership' is suggested as a catalyst that will contribute positively to the future workforce supply and demand of people with disabilities.

As book series editor, I wish to thank the contributors to this book, all of whom are experts in this important area of matching training and the skills of people leaving education, who are entering into the job market with diverse social and cultural characteristics, with the requirements of employers. When this match is successful, the unproductive time spent by individuals unemployed or job seeking can be minimised.

The Hong Kong Institute of Education   Rupert Maclean
28 May 2012

Contents

About the Contributors

Dr. Aisha S. Al-Harthi is an assistant professor in adult and continuing education at the College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. She holds a Ph.D. from The Pennsylvania State University, United Sates. Her research interests are in distance education, cultural differences measurement and issues and vocational secondary education.

Dr. Hamood K. Al-Harthi is an assistant professor in comparative and international education in the College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University in Oman. He has a Ph.D. in international and developmental education from University of Pittsburgh, USA, in 2002 and an MA in sociology of education from the Institute of Education, University of London, UK, in 1997.

Dr. Xiafang Chen was recently awarded her second doctoral degree, Ph.D. in education from the University of Western Sydney. Her key areas of knowledge and academic experience in teaching and research are in English education, applied linguistics, TESOL, educational leadership, vocational education and training in senior secondary. However, she also has knowledge and experience in early childhood education, education studies/society and culture, distance education, information literacy and international education. Before she came to Australia in 2008, she was associate professor in English education and linguistics in the School of Foreign Languages, Shanghai University of Finance and Economics (SHUFE), China.

Anita Eriksson is a senior lecturer in education studies at the School of Education and Behavioural Sciences, University of Borås, Sweden. Her research area is in teacher education and the sociology of education, with a special interest in theory and practice relations and the development of professional knowledge and competence.

Dr. William Feighery is an independent scholar whose research interests embrace visual culture and tourism, ethnicity and representation in tourism and critical tourism studies. Currently based in Switzerland, he has previously lived and worked in the United Kingdom, the Middle East and China. He is the editor in chief of the journal *Visual Methodologies* and serves as book reviews editor for the journal *Tourism, Culture and Communication*.

Roberta (Bobby) Harreveld is an associate professor in the School of Education and was the foundation director of the Learning and Teaching Education Research Centre (LTERC) at CQ University (Australia), as well as being an adjunct fellow with the Centre for Educational Research at the University of Western Sydney (Australia). She edits *VOCAL, the Australian Journal of Vocational Education and Training in Schools*. Her current research in partnership models of teacher education focuses on contrapuntal readings of culturally and linguistically diverse leadership for socio-economically aligned learning and earning in education and training systems. This is a key focus for her work in teacher-researcher education with postgraduate and early career teacher education researchers. She is an internationally renowned scholar in the fields of adult language and literacy teaching, and professional and vocational education for university, college and secondary school teachers, industry trainers and workplace assessors. Working in these areas, she has pioneered advances in school-based curriculum and pedagogy for teacher education. Her work in advancing innovations in teacher education involves curriculum development, teaching, research and evaluation.

Ayse Kizildag holds a Ph.D. degree in English language teaching since 2007. Her thesis focused on English language teachers' professionalisation during the first year as a full-time teacher. She has been involved in postdoc projects in Australia and Sweden in the field of teacher learning. Her research interests include teacher education policies, theory-practice relations in teachers' professional learning, teacher education across EU and intercultural teacher competences. Currently, she is preparing her thesis for a master's degree in European political sociology with a study on *Turkish teacher training reforms in line with EU guidelines*.

Breanna Lawrence, MA, is a doctoral student in educational psychology at the University of Victoria, in British Columbia, Canada. She teaches undergraduate counselling and teacher education courses. Breanna is the research coordinator for several youth-focused studies at the Centre for Youth and Society at the University of Victoria. She also works at the local Learning Disabilities Association, helping children with literacy-based learning difficulties. For her master's thesis in counselling psychology, Breanna studied coastal, rural youths' work-life transitions. She has worked as a career counsellor and has taught study skills for new university students.

Dr. Bingyi Li is currently a research assistant at the Centre for Educational Research, University of Western Sydney. She received her Ph.D. in education at the University of Western Sydney in 2011. Currently, her research focuses on students' outcomes in terms of social equality and self-concept theory. She also researches the effect of cultural influence in language education.

Dr. E. Anne Marshall is a professor of counselling psychology at the University of Victoria in British Columbia, Canada, and director of the Centre for Youth and Society, an interdisciplinary research centre. Her research and scholarly interests include adolescent mental health, indigenous counselling, culturally based counselling, adolescent and emerging adult transitions and qualitative methodologies. She was

academic and research advisor for the first cohort of the Aboriginal Communities Master's in Counselling programme offered at the University of Victoria.

Charles E. Mitchell, Ph.D., is a graduate of the University of Georgia and is currently employed as an assistant professor of public administration at Troy University in Atlanta, Georgia. Prior to joining Troy University in 2006, Charles was employed with the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission where he served in a variety of programmatic positions to include enforcement supervisor, district training officer, staff consultant and coordinator of various investigative projects. Charles has also taught at Georgia State University and Clark Atlanta University. His research interests are in the areas of developing labour law and government ethics. Published works appear in the Labor Law Journal, Public Personnel Management Journal, Review of Public Personnel Journal and European academic conference proceedings.

Melissa Ng Lee Yen Abdullah, Ph.D., is a senior lecturer at School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia (Malaysia). She is also an associate research fellow of the National Higher Education Research Institute (IPPTN). Her area of specialisation is educational psychology. One of her key research areas is school-to-work transition of persons with disabilities, in which she has successfully completed a research grant. In addition, she has also conducted a seminar on transition and supported employment. Her publication in this area mainly focuses on the employability and school-to-work transition issues of persons with disabilities and also the psychosocial profiles of persons with disabilities by employment status.

Rosly Othman, Ph.D., is currently a senior lecturer at the Graduate School of Business, Universiti Sains Malaysia. His major field of interest lies in operations management, particularly in logistics and supply chain management. He has considerable experience in various service organisations prior to joining the university and also working actively with several NGOs dealing with persons with disabilities in areas related to supported employment. In addition, he is actively involved in numerous research projects, and findings from his research have been presented in conferences and published in local as well as international journals.

Dr. Natalee Popadiuk, R. Psych, is an assistant professor in the counselling psychology programme at the University of Victoria. Her research interests include international student transitions, relational perspectives and qualitative methodologies. In her in-depth narrative studies with international students, she has explored the experiences of women's difficult intimate relationships, student strengths and successes, relationality and adjustment and school-to-work career transitions. Dr. Popadiuk has previously worked with culturally diverse young people in secondary schools, a university counselling centre and at a suicide prevention counselling agency.

Michael Singh is professor of education, Centre for Educational Research, University of Western Sydney (Australia). He is a joint editor of the *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* and a member of the editorial board of the *European Journal of Educational Research.* In 2010, he won Vice Chancellor's Excellence Award

in Postgraduate Research, Training and Supervision for his development of an international partnership for the research-oriented, school-engaged education of teacher-researchers. His current research and teaching focus on internationalising education through bringing non-Western languages and theoretical knowledge to life; advancing partnership-driven research-oriented, school-engaged teacher education; and improving Australia's China and Chinese literacy through innovations in language learning and making Chinese learnable. Prior to this, he was professor of language and culture and head of RMIT language and international studies where he worked to help establish the Globalism Institute. In the early 1990s, as Head of the Initial Teacher Education Program at Central Queensland University, he contributed to the development of the Languages and Cultures Initial Teacher Education Program (LACITEP), in which up to 80 % of the programme was taught in Japanese.

Dr. Suzanne L. Stewart is a member of the Yellowknives Dene First Nation. She is a psychologist and assistant professor of Aboriginal healing and counselling psychology at OISE/University of Toronto in Ontario, Canada. She is also special advisor of the dean on Aboriginal education and chair of the Indigenous Education Network. Her research and teaching interests include Aboriginal mental health and healing, Aboriginal youth transitions and Aboriginal pedagogies in teacher education. Dr. Stewart is chair of the Aboriginal Psychology Section of the Canadian Psychology Association. She works within local native communities and shares her experiences with regional, national and international health and government organisations.

Liton Weili Xu works as both a teaching assistant and research assistant in the Faculty of Education at the University of Victoria, Canada. She has specialised in problem-based learning across the curriculum, languages, arts education, adults' literature and educational technology. Her teaching and working experience in universities and colleges across Asia and North America spans 8 years. She speaks four languages: English, Japanese, Mandarin and Cantonese. She has also designed educational software – English Phonetic Training System software (EPTS) – which is a tool that has been developing to aid FL (foreign language) teachers to create artistic and dynamic learning opportunities designed to correct phonetic difficulties experienced by their students. Her research involves using art to enhance the confidence of foreign language learners and intercultural school-to-work transition curriculum.

About the Editor

Guy Tchibozo is a professor of education at the Université de Limoges, France. He has worked at the Université de Strasbourg and as an expert in the field of vocational education and training research at the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP). His teaching and research address the relationships between education and work, in particular the individual and institutional processes, strategies and policies in the fields of school-to-work transition and vocational education and training.

Part I
Introduction

Chapter 1
Leveraging Diversity to Promote Successful Transition from Education to Work

Guy Tchibozo

1   Problem Statement

School-to-work transition is the process that leads school attendees from the earliest stages of their education up to working life. The transition from education to work has emerged as a political and theoretical issue in the 1980s, when it became obvious in most western developed countries that the economic systems would not continue to integrate the education leavers as easily and instantly as they had used to do since the 1950s. On the political side, the ill-functioning of the transition process results in youth overexposure to unemployment; the need for social policies to assist and retrain the unemployed youth; and threats on social mobility, on social cohesion and on the capacity of future generations to contribute to the supply of qualified labour and to financing the country's social and public expenditure. On the theoretical side, school-to-work transition appears as a specific process, the wholeness of which the existing theories would not allow to grasp easily. The transition process is complex. It combines the effects of individual demographic, historical and psychological characteristics with those of varied educational, social, cultural, economical, political and institutional contexts. It intertwines individual and cohort behaviours with strategies and network mechanisms. It includes deliberate action as well as interactions and hazard. In this respect, understanding the transition from education to work is a challenge for theory.

As organisations' interest in increasing their staff's ability to manage multicultural issues, clients and partnerships has become of chief importance over the past 15 years, the question becomes how the transition system can take advantage of that demand to improve the effectiveness and performance of the process from education

G. Tchibozo (✉)
Département des Sciences de l'éducation, Université de Limoges, Limoges, France
e-mail: guy.tchibozo@unilim.fr

to employment. In effect, several authors have outlined the increase in enterprises' need for culturally diverse and competent personnel worldwide, for example, Snow et al. (1996), Harvey et al. (2000), Raatikainen (2002) and Magnusson et al. (2008). As can be seen from the two chapters relating to the Malaysian case respectively by Rosly Othman (Chap. 5) and Melissa Lee Yen Abdullah Ng (Chap. 9) in the present volume, not only cultural but also social diversity is looked for. Also, not only businesses are concerned but non-profit organisations as well (Weisinger and Salipante 2007).

The demand for diversity appears as a chance for the education users on their way to employment, in particular for those among them who embody that diversity. As James Banks (2009a, b), Castles (2009) and Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2009) have shown, massive international migration movements over the past decades have translated to an unprecedented ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic diversity in schools. Hence, a reasonable assumption would be that, in a context of strong demand from organisations, those students' diversity may be an asset for enhancing their transition to the working life.

This chapter posits an approach of the ways for school-to-work transition systems to further address the organisations' demand for diverse personnel. Section 2 presents the theoretical option and investigation procedure. Section 3 introduces the main concepts. Section 4 reports the findings. Section 5 concludes.

2 Theoretical Approach and Research Procedure

From a theoretical viewpoint, school-to-work transition can be approached either as a state or as a process. In the former case, what is considered is whether the subject is included/integrated or not in the labour market. In this regard, analysis focuses on indices (e.g. salary amount or duration of employment contract) that reveal the state in which the subject is. On the contrary, if the transition is approached as a process, what attention is paid to is the types of stages through which the subject can pass and the sequence of these different stages as well as their dynamics, that is, the mechanisms which explain the passage from a stage to another.

If the process approach is adopted, two options are still possible. A process can be analysed either as a function or as a system. On the one hand, Barrow and Rouse (2005) have presented the functional approach. Most often utilised by economists in the form of the 'production function', the functional approach focuses on causality, that is, the factors which statistically and theoretically determine why entering a certain input at the start of the process will end in producing a certain output. In the perspective of the transition from education to work, this would lead to focus on the characteristics of the young entering the education process, on those of the education leaver at the end of the process and on the factors (e.g. the number of training hours or the school climate) which influence the relationships between the entrance and exit characteristics. The literature on educational effectiveness research (e.g. Scheerens 2004) illustrates this approach.

On the other hand, a process may be analysed as a system. In this case, the dimensions of interest become the overall architecture of the system; the components of the process (e.g. the individual agents and institutions), their characteristics and their behaviours (roles, objectives, actions, modes, procedures . . .), resources and constraints; the interactions between components, the feedback loops and control mechanisms; and the relationships between the system and its environment. In this chapter, the school-to-work transition process will be approached as a system. The reason for that is that mapping the system should precede identifying and testing those among its components which might be significant determinants of the output.

The research procedure is as follows. First, the concepts of school-to-work transition system and organisation's demand for diversity will be defined. Then, these concepts will be utilised to analyse the research and practice literature in the fields of multicultural education and management and to identify directions of action for the transition systems.

3   Concepts

3.1   Concept of School-to-Work Transition System

3.1.1   School-to-Work Transition Process

School-to-work transition can be defined as the process which leads a school attendee from the early formation of a professional life project to the final state of professional integration. From a logical standpoint, the school-to-work transition process comprises four stages. These four stages have to be considered as fully fledged parts of the same process since the latest stages are to a large extent determined by the choices made in the earliest ones and cannot be understood without reference to them. In practice, the stages may overlap.

The first stage is the period when the young begins imagining for the first time what his/her professional activity might be one day. Depending on individuals' psychological maturity, this first stage may occur more or less precociously. The reflection at this stage may be more or less elaborated. Some may have a very precise idea of the type of work they wish to do and even an idea of the type of life they wish to live. From then on and all along the further stages of the process, the most strategists among the young will develop and refine their objectives; plan their actions, sequence of steps, schedules and means; and anticipate and proactively address the reactions of the environment. Some others, on the contrary, may be just hesitating between different possibilities or even simply wondering what to do. Some may be influenced by the family, friends or school environment, while others may develop their own vision autonomously or in reaction to pressures. The important thing at this stage is that the reflection has started, that is, the individual has begun the process of forming a vision of his/her possible future professional life. That reflection will continue, develop and refine all along the transitional process.

The second stage of the transition process begins when the individual starts making choices on his/her educational pathway. Depending on the country and educational system, the time for choices may come early (e.g. at lower secondary education level) or later. An individual that would not have started the first phase would simply follow the directions provided by the family or school, or would make random choices. Instead, an individual who has started forming a project would select learning subjects, optional modules and educational pathways – and even the decision to continue after compulsory schooling – in conformity with the vision s/he has started to build. This second stage lasts until the end of initial education.

The third stage of the transition process is that of labour market entry. It starts with a phase of labour market entry preparation through operational job search training, internships and any similar settings. The education leaver then arrives on the labour market. Though some may directly reach an employment position, most education leavers have to undergo a search and temporary unemployment phase, which may take more or less time. Retraining phases may also take place. This third stage ends when the school leaver obtains a job.

The fourth stage is integration, which is necessary for the transition process to be completed. After entering employment, the novice still has to assimilate, that is, to learn and adapt to the values of the teamwork and to be accepted by the other team members. Integrating in the work team and organisation is most often a condition for stabilising in the job.

The transition process from education to work is particularly complex because it is subject to at least six categories of personal and environmental determinants. The individual's behaviour is first driven by his/her personal socio-demographic attributes (e.g. gender, racial-ethnic belonging, or size) and psychological identity. In addition to these drivers, external influences are exerted by the family-and-friends environment (e.g. about the objectives to be targeted and the ways to address these), the educational institution attended (through the education, information and advice provided), the economic situation (e.g. the possible opportunities for career choice) and the public policies (e.g. the education and employment policies). Not only do all these determinants intertwine all along the process but also are most of them (i.e. the young's personality and the external environment) in continuous change. The transition process thus appears as a complex mix of dimensions: individual, social and contextual (e.g. Feighery 2012, Chap. 4 in this volume); deliberate, negotiated and constrained; static, sequential and dynamic[1]; and strategic, random and chaotic (Tchibozo 2002, 2004).

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[1]Maule and Svenson define these terms as follows: 'In static situations, the focus is on one decision made on the basis of the information about acts, outcomes and contingencies available at the moment of choice. In sequential situations, there is a series of decisions, each changing the situation for future decisions. In dynamic situations, each decision represents an input to a system that is continuously changing according to its own dynamics even when the decision maker does nothing' (Maule and Svenson 1993).

3.1.2 School-to-Work Transition System

The school-to-work transition system can now be defined as a set of interconnected agents whose activity consists in framing the process through which school attendees progress from the early stages of education to integration in professional life. The system operates the four stages of the transitional process, that is, project formation, educational choice, labour market entry and professional integration.

Apart from the education attendees themselves, four categories of functionally different agents can be distinguished in the system: the family and friends; the educational staff; the information, advice and guidance (IAG) counsellors; and the employment officers. These four categories of agents constitute the four subsystems or segments of the transition system, that is, the family, education, guidance and employment subsystems. Each category of agent has objectives to reach, resources to rely on and constraints to work within. The family-and-friends environment is the appropriate place for the transitioning young to get extensive information and discussion on experiences, views, outlooks and ways ahead. The educators, teachers and trainers of all types are in charge of providing education at all education levels. The counsellors provide information, advice and guidance on educational pathways and careers; they mostly intervene from secondary education to the undergraduate studies level.

The employment officers serve as intermediaries between the educators, the students and the employers; they collect and make available labour market and work opportunities information, provide job search operational advice and training and carry out placement activities. They most often operate as of the graduate study level. Their placement activity covers any type of work position, whether part of the study programme (e.g. apprenticeships and compulsory or optional internships) or not (e.g. unpaid internships or regular employment on a permanent basis). The institutional and functional setting of the employment services vary depending on the national, local, sectoral and institutional context: the higher education institutions (HEIs) may operate the service by themselves (individually or in cooperation) and assign the functions to be carried out to specifically dedicated officers or to the existing IAG counsellors and/or teachers and trainers. The service may also be operated by student associations under the auspices of the HEI or organised externally by public or private institutions. The range or activities (analysis of labour market trends, listing of vacancies, contacts with employers, job search techniques training, curriculum vitae and interview preparation, aptitude tests, skills assessment, placement, career counselling, retraining) is also variable across institutions.

The categories of agents interact. For example, parents, teachers and counsellors may discuss the choice of options for the child; teachers may be involved in the placement of their students in apprenticeships and internships; they also may be called for when retraining courses for the unemployed education leavers are needed.

3.2 Concept of Organisations' Demand for Diversity

3.2.1 Diversity

The concept of diversity is complex. First, diversity is multifaceted. Social and demographic diversity refers to such various dimensions as the educational background, occupation, income, political orientation, skin colour, gender, age, size, disability, giftedness, or sexual orientation. Cultural diversity refers to the different cultural backgrounds represented in a group. Culture is most usually defined as the shared set of assumptions, beliefs, myths, values, rituals, heroes and symbols which distinctively shape the ways of thinking, feeling and acting of a human group and in particular the way the group members view and analyse the world that surrounds them. However, the cultures referred to in the concept of cultural diversity depend on the type of social group considered. Three major types of such groups are most often analysed in literature: countries, organisations and schools. At country level, Geert Hofstede (2001) has demonstrated how national cultures can be contrasted in terms of such dimensions as 'power distance', 'uncertainty avoidance', 'individualism'/'collectivism', 'masculinity'/'femininity' and long-term/short-term orientation. According to Hofstede, the dimensions which characterise organisational cultures are quite different from those for contrasting nations. They include such aspects as the priority given to either process or results; the degree of interest in individuals; the recognition of private life; the openness to the external world; control; dogmatism; work centrality; and the needs for authority and security. Quite different too would be the dimensions to be used for distinguishing school cultures. For example, Banks (2009a: 28) characterises school culture in terms of – among others – language, non-verbal communication style, world views and methods of reasoning and validating knowledge. Though there might be some convergence within a given country between school cultures and organisation cultures, it is clear that, in general, the meaning of cultural diversity at school is different from that of cultural diversity in an organisation, and what is considered culturally diverse here may well not be considered so there. A consequence of this would be that cultural diversity at school or on campus is not per se a predictor of cultural diversity at work.

The complexity of the diversity concept also lies in the complicated interactions between its different dimensions. A dimension may determine another one. For example, the education received may influence the method of reasoning, occupation or income. However, that influence is only partial and non-systematic since, for example, people with similar income may have different educational backgrounds. Hence, similarity in some dimensions does not imply belonging to the same group. But conversely, differences in several dimensions do not preclude belonging to the same group: people may be different in terms of nationality, gender, age and education and nevertheless share the same organisational culture. Social and cultural categorising therefore requires taking into consideration more or less close and overlapping subgroups, each of which would be defined by combining modalities

from all dimensions. However, the possible closeness between subgroups also suggests that diversity is relative, hence potentially uneasy to objectively ensure. In addition, individual psychology has also to be taken into account. From an individual standpoint, a person may belong to several subgroups. The *theory of social identity complexity* (Brewer 2010) explains how the thinking and acting of that person may be organised following inclusive ('intersection', 'merger') or exclusive ('dominance', 'compartmentalisation') patterns, depending on the degree of differentiation and integration of the person's different affiliations. As a result, the degree of diversity might well be high in a small group the members of which used to adopt complementary or comprehensive inclusive patterns.

3.2.2 Reasons for the Demand for Diversity

The demand for diversity comes not only from businesses but also from society as a whole, including public administrations and other non-profit organisations. Three reasons can be invoked to explain this: equity, legitimacy and efficacy.

While social justice refers to equal opportunities for all society members in the access to the benefits of a society, the reference to equity aims at emphasising the need for allowing differences in treatment in order to take account of gaps in individuals' or social groups' situations. Social justice is hampered by discriminations. Promoting social diversity – through equity measures when necessary – is a way for countering discriminatory behaviours and enhancing social justice. In societies committed to social justice, the ideal of equal opportunities for all to access any desired position is pursued, making the principle of social diversity a reference for recruitment in public administration and non-profit organisations and enterprises. In the field of firm management, Thomas and Ely (1996) have for long noted that the enterprises that apply this 'discrimination and fairness paradigm' go beyond 'traditional affirmative action efforts' and 'institute mentoring and career development programmes specifically for the women and people of colour in their ranks and train other employees to respect cultural differences'.

Legitimacy is the second motive for demanding diversity. In the political sphere, the *theory of deliberative democracy* has outlined the importance of diversity. What is targeted here is the diversity of views to be taken into account when it comes to considering societal issues. According to Jürgen Habermas (1996), the legitimacy of legal norms in a democratic pluralistic society relies on the participation of the citizens themselves – and not of the parliament only – in the process of debating the issues at stake. In this process, all the relevant perspectives and voices must be included (p. 183) in order to reach 'a representative diversity of voices' (p. 368). James Fishkin (2009) has proposed that the people's deliberations be organised in the form of 'microcosmic deliberations', that is, deliberations within a statistically representative sample of the population (p. 81). Five basic conditions are necessary to the validity of the deliberations (p. 34): sample participants should be provided with sufficient information about the issue discussed; they should give equal, sincere and in-depth consideration to all the arguments in presence; and they should be

representative of the positions about the issue in the population. 'Deliberation is crippled if only the advocates of one side or one point of view are in the room . . . The range of competing viewpoints on the issue in the population at large should be represented in the discussions . . . This concern is directly relevant to the quality of deliberation since if the arguments, concerns, and values of one group are not included in the argument, then the basis for choice will have been impaired . . . ' (p. 37). Not only political, cultural and social diversity are looked for here but also demographic diversity since demographic characteristics of a group may, to some extent, influence its views.

The reference of the theory of deliberative democracy to diversity in views is echoed by the *stakeholder theory* in organisational management. Legitimacy is at stake there too. While the traditional theory of the firm focused on the views of investors, customers, employees and suppliers, the stakeholder theory emphasises the need to extend the scope to the positions of the society at large, including communities, political groups and governmental bodies. Donaldson and Preston (1995) have outlined the ethical dimension of that extension. Based on the theory of property rights, and in particular on the idea that property rights exclude harmful use and admit restrictions with respect to human rights, it can be considered that not only the owners of a firm but also the whole society have rights on that firm. Hence, the positions of the society have to be taken into account in business management. Donaldson and Preston conclude that 'the ultimate managerial implication of the stakeholder theory is that managers should acknowledge the validity of diverse stakeholder interests and should attempt to respond to them within a mutually supportive framework, because that is a moral requirement for the legitimacy of the management function'.

The third reason which explains the demand for diversity is effectiveness and efficiency in political, administrative, social and economic action. In the non-market sector, the *theory of representative bureaucracy* has posited that making the servants resemble their constituents and users would increase action effectiveness. The rationale behind is that officers ('bureaucrats') can better understand and accommodate their public's needs if they are from the same social, demographic and cultural origins and share comparable life experiences and worldviews (Pitts 2005). Thomas and Ely (1996) also report applications of that approach (which they call 'access and legitimacy paradigm') in firms. However, literature has also pointed out possible adverse effects of diversity on social cohesion and trust (Twigg et al. 2010). As regards the economic impact, though some authors have noted possible difficulties raised by social and cultural diversification in terms of economic growth (Ratna et al. 2009), many others have stressed the potential of diversity as a lever for economic performance. In this latter regard, diversity has been proved to increase entrepreneurship and the development of technology start-ups at national and regional levels (Audretsch et al. 2010; Sobel et al. 2010), enhance innovation and research and development (Niebuhr 2010) and stimulate creativity in work teams (Stahl et al. 2010a, b).

3.2.3   Organisations' Demand for Diversity

Roosevelt Thomas (2010) has proposed an inspiring '*world class diversity manage-ment*' approach. He posits that the issue of diversity is not limited to the social and cultural dimensions of the workforce but instead more generally embraces any other dimension (e.g. work practices) and also includes the non-workforce-related issues, for example, the product offering strategy. In this respect, 'diversity management [refers] to the management of any diverse mixture' (p. 129). Hence, diversity management basically refers to the capability of grasping the essence of diversity, understanding the universal pattern common to all diverse situations and mastering a general framework to approach any type of such situations. Box 1.1 presents Thomas's general framework for diversity management. In terms of workforce management, this approach first entails developing workforce *representativeness* through authentic personnel social, demographic and cultural diversity. Next, Thomas's approach implies enhancing appropriate work *relationships* through taking steps to make each staff member realise, understand, accept and value with equal consideration the differences of the other staff members and to address and resolve the tensions and complexities that ensue from diversification. Thomas suggests (pp. 50–52) that such steps include racism-, sexism- and any necessary 'ism'-seminars, sensitivity trainings, personal development seminars for minorities and women, political correctness, leveraging differences as tools for the benefit of the organisation, inclusion and any appropriate action in terms of cultural competency. Finally, the *empowerment* strand of the approach aims at enabling all employees maximise their individual engagement, develop their talents and make these usable by and beneficial to the organisation. Empowerment requires taking every appropriate step, in particular adapting as necessary the organisation's culture, performance appraisal process and promotional practices.

   Two aspects of this approach are of particular interest in the perspective of the present research. The first one is that in Thomas's approach, diversity management is not the responsibility of managers only but instead a shared responsibility of all staff members of the organisation. Commenting on the empowerment strand, Thomas outlines that 'every individual – regardless of organisational position – has managing diversity responsibility. All are called upon to make quality decisions in the midst of differences, similarities, tensions, and complexities along all dimen-sions of workforce diversity' (p. 97). This can easily be extended to the relationships side as well since every staff member is obviously concerned by the request for realising, understanding, accepting and valuing differences. In that respect, Thomas's approach provides an interesting insight into the types of behaviours and abilities which organisations' look for while demanding diversity. The content of the demand can thus be condensed into three words: representativeness, relationships and empowerment.

   The universality of the approach, next, is of major importance. Thomas's approach holds for any of the three logics driving the demand for diversity, that is, whether diversity is demanded for equity, legitimacy, or efficacy reasons. But above all, diversity management here does not refer to business only but far more

generally to addressing diversity also outside the professional sphere, that is, in everyday social life. Thomas (p. 130, 140) provides some examples suggesting that his approach could also inform behaviours in family and political life. Hence, at least non-profit organisations and public administrations also may be approached through this lens. The approach therefore provides a suggestive framework for understanding profit and non-profit organisations' demand for diversity and for exploring ways for the school-to-work transition systems to address that demand.

Box 1.1

A synthetic presentation of Thomas's general framework for diversity management. Source: R. Roosevelt Thomas (2010: 132–134).

1. Representation
   In order to identify who or what should be included in the mixture, the attribute profile and its behavioural variations have to be defined. Two sets of questions must be addressed.

   1.1. Attribute variations

   1.1.1. Do we want to have attribute pluralism?
   1.1.2. If so, what kind?
   1.1.3. If so, how much?
   1.1.4. If so, how do we go about assembling the desired profile?
   1.1.5. If so, what will be the managerial implications?

   1.2. Behavioural variations

   1.2.1. Do we want to have behavioural variations?
   1.2.2. If so, what kind?
   1.2.3. If so, how much?
   1.2.4. If so, how do we go about assembling the desired variations?

2. Relationships
   The central question is: 'What relationships are required among the mixture's elements to ensure optimal productivity and achievement of organisational objectives?' The subquestions to frame the answer are:

   2.1. To ensure achievement of organisational objectives, how much *differentiation* is required between the mixture's elements?
   2.2. To ensure achievement of organisational objectives, how much *integration* is required between the mixture's elements?

3. Empowerment
   The central question is: 'How do we empower or engage each element's individual and collective potential for contribution?' Three framing subquestions:

   (continued)

(continued)
  3.1. What type of environment is required to promote the required integration and differentiation?
  3.2. What managerial model is required for this purpose?
  3.3. What type of organisational culture is required for this purpose?

4 How Can the School-to-Work Transition System Address the Demand for Diversity?

In the light of the research and practice literature in the fields of multicultural education and multicultural management, the education and employment subsystems of the transition system appear particularly appropriate for action to address the organisations' demand and thus leverage diversity for improving the process for education to work.

4.1 Role of the Education Subsystem

The education subsystem has for long been identified as a place of major importance in the diversity issue. Its specific role in this matter is twofold, that is, pipelining and preparing.

In the perspective of this research, education has first to bring a diverse population of students up to the point where they may be recruited by organisations, thus addressing the first requirement – authentic workforce representativeness – of the diversity demand. In most countries, the representation of the socially and culturally diverse education attendees decreases steadily between the lower secondary education level and tertiary education. The lack of diverse applicants with a tertiary education background is a commonplace in recruitment. In Europe, policies for the reduction of educational inequality have for more than 30 years attempted to tackle the problem at its roots (Ross 2009). Such programmes as the Education Action Zones in the United Kingdom and the 'Politique d'éducation prioritaire' in France have tried to provide children with equal opportunities of success at school through awarding increased staff and educational and budgetary resources to primary and secondary schools located in socially and economically disadvantaged areas. Several programmes in other countries have tried to provide a specific support to families and children at a disadvantage through improving home-school communications, adapting the curriculum to cultural specificities, adapting the pedagogic style to the children's socioeconomic background, sensitising the educational staff to differences and nondiscriminatory practices, setting 'second

chance' programmes and recruiting teachers from disadvantaged groups. Since the 1990s, these programmes have been complemented by policies targeted at democratising the access to higher education. In the United States where similar inequalities in the access to higher education can be observed, affirmative action steps have been taken for decades (e.g. Krislov 2010; Mitchell 2012, Chap. 2 in this volume). Reforms at the institutional (e.g. Harvard, Yale and Stanford) and national (simplification of the federal student aid programmes) levels are ongoing to alleviate the education costs for students from disadvantaged groups and enhance their access to financial assistance (McPherson and Smith 2010). Still, further progress certainly has to be made.

The second mission of the education segment is to address the relationship requirement of the diversity demand. Education is expected to prepare the students to meet the requirements of adult life in a diverse society. In this regard, researchers and practitioners in the field of multicultural and intercultural education have for 40 years elaborated on the ways for raising awareness of the diversity issue in the young. While multicultural education has been defined as 'an approach to school reform designed to actualize educational equality for students from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, social-class, and linguistic groups' (Banks 2009a: 13), Allemann-Ghionda (2009: 135) stresses that 'in intercultural education, the prefix *inter* underlines the interactive aspect'. Reference to intercultural education thus emphasises the role of interactions as a source for mutual understanding. Aboud (2009) outlines that at primary and secondary school, shared storybook reading (until the age of five), cooperative classroom learning and training to intervene in discriminatory situations have proved successful in positively changing pupils' and students' racial attitudes. In this regard, classroom social and cultural diversity may appear as an asset to help create authentic contexts for cooperation and behaviour training. Allemann-Ghionda (2009) points out cross-cultural understanding strategies applied at all educational levels in the European Union, that is, multilingualism, inclusion of different religions and transnational mobility programmes for pupils and students, as well as teachers, trainers and school administrators (the Erasmus, Leonardo and Comenius programmes). Through multi- and intercultural approaches, the education subsystem may – and does – work at raising the school attendees' awareness of diversity and training them to realise, understand, accept and value with equal consideration others' differences. It thus may – and does – contribute to address the relationship requirement of the organisations' demand for diversity.

4.2 Role of the Employment Subsystem

Research and practice literature suggest that at the employment subsystem level, progress could be made in two directions related to the empowerment and representativeness requirements of the demand for diversity.

In work placement (internships) activities first, Özbilgin and Tatli (2008: 334, 343) point out some failures to offer more than one-size-fits-all services and settings while receiving the student-customers and arranging work placement conditions with employers. Reporting on their research on work placement in the creative and cultural industries in London, they wrote:

> the impact of work placement on the level of satisfaction of students from different demographic backgrounds were not monitored by the HEIs. In general, interviews suggested that the issues of equality and diversity were not high on the agenda of the participant HEIs within the scope of work placement practices. When we asked the respondents whether they believed that their work placements may have different impact by gender, ethnicity, age, disability, sexual orientation and religion of the students, all said that the success of the work placement depends on the personality of the student rather than their demographic characteristic. (p. 343)

Not to mention the possible relationships between demographic characteristics and personality, more awareness of the diversity issue sometimes seems to be needed. Özbilgin and Tatli note that this situation 'is not peculiar to the arts and humanities fields, but rather is a feature of work placement practices in other fields as well' (p. 343). They also observe that 'the host organizations do not sufficiently attend to diversity and equality issues in work placements' (p. 346). Interns are generally not considered as normal staff. They may sometimes just be perceived as cheap low-level administrative and secretarial resources and assigned to such tasks as photocopying, answering the telephone or data entry. As a non-integrated group, interns may remain out of the scope of the diversity culture and policy of the organisation, if any. It is thus suggested that the school-to-work transition system could increase its performance through paying closer attention to better tailoring the work placement service provision to the needs of diverse students and arranging relevant placement conditions with host organisations (see also Melissa Lee Yen Abdullah Ng 2012, Chap. 9 in this volume). Monitoring the placement activities and assessing the user's satisfaction could help. Arranging for these students appropriate conditions and, where necessary, appropriate adjustments in the host organisation's culture and managerial mode would most likely allow them to fully engage and achieve their full potential and should finally be beneficial to host organisations.

The second direction to be explored is about adapting to the recruitment practices of the diversity demanders. The representativeness requirement is concerned here too. Anderson and Billings-Harris (2010: 122–125) have synthesised some major guidelines in the practice of diverse recruitment. In particular, their findings suggest that those organisations that successfully attract diverse applicants first set a clear idea of the social and cultural characteristics they are looking for, based on their current and future needs. All educational institutions where such candidates can be found are then considered, not the top universities only. Collaboration with recruitment firms specialised in multicultural recruiting is also sought. Partnershipping with the *employee resource groups* (ERGs) in-house is a good idea to get feedbacks

to improve the design appropriateness of the attractiveness and recruitment strategy given the specificity of the applicants targeted. Reaching a diverse population also implies using diverse media. Finally, the recruiters and interviewing managers need 'to be well-versed in all the diversity and inclusion efforts of the company' (p. 125). The whole approach is to be monitored and assessed for efficacy.

Implications for the employment subsystem are many. The employment offices would certainly gain in efficacy if they would have a clear idea of the approach to diversity and of the current and future needs of the organisations in the market. They should widen the range of their partner organisations and include the top companies in their address book, instead of limiting themselves to prospecting the local market only. They could also develop networking with diversity recruitment agencies and contacts with ERGs in the workplace. In addition, while training the students for the interviews, the inclusion and diversity issue should be in-depth explained and discussed. Al-Harthi and Al-Harthi (2012, Chap. 3 in this volume) illustrate how far students' representations in this matter may sometimes stand away from the expectations of organisations.

Though mostly based on the United States experience and therefore not exactly representative of other national or social contexts, the framework proposed by Anderson and Billings-Harris is of interest in that it suggests ways for action. Above all, it recalls that, in a given context, organisations develop appropriate recruitment strategies. Hence, a major role of the placement industry, in particular the employment segment of the school-to-work transition system, is to monitor these developments and adapt their own strategies accordingly.

5 Conclusion

The recommendations are straightforward (which does not mean easy to implement). To address the organisations' demand for diversity, school-to-work transition systems need to pursue ongoing efforts and take new steps along three directions. First, improving and expanding educational equality and higher education access policies, and adapting the working methods in HEIs employment services to the specific practices of diversity recruitment, would assist organisations recruit more diverse qualified personnel, thus meeting the representativeness requirement. Next, implementing approaches of multicultural and intercultural educations that have proved successful is key to prepare the future workforce for meeting the relationship requirement for multicultural working life. Finally, providing diverse students with adapted support and conditions at the stage of labour market entry, in particular in the phases of entry preparation and internships, would help empower them and make their transition process fully successful. Future research should lead to identifying in these areas the best approaches for converting diversity at school into successful transition from education to work.

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Part II
The Demand for Cultural
and Social Diversity

Chapter 2
Cultural and Social Diversity in the United States: A Compelling National Interest

Charles E. Mitchell

1 Introduction

This chapter addresses the demand for cultural and social diversity from three perspectives: (1) how those in the public arena have addressed the need to assess and implement such diversity in promoting the successful transition to work, (2) how public organizations throughout the USA have implemented a bureaucracy representative of all cultural and social groups, and (3) how legal confrontations over achieving these objectives through educational access have resulted in the development of policy on cultural and social diversity in academic settings. Accordingly, the research questions are to what extent the demand for cultural diversity in public enterprises has manifested itself, to what extent educational systems are addressing this need, and to what extent legal confrontations involving educational access have impacted the development of a national policy to ensure diversity in educational settings and the workplace.

Cultural diversity has many definitions. Geert Hofstede's (2001) research in 40 countries provides a definition that addresses mindset and cultural values in terms of such factors as individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, power distance, and level of uncertainty avoidance. His research underscores the generally accepted definition of Kluckhohn (1951) that culture is an acquired and transmitted pattern of shared meaning, feeling, and behavior that constitutes a distinctive human group.

Once called a "melting pot" of cultures, the USA is now described as a mosaic or tapestry. These metaphors "suggest that it is acceptable to keep one's differences and still be part of the overall society" (Weaver 2006). Differences thus "are acceptable

C.E. Mitchell, Ph.D. (✉)
Public Administration, Troy University, Atlanta, GA, USA
e-mail: cmitchell19705@troy.edu

and need not be abandoned to have an equal opportunity to achieve ... life goals" (Weaver 2006). The USA, one of the most culturally and socially diverse countries in the world, understands and fosters this concept. It is from this perspective that this chapter approaches the topic. Furthermore, social diversity as discussed in this chapter refers to persons distinguishable by their ethnicity, language, and religion.

The USA is comprised of a variety of cultural and social groups including persons who can be identified as Hispanic American, Native American, Irish American, Arab American, Asian American, and African American, etc. It also includes various religious groups (Protestant, Islamic, Jewish, Catholic, Hindu, etc.) as well as a number of others. Everyone living in the USA is covered by the nation's Declaration *of Independence* document that upholds individual human rights in these terms: "... that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness."

Inherent in this famous pronouncement is the promise that all who reside in the USA are ensured equality of opportunity to pursue their life goals to the fullest extent of their abilities, irrespective of cultural or social background. Achievement of this utopian ideal has not been easy. Like many other countries, the United States of America has had to overcome cultural and social biases in its effort to allow equal opportunity for all. The American Dream is still being refined in this respect, and educational opportunity is paramount to its achievement.

American society has struggled with inclusiveness in its institutions of higher education. From the courts have emerged strategies and policies to ensure diversity in higher education. Key court cases that have addressed this issue include *Regents of the University System of California v. Bakke*, 438 U.S. 265 (1978), *Gratz et al. v. Bollinger et al.*, 539 U.S. 244 (2003), and *Grutter v. Bollinger et al.,* 306 U.S. 244 (2003). These court decisions reflect attempts by a diverse society to develop a national policy that allows all citizens an equal opportunity to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Numerous legal confrontations demonstrate how the courts have fashioned what has been termed a "*compelling governmental interest*" in access to higher education within the USA.

An analysis of legal confrontations regarding educational access reveals the extent to which courts have fashioned a national policy to ensure workforce diversity. In addition to an analysis of court decisions, the methodology used here will entail a literature review of works on cultural competency and representative bureaucracy. This research should reveal why diversity is demanded and for what it is intended.

1.1 The Demand for Cultural and Social Diversity

The demand for cultural and social diversity in the United States has manifested itself in fields such as social work, health services, the military, and schools of public administration among others. Importantly, all have made attempts to compel

curricula that address this demand. In a society as diverse as that of the USA where inclusiveness is espoused, representative bureaucracy frames how this concept is implemented.

1.1.1 Cultural Competency

Defining Cultural Competency

The phrase "*cultural competency*" denotes an essential part of service delivery to the public. Fernandouplle refers to cultural competency as the "ability of organizations and individuals to work effectively in cross-cultural or multicultural interactions" (as cited in Carrizales 2010, p. 594). The National Center for Cultural Competency in the USA was established to provide a resource for cultural competency in the health sector. It defines cultural competency as "having the knowledge, skills, and values to work effectively with diverse populations and to adapt institutional policies and professional practices to meet the unique needs of client populations" (Carrizales, p. 594).

A Need for Cultural Competency in Service Delivery

The need for social equity in a diverse society has been the catalyst for discussions and later attempts to develop cultural competencies in public agencies. In the developing academic field of public administration, initial discussions in this area were held at a conference arranged by Dwight Waldo as editor of *Public Administration Review* (Shafritz et al. 2011). The conference was held at Syracuse University in 1968, with the stated goal of identifying what was relevant about public administration and how the field needed to change in order to meet changes brought on by social change and consciousness (Shafritz et al. 2011, p. 440).

The conference produced a number of papers edited by Frank Marini and published in 1971 in the premier issue of *Public Administration Review*. H. George Frederickson's "*Toward a New Public Administration*" called for social equity in the delivery of public services (Shafritz et al. 2011, p. 440). This was the start of numerous conference papers and scholarly articles calling for public administrators to heed changing demands associated with social equality in the delivery of services to the public.

As a result of this pioneering effort, it is accepted today that one of the primary concerns of public-agency administrators is the ethical and equitable treatment of all its constituents, irrespective of class, culture, or socioeconomic status. It took decades for this process to go from academic discussion to actual practice, but it was here that ideas of addressing the service needs of different groups began.

Tony Carrizales (2010) writes that changing demographics in the USA gave rise to opportunities for a more effective public sector. What Carrizales speaks of here is the development of more effective relationships between government and

its citizens that can be achieved through cultural-competency initiatives by public servants serving their constituents. Instead of viewing differences in the population as problems, they should be viewed as opportunities to make use of the varied members of society to achieve a more effective public sector workforce.

Carrizales' view is consistent with that of Mitchell Rice (2007), who also discusses demographic changes brought on by the influx of Hispanics into the USA. Rice notes that these changes bring on the certain possibility that the exchange between clients and public agencies will be those involving different cultural backgrounds, material realities, beliefs, practices, behaviors, and language differences (p. 43). With each such encounter, there is a chance for the public sector to enhance its performance via the use of cultural competency. Thus, Rice also emphasized that public agencies must look at demographic changes as opportunities rather than inconveniences.

Cultural and Social Competency and the Educational Curriculum

White and Rice argue that (as cited in Carrizales 2010, p. 593) the public sector has to take into account cultural competency as part of service delivery and organizational change. To achieve this end, educational institutions must include cultural competency in their curricula.

In this regard, Carrizales (2010) notes that, in its guidelines for schools seeking accreditation in 2008, the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) advanced the notion of diversity across curricula (p. 596). In its 2008 set of guidelines, NASPAA developed a "*Diversity Across the Curriculum*" set of standards (NASPAA 2008). The standards articulated that program activities must prepare students to work in and contribute to diverse workplaces and communities. This accrediting agency deemed it necessary for school seeking accreditation to adhere to the following stipulations:

> courses, curriculum materials, and other program activities should expose students to differences relating to social-identity categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, disability, age, and veterans' status (NASPAA 2008).

While the standards did not prescribe specific courses, they did require curricula related to the development of cultural competency. Each institution that sought accreditation through NASPAA under these guidelines had to show the extent to which it pursued these objectives.

NASPAA's new set of similar standards can be found in its Standard 5 which speaks to "*matching Operations with the Mission: Student Learning*." The new standard is not as specific as its predecessor, but it does speak to a set of "*Universal Required Competencies*" which are designed "to communicate and interact productively with a diverse and changing workforce and citizenry" (NASPAA 2009).

The idea of incorporating cultural competency into the curricula of institutions of higher learning is nothing new. The social work and health professions have been involved in this process for well over 30 years (Carrizales 2010). Authors in the area of social work education have conducted studies showing the importance of including curricula dealing with cultural competency. As an example, studies have identified three objectives for social work education designed to make students aware of the need for cultural competency. Specifically, teaching and encouraging cultural competency (1) raises the student's awareness about the importance of being culturally competent, (2) creates an atmosphere in which students and teacher can ask questions and share their knowledge about cultures, and (3) increases the amount of information students have about cultures (p. 595).

The curriculum in this area has been developed over a number of years to ensure that students who work in social work are fully aware of the needs of diverse groups. Importantly, the point is made that the end product is to produce culturally competent professionals with the ability to utilize learned cultural knowledge to meet the needs of the diverse people being served.

Like the area of social work, the healthcare field was one of the first to realize the importance of cultural competency in dealing with diverse groups. Striving to reduce inequities in the US health industry, Anderson et al. developed a community-based approach in nursing education (as cited in Carrizales 2010, p. 596). Their approach to teaching cultural competency in nursing education involved the following:

1. Knowledge-based programs that highlight information about culture and related concepts
2. Attitude-based curricula that underscore the impact of sociocultural factors on patients' values through self-reflection
3. Skill-based educational programs that focus on learning communication skills and applying them to negotiate patients' participation in decisions
4. A community-based approach designed to forge a four-way partnership with community members, health professionals, students, and faculty to work together in defining cultural competency relevant to their community

This community-based approach exemplifies what is possible in developing curricula that address the need for cultural competency in the public arena. Public employers should seek other such approaches in efforts to incorporate cultural competencies to better serve the needs of a growing culturally diverse population.

As a further example in the healthcare arena, graduating Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) students in some schools are exposed to a variety of curricular approaches designed to achieve cultural competency. To test the effectiveness of such techniques, Kardong-Edgren et al. (2010) conducted a study of the cultural competency of students graduating from six BSN programs in the United States. Each school had a different curriculum. Campinha-Bacote's Cultural Competency Care Model was the conceptual framework for the study. This model posits that the key to cultural competency involves "*wanting to, rather than having to*" interact with other cultures (p. 279). The cultural competencies measured included cultural awareness, desire, skills, knowledge, and encounters with other cultures.

The study revealed that none of the curricular approaches were superior to any other. Students in all six schools were found to be culturally aware as a result of their programs of study. The findings further suggest that cultural awareness might be a more appropriate factor to measure in graduating nurses than cultural competency. Whether it is cultural awareness or cultural competency, the study revealed a concerted effort by the six nursing schools to assess the needs for diversity among prospective employers and to develop strategies for promoting a successful transition to work.

The Need for Cultural and Social Competency in the Military

Both the British and US military establishments understand well the need to have a culturally competent workforce. Daft (2011) writes that the British Secret Intelligence Service, or MI6, as well as the US military have embarked on an "intense campaign to recruit women and minorities who speak languages such as Arabic, Persian, Mandarin, Urdu, and the Afghan languages of Dari and Pashto" (p. 333). Military and intelligence agencies realize the importance of having people with cultural competencies to ensure success in the war on terrorism. They understand that a diverse workforce is essential to mission success.

Realizing the need for specific competencies, the US House of Representatives' Committee on Armed Services commissioned a study to assess the need for language skills and cultural competencies in the military (House Armed Services Report 2008). The study revealed that foreign language skills and cultural expertise were essential to mission success; however, only a "small part of today's military is proficient in a foreign language, and . . . there is no comprehensive, systematic approach to develop cultural expertise" (p. 9).

The committee report criticized the US educational system for not prioritizing the teaching of foreign languages and for lacking the infrastructure to support that curricular commitment. The report acknowledged that the Department of Defense (DOD) must advance a national educational agenda that promotes the teaching of language skills and cultural awareness not only to address national security needs but also to ensure that the USA remains competitive in the global marketplace. Recommendations included the following:

1. The DOD should develop a comprehensive foreign language, cultural awareness, and regional expertise strategy that include a prioritization of efforts and resources.
2. The DOD should consider targeting its Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) for Language and Culture Project grants.
3. The largest feeder schools, such as the five senior military colleges, that are training the highest number of officers should develop intensive language programs.
4. Where they otherwise have not done so, the Armed Services should require that ROTC cadets and midshipmen to study a foreign language, preferably one of the less commonly taught languages.

5. The DOD should place greater emphasis on foreign languages and cultural programs in its own K-12 school system to make them models for producing students with higher proficiency levels in these areas. (US House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services 2008, p. 65)

The committee report was clear in its assessment that foreign language skills and cultural expertise are critical to mission success in the military. Problems in this area are symptomatic of a deficiency that not only the DOD but also the nation's K-16 schools should address. The report recommended the development of teacher skills and curricula to support this effort.

1.1.2 Representative Bureaucracy

Defining Representative Bureaucracy

It was J. Donald Kingsley (1944) who coined the term "representative bureaucracy." His comment that "bureaucracies, to be democratic, must be representative of the group they serve" (p. 305) has prompted numerous studies and a considerable body of research related to the need for representative bureaucracy.

Kingsley's work describes the placement of individuals in the British Civil Service. He details the educational achievement needed for placement into what he calls compartments or classes. Entry into the clerical class requires a lesser amount of training than does entry into the administrative class, which is comprised of university graduates. Kingsley's description of the British Civil Service makes it clear that educational opportunity in the British system is not equal.

As Kingsley notes, such is not the case in the United States. There is no caste system in the USA, and, given its large middle class, educational access generates opportunities in public service positions for all in the USA.

A Need for Representative Bureaucracy

Public sector institutions in the United States understand the need for a representative bureaucracy. A democracy such as the USA has a commitment to ensure diversity in the institutions that serve this same diverse culture. Representative bureaucracy thus manifests itself in the composition of all public institutions including the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Access to educational opportunity must be available to ensure expertise for all who would participate in a representative bureaucracy. Educational systems in the USA must address this need in developing useful strategies for promoting a successful transition from the classroom to the workplace.

As an example of the extent to which the USA values representativeness in government entities, the changing composition of the US Supreme Court merits scrutiny. Previously the domain of White, predominately Protestant males, the

Table 2.1 US Supreme Court demographics

Name	Gender	Race/ethnicity/religion	Education
Antonin Scalia, Associate Justice	Male	White/Italian American/Catholic	LL.B., Harvard University
Anthony M. Kennedy, Associate Justice	Male	White/Irish American/Catholic	L.L.B., Harvard University
Clarence Thomas, Associate Justice	Male	Black/African American/Catholic	J.D., Yale University
Ruth B. Ginsburg, Associate Justice	Female	White/German American/Jewish	L.L.B., Columbia University
Stephen Breyer, Associate Justice	Male	White/Jewish	L.L.B., Harvard University
John G. Roberts, Chief Justice	Male	White/Catholic	J.D., Harvard University
Samuel Alito, Associate Justice	Male	White/Italian American/Catholic	J.D., Yale University
Sonia Sotomayor, Associate Justice	Female	Hispanic/Catholic	J.D., Yale University
Elena Kagan, Associate Justice	Female	White/Polish American/Jewish	J.D., Harvard University

Source: Self-designed based on (1) Susan Navarro Smelcer (2010), *Supreme Court Justices: Demographic Characteristics, Professional Experience, and Legal Education 1789-2010*, Congressional Research Service Report. The report can be found at www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R40802.pdf
(2) Cornell University Law School Legal Information Institute at http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/justices/fullcourt.html
(3) The Oyez Project, at www.Oyez.org/courts/robt6

Court now reflects in its constituency the largest demographic groups (males, females, Whites, Blacks, Hispanics) in the USA. Importantly, the current diversity of Supreme Court Justices is possible because of their access to educational opportunities at elite universities. As noted in Table 2.1, all members of the Court are graduates of elite law schools that use the cultural/social demographic of its students as a criterion for admission. This strategy ensures leadership diversity in the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government in the USA.

The Supreme Court Justices are obviously from varied backgrounds. To be sure, this diversity is exclusive in some respects and has political overtones with its implications for electoral power. That point notwithstanding, the Court's diversity reflects representative bureaucracy in the judicial branch of government. This diversity represents a substantive change since 1967 when the first African American male (Thurgood Marshall) was appointed and later when a female (Sandra Day O'Connor) was appointed in 1981. Thus, the Court has seen significant change in its demographic composition.

Each individual currently sitting on the Supreme Court has the training and experience necessary to deliberate on constitutional questions of law. Even so, factors such as ethnicity, gender, and race have been considerations in the selection process.

This has been the case because of the theoretical assumption that one's ethnicity, gender, and/or race lends itself to "*empathy*" for the groups with which one is

identified. In this regard, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, during a 2001 lecture at the University of California at Berkeley's School of Law, created a stir prior to her confirmation of appointment to the Court in her now famous "wise Latina" remarks. She said:

> Whether born from experience or inherent physiological or cultural differences, . . . our gender and national origins may and will make a difference in our judging. Justice [Sandra Day] O'Connor has often been cited as saying that a wise old man and wise old woman will reach the same conclusion in deciding cases. I am not sure . . . that I agree with the statement. First, as Professor Martha Minnow has noted, there can never be a universal definition of wise. Second, I would hope that a wise Latina woman with the richness of her experiences would more often than not reach a better conclusion than a white male who hasn't lived that life. (Lowen 2009)

Justice Sotomayor's comments were soundly criticized by the conservative media. However, her comments accurately reflect the thinking of those who espouse the need for representative bureaucracy. Each person who sits on the bench brings with him or her a unique set of cultural experiences and values. Justice Sotomayor's observations are as true for every White male who sits on the bench as they are for her. Each believes his or hers to be the wisest judicial decision. Given differences in the overall deliberative process on the bench, ideally the most correct decision will be made by the totality of the group's experiences and knowledge of the US Constitution.

President Barack Obama was also criticized for his 2008 campaign statement that he would want his Supreme Court nominees to have "*empathy*" (Murray and Livingston 2009). Prior to being elected President, Obama made it clear that he would not be looking solely for a candidate who is an intellectual and a constitutional scholar. He would be looking as well for someone who had "the empathy to recognize what it's like to be a young, teenaged mom; the empathy to understand what it's like to be poor or African American or gay or disabled or old" (Murray and Livingston 2009). These comments too reflect what is meant by the need to have a representative bureaucracy in governmental institutions.

In a study on the importance of representative bureaucracy in the rendering of service to persons with AIDS, Thielmann and Stewart (1996) found evidence supportive of what they deemed a demand-side perspective on the importance of representative bureaucracy. Their study considered not only those being served who had AIDS but also whether they had concerns about the ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation of persons rendering services.

Thielmann and Stewart noted that initially the organized and funded response to AIDS came from the private sector because the disease was found primarily in the gay community and among drug users. As the epidemic spread to mainstream populations, including babies and heterosexuals, it became clear that there was a need to ensure responsive services to those in need.

The US government's intervention was through grants from legislation passed by Congress called the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act of 1990 that provided funding to help local agencies deal with the AIDS crisis (Thielmann and Stewart 1996, p. 170). The study by Thielmann and Stewart

revealed that one of the ways to promote responsiveness to those in need was to create planning councils representative of the case load in each metropolitan area. The case load, depending on the area, might be predominantly Black, Hispanic, etc. Accordingly, the councils' staffing should reflect the demographics of those being served.

The research findings showed that the effectiveness of the service delivery and the treatment of those infected with AIDS were affected by the staffing of service delivery agencies (Thielmann and Stewart 1996, p. 172). These findings support the concept of a representative bureaucracy designed to make a difference in the effect they have on service delivery.

The United States realizes the importance of representative bureaucracy that allows for the participation of all diverse groups and mitigates inevitable conflicts of interest. Meir and Hawes (2009) note that the violent protests by ethnic minorities in France relating to employment opportunities and ethnic discrimination can be linked to the failure of the French to accept the concept of representative bureaucracy. By ensuring equal access to educational opportunities, these authors conclude: France could minimize such cultural conflict.

Milton J. Easman (1999) also attests to the need for representative bureaucracy to ease tension between multicultural groups. In his analysis of conflict management in pluralistic societies such as India and South Africa, Easman states that representative bureaucracy serves to legitimize government in the eyes of these countries' diverse populations. Inclusiveness, he says, demonstrates to members of all ethnic communities that they can and actually participate in the administration of public affairs (p. 353). While not without problems, this inclusiveness alleviates many of the conflicts found in other pluralistic societies.

Easman (1999) also points out that achieving a representative bureaucracy is not an easy task in a society that shows a significant deference to merit-based staffing in government. This difficulty can be overcome, he suggests, by a system in which educational opportunities produce a multiethnic pool of qualified and competitive applicants sufficient to realize a representative bureaucracy (p. 365). Such is the process in the United States.

Achieving a representative bureaucracy in the USA has involved sometimes contentious confrontations over the issue of educational access. In this regard, litigation over access to elite universities, especially law schools, has been pronounced because it is recognized that only through such access can one be assured of leadership positions in the professional sphere. Much as in the British system, the most highly educated individuals secure the most prestigious appointments in public service. However, the USA has no caste system that precludes certain persons based on their socioeconomic status or cultural background. Indeed, as will be discussed in the next section, one's social and cultural background is a plus in efforts to ensure cultural diversity in American society.

2 Confrontations Over Educational Access

As already noted, the pluralistic population of the United States has led to a demand for cultural competency and representative bureaucracy. In large measure, the end result of cultural competency and representative bureaucracy is determined by educational access.

With well over 308 million people in the USA from various cultural and social groups (US Census 2010), government seeks to make certain that all US citizens have equal access to educational opportunities so that the ideal of representative bureaucracy can be realized. Key court decisions involving attempts to ensure diversified student populations in schools of higher learning underscore the rancor that has occurred over this issue.

Notably, those decisions that have defined the battle over access to educational opportunities have come from confrontations over entry of minorities into elite institutions of higher learning. The top-tier institutions that serve as "*flagship*" institutions of various states have been sources of legal confrontations. This is not surprising as it is from flagship institutions that the leaders of the country are forged. Some examples are enumerated below:

1. *Regents of the University System of California v. Bakke* (1978). This split (5–4) Supreme Court decision determined that it was unconstitutional for the University of California's medical school to reserve places for minority applicants. At the same time, it rejected the idea that race or one's ethnicity could not be considered by the institution in the interest of maintaining a diverse student body (Long 2007).
2. *Hopwood v. the University of Texas* (1996). This US Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision held that it was unconstitutional to allow any form of preferential treatment for ethnic minorities at the University of Texas's law school.
3. *Johnson v. Board of Regents of the University of Georgia* (2001). This US Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals decision maintained that it was unconstitutional for the University of Georgia to give preferential treatment for freshman admission to ethnic minorities.
4. Two of the more salient cases in this regard reached the Supreme Court for a decision. Both involved the University of Michigan, a top-tier university in the USA. The decisions rendered illustrate the debate over providing equal educational access to diverse cultural groups. Gratz et al. v. Bollinger et al. and Grutter v Bollinger et al. were the two cases. In both lawsuits the University of Michigan was sued by majority-group members because of the University's efforts to provide for a more diverse student body by including minorities.

In *Gratz et al. v. Bollinger et al.* (2003), the University of Michigan's admission policy for its College of Literature, Science, and the Arts (LSA) was challenged. The University used a number of factors in making admission decisions, including high school grades, standardized test scores, curriculum strength, geography, alumni relationships, leadership, and race. The intent of the policy was to ensure a student

body that included underrepresented groups such as African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans. The policy adopted by the LSA admitted virtually every qualified applicant from these groups. Two qualified majority-group applicants (White) who were denied admission filed lawsuits that claimed a violation of their constitutional rights under the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution.

The policy developed by the University of Michigan gave each member of its preferred racial or ethnic minority group 20 of the 100 points needed to guarantee admission. The University of Michigan contended that its admission policy for minority groups might in some instances constitute a compelling state interest. The Supreme Court ruled that, while there might be such an interest, but the policy was "not narrowly tailored to achieve educational diversity" (Gratz, p. 24).

In explaining its reasoning, the Court articulated that, in order to achieve educational diversity but not impinge on the protected rights of majority-group members, the University should have considered each minority member's record. That is, instead of automatically granting each underrepresented applicant 20 points, the University should have assessed all of the qualities that each minority member possessed and thereafter evaluated each individual's ability to contribute to the unique demographics of the University. Without this kind of analysis, the policy was considered overly broad and unconstitutional.

During the same year, *Grutter v. Bollinger et al.* (2003) was filed by a majority-group applicant seeking admission to the University of Michigan's law school. This applicant alleged a violation of her rights under the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution in that she was not admitted while minority-group applicants were pursuant to the law school's diversity policy. A hallmark of the policy was its focus on academic ability and its assessment of applicants' talents, experiences, and potential to "contribute to the learning of those around them" (p. 325). The policy aspired to "achieve that diversity which has the potential to enrich everyone's education and thus make a law school class stronger than the sum of its parts" (p. 315).

The admission policy of the law school also sought students with substantial promise who would be successful in the practice of law and who would contribute in diverse ways to the well-being of others. Behind this criterion is the idea that graduating students will live in a global marketplace where exposure to diverse people, cultures, ideas, and viewpoints will occur. Thus, the diversity present in the law school environment gives University of Michigan students the kinds of exposure needed to thrive in the workplace.

Legal dicta used to support the decision in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) came from another majority-group member, Allan Bakke, denied admission to the University of California at Davis's medical school. In referencing *Regents of the University System of California v. Bakke* (1978), the Supreme Court cited former Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr. who

> emphasized that "the nation's future depends upon leaders trained through wide exposure to the ideas and mores of students as diverse as this Nation." However, he also emphasized that "[i]t is not an interest in simple ethnic diversity, in which a specified percentage of the student body is in effect guaranteed to be members of selected ethnic groups," that

can justify using race. Rather, "[t]he diversity that furthers a compelling state interest encompasses a far broader array of qualifications and characteristics of which racial or ethnic origin is but a single though important element" (p. 307).

The opinion of Justice Powell has been pivotal to the Supreme Court's analysis of race-conscious admission policies in public and private universities across the United States. In *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003), the Court "endorsed Justice Powell's view that student body diversity is a compelling state interest in the context of university admissions" (p. 308). Accordingly, it ruled that the University of Michigan law school's admission policy did not violate the Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution and thus deferred to the law school's judgment that diversity is essential to its education mission.

The purpose of this discussion is to underscore the struggle to achieve workforce diversity in the educational arena. To promote cultural competency and representative bureaucracy, US universities must admit competent students from all sectors of its culturally diverse society. As noted above, this has not been easily achieved.

3 Summary

Given its foundational Constitution that promises equitable treatment, the United States of America is obligated, on a continuing basis, to address the issue of cultural diversity in order to ensure that all its citizens are allowed an equal opportunity for life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Educational access is the key to this promise.

The demand for cultural diversity in the USA is readily evident in public enterprises such as social services, healthcare, and the military. Cultural competency is one way in which this demand is implemented. The concept was criticized initially, but it is now universally accepted that service delivery to the public demands consideration of the diversity of those being served.

The healthcare field has made significant attempts to address the need for a culturally competent workforce. Nursing programs have developed curricula designed to meet this need. The same is true of the social work arena. Moreover, accreditation bodies such as NASPAA have developed standards by which member schools must respond to cultural diversity. In its *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, NASPAA regularly publishes articles that call for the development of curriculum designed to address the demand for cultural competency in public service delivery.

The US military also has examined its need for a culturally competent workforce to achieve mission objectives. A study by the House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services has identified numerous systemic barriers to the military's achieving foreign language skills and cultural competency. The nation's schools, it points out, have not placed a priority on teaching foreign languages and, in fact, lack the infrastructure to support the widespread teaching of foreign languages. The study makes several recommendations for correcting this problem.

Representative bureaucracy is an essential dimension of American government. To achieve this valued end requires trained leadership from diverse cultural and social groups in the USA. It therefore is imperative that equal educational opportunities be made available to all cultural and social groups in the USA.

The current composition of the US Supreme Court reflects the growing value placed on cultural and social diversity in governmental institutions. Although fraught with political overtones, the appointment of culturally diverse judges to the Court redresses historical imbalances in representation. This diversity exists due to the availability of access to institutions of higher learning.

Court decisions on educational access strive to ensure the diversity needed in a culturally competent workforce. Key decisions have struggled with the requirements of the Fourteenth Amendment to the US Constitution concerning equal protection under the law as balanced against the need to guarantee equal access to educational opportunities for all. Decisions such as *Regents of the University System of California v. Bakke* (1978) and *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) underscore the value placed on ensuring diversity in the classroom, which produces the leadership necessary for representative bureaucracy and cultural competency.

4   Future Research

Future research in the areas discussed in this chapter should perhaps focus on student perceptions by gender and ethnicity of the strategies used by educational institutions to achieving their objectives of cultural diversity. Such perceptions are expected to vary, but research could ascertain the implications of that variation. Success in educational settings and in the workplace may be affected by those implications.

An analysis by gender and ethnicity of the graduation rates and long-term contributions of students to their professions as well as to their respective cultural/social groups should also be undertaken. This research could measure the participation rates of culturally diverse groups in institutions of higher learning and perhaps suggest new strategies for implementing diversity as an asset in promoting the successful transition to work.

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Chapter 3
Perceptions of the Demand for Cultural Diversity in the Omani Workplace and Its Availability Among Secondary School Students

Aisha Salim Al-Harthi and Hamood Khalfan Al-Harthi

1 Cultural Diversity in the Workplace

Hofstede (2001) explains that the word "culture" can be applied to any human collectivity or category: an organization, a profession, an age group, an entire gender, or a family. Cultural diversity becomes visible when groups are formed from these categories within the same social system. In addition to these categories, Seymen (2006) expands these categories, based on different resources, to include a wider distribution of cultural types. She adds race, geographical region, ethnicity, age, educational background, physical and cognitive capabilities, language, lifestyles, beliefs, and economic category. According to Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), cultural differences can be classified into variations in relation to five orientations toward innate human nature, human-nature relationship, time, activity, and relationships among people.

Although many perceive cultural diversity as a problem, it could be viewed as a chance for challenge and innovation in both education and work settings (Dooly 2007). These contexts do not always appreciate or acknowledge cultural diversity. To positively interact with cultural differences, such sensitivity to diversity is the key to successful intercultural communication (Loosemore and Muslmani 1999). Within organizations, cultural diversity is perceived and managed in different ways. Seymen (2006) summarizes four views of managing it in organizations. It is seen as (1) a tool for competitive superiority of the organization and thus should be supported; (2) a source for both advantages and disadvantages for the organization and thus should be evaluated for both sides; (3) a part of a homogeneous organizational culture, and thus, it should be blended in a universal organizational culture;

A.S. Al-Harthi (✉) • H.K. Al-Harthi
College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Muscat, OMAN
e-mail: asa@squ.edu.om; hamood99@hotmail.com

and (4) a strategy or program in human resources to manage cultural diversity in the organization. Similar to Seymen (2006), Ely and Thomas (2001) indentified three perspectives on the influence of cultural diversity in the workplace. The first perspective is the integration-and-learning perspective, which distinguishes cultural diversity as a good resource for informing practices by rethinking and changing business strategies. The second perspective is the access-and-legitimacy perspective, which uses diversity to reach culturally diverse markets and gain legitimacy with them. The third perspective is the discrimination-and-fairness perspective, which observes equity and morality in the organization practices with diverse cultural groups. All of these perspectives could be classified under the second view in Seymen (2006) as they all represent different ways of viewing the effect of cultural diversity in the workplace.

2 Role of Education in Shaping Cultural Diversity Orientations and Skills

Education plays an influential role in shaping individual responses to cultural diversity in the workplace. In fact, as summarized from previous research by Shaw (2005), there is a positive correlation between student diversity experiences and their learning outcomes. Shaw presents many research studies that provide evidence that more diversity interaction leads to more engagement in active learning and critical thinking processes. She projects from these studies that diversity leads to a positive interaction with other ethnicities and races in the classroom, and this is later transferred. Choy et al. (2007) explain that "the various forms of educational exposure have consequential effects upon the students such that their value systems are molded to conform to the expectations of the society and institutions" (p. 138). They found from their study that lower-ranked employees showed more values of benevolence, conformity, security, and extrinsic orientation. By contrast, higher-ranked employees are more oriented toward self-direction, personal growth, and intrinsic orientation. This, the researchers explain, is the result of school socializations into different functional future roles and expectations. School socialization is determined by student ability as indicated by academic achievement level.

It is important, therefore, that programs aiming to increase awareness of cultural diversity are not superficial, but deeply criticize school, organization, and community assumptions and practices. From their meta-analyses of research studies on cultural diversity, Curtis and Dreachslin (2008) advocate the need for diversity training to be conducted in an environment that discusses power relations to contextualize training. They also note from their analyses that while diversity programs can lead to changes in awareness and attitude, they initially reduce trainees' comfort about diversity and confidence about how to deal with it. This highlights the importance of developing trainee self-management skills.

3   Cultural Diversity in Oman

In the Omani context, national culture is characterized by Arabic as the main language, dominance of Islamic values and ethics, sharp gender segregation, and Omani nationals of Arab descendent as the major ethnicity. According to the Omani census of 2010, the population of Oman is 2.3 millions. Omani nationals represent 70% of the population. Women represent 49.3% of the Omani nationals (Ministry of National Economy 2010). Islam is the formal religion of the country with more than 95% of Omani Muslims distributed into different sects: Ibadhi, Sunni, and Shiite.

In the Omani workplace, cultural types do not represent this national culture in many ways. The culture dominant in the workplace, particularly in the private sector, is characterized by English as the main language, dominance of Western and Indian values and ethics, relative gender desegregation, and Indians as the major ethnicity. Religions among expatriates include Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and other religions and faith. Islam and Hindu are the most common because the majority of expatriates come from the Indian subcontinent. Most Omanis are Arabs, but a large segment of the Omani population has its origins in Africa or Persia. This means what is the majority in Omani society and thus in the school system (i.e., in the national culture) becomes a minority in the workplace (i.e., in the workplace culture). Both cultures frame student transition from school-to-work. Potentially, this could lead to variations in the perception of the demand for cultural diversity in Oman between students and employers and among employers (private versus public).

4   Demand for Cultural Diversity in the Omani Workplace

Different demographic, social, political, and economic factors contribute to the demand for cultural diversity in the Omani workplace. The Omani economy is based mainly on the oil industry. The need to run this industry, and other types of economic activities and services, has made the country open its door to the international community. Those doors were closed during most of the twentieth century, in fact, until the beginning of the 1970s. This long closed period is associated with lack of formal education, which limited the number of trained and educated Omanis at the beginning of the 1970s. It was therefore necessary to depend on expatriates. In the early 1970s, moreover, the Omani population was less than one million, and this was another reason to encourage immigrant workers to come to work in the country. As a result, there was a rapid change in the demographic structure in Oman. In the mid-1970s, Omani nationals were more than 90% of the population. By the year 1985, the percentage of expatriates rose to 22% of the population, then to 24% in the year 2003, and to 37% in 2009 (Ministry of National Economy 2010).

This increase in the percentage of the expatriates in the overall population, and hence in the workplace, has been paralleled with the increase of the number of

Omani nationals who join the workplace. In the 2010 census, Omani nationals constitute 86% employees working for the governmental sector and 16.5% of employees of in the private sector rising from 75% in the governmental sector and 10% in the private sector in the year 2000 (Ministry of National Economy 2010, 2011). Similarly, female nationals participation in the workplace has increased from 29 in the governmental sector in the year 2000 to 42% of the total number of national employees working in the governmental sector in 2010 (Ministry of National Economy 2010). This increase in the percentage of Omani nationals in the workplace is a direct result of the Omanization policies implemented by the Omani government to increase the number of nationals in the workplace. It is also a result of the increase in the percentage of educated Omani nationals. The percentage of Omani nationals who had high school certificates and further education degrees rose from 11 in 1993 to 30% in 2003 (Ministry of National Economy 2010).

While the impact of this cultural diversity in terms of nationality is less seen among school students because the majority of nonnationals are of working age, the impact is obvious in the workplace where expatriates constitute 80% of the workforce in the country. However, this percentage of expatriates differs between the private and the public sectors. In the year 2009, the total number of registered employees in the public (governmental) sector was 160,000 employees; of which, expatriates represent only 11% decreasing from 32% in the year 1996. In the private sector, in the year 2009, there were 1,032,000 registered employees, 85% of whom were expatriates (Ministry of National Economy 2010). Omanis are still considered new comers in the private sector, especially in professional positions. The dominance of English as the language of communication and the dominance of nonlocal cultures, moreover, may create some challenges to locals when adapting to the work environment in the private sector.

Moreover, exporting oil provides other factors that encourage the demand for cultural diversity in workplaces in the country. Oil and natural gas products amounted to 65% of the total merchandise exports of Oman in the year 2010. To prepare for the risk of the end of oil reserves in the country, the government now applies a policy to find other resources of income. Among them is encouraging foreign investment in the country. Enhanced with the expansion of global economy, membership in the World Trade Organization, and an agreement of free trade with the United States and other countries, direct foreign investment has grown rapidly in the country. According to Global Arab Network (2011), in 2008, direct foreign investment in Oman increased an additional 24% of its status in 2007. In addition, encouraging tourism industry to make Oman an international tourist destination is a strategic plan for the country. All of these factors lead to more demand for cultural diversity in the workplace.

Moreover, the increase of women's participation in the Omani workforce is another important factor for the demand of cultural diversity in the workplace. Traditionally, Omani women were considered active participants in the local economy. However, women's participation was concentrated on farming and home economic activities. Until the 1990s, female representation in the labor market workforce was

less than 10% with a focus on teaching and the health services occupations. With time, there was a dramatic increase of female participation in education, as girls currently represent 49% of the student population in Omani schools, 46% of higher education intake, and 58% of higher education graduates. Women's participation in the workplace is a phenomenon almost unique to Oman. National statistics for 2010 report that Omani women amount to 42% of Omani workers in the public sector, increasing from only 23% in 1996. However, female participation in the private sector has shown less rapid growth. Women only total 12.5% of the Omani national workforce in the private sector (Ministry of National Economy 2010). More women are expected to join the private sector in the coming years due to the increase of women graduates from higher education and an associated decrease in employment in the public sector.

5 Theoretical Framework

To frame the current research study, the researchers propose the following theoretical framework, as depicted in Fig. 3.1, to capture the different components of the study and their relationships to each other. It is not enough to have only awareness of cultural diversity, especially as one communicates with other cultures. This awareness needs to be translated into intercultural interaction when people and groups from different cultures or subgroups interact with each other (Jandt 2004). With more interaction with international students in a Korean university, Jon (2009) found that local students' intercultural competency increased. The dimensions of attributes, awareness, attitudes, and skills are referred to as intercultural competency by Fantini (2009). The present researchers, therefore, suggest that responses to
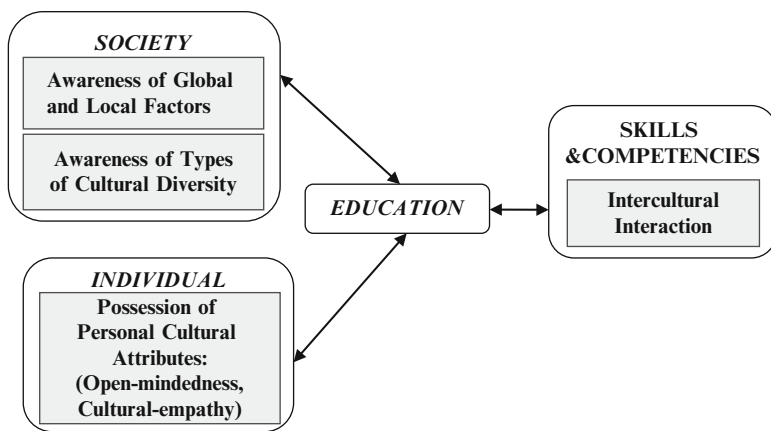
Fig. 3.1 Components framing individual responses to cultural diversity: suggested model in this study

cultural diversity in the workplace are the result of (1) *factors* driving cultural diversity, whether they are global factors like globalization or local factors like the number of educated people in the country; (2) *types* of cultural diversity in society, whether they are general like gender or more specific like local tribal affiliation; and (3) personal cultural *attributes* like being empathetic and open-minded. It is the researchers' belief that education plays an important role in framing individual responses to cultural diversity through increasing competencies such as intercultural interaction to deal with cultural diversity. Education is expected to mediate the effect of social and individual factors on the development of the skills and competencies required for effective cultural diversity interaction. This exploratory study will not be testing this model, but uses it to frame its position on the way the demand for cultural diversity is constructed. This study aims to begin to provide an insight about the Omani context hoping to explain the views of students who are more sensitive to the national view of cultural diversity and employees who are more sensitive to the workplace view of cultural diversity.

6 Importance of the Study

This is an exploratory study of the demand for cultural diversity in Oman guided by the previous framework. There is a lack of research in this area in Omani research studies. The study aims to provide different perspectives on the demand for cultural diversity. Among many benefits, cultural diversity in the workplace leads to successful interaction with customers and employees from different cultural backgrounds (Bush and Ingram 2001) and positive employee perception of organization performance (Allen et al. 2008). Having cultural competence in their transition from school to work is an asset that will facilitate this transition for students and will probably lead to success in the workplace.

7 Research Questions

There are multiple dimensions to be investigated in the demand for cultural diversity. The following aspects of the demand are explored: (1) factors driving the demand for cultural diversity, (2) awareness of the types of cultural diversity demanded as they relate to the Omani society and workplace requirements, (3) demanded attributes of cultural diversity and their presence in secondary school students, and (4) demanded cultural diversity skills and their presence in secondary school students. More specifically, the following questions are asked:

1. How does the Omani labor market perceive the demand for cultural diversity in the workplace (factors, awareness, attributes, skills)?

2. How do school students in Oman perceive the demand for cultural diversity in the workplace (factors and awareness) and their possession of cultural attributes and skills?
3. What are the variations between the workplace perspectives of the demand for diversity (factors, awareness, attributes, skills) and students' perceptions of the demand for cultural diversity in the workplace (factors and awareness) and their possession of cultural attributes and skills?

8   Study Instrument

The study used a questionnaire consisting of some demographic variables and 75 items covering the four aspects investigated, as explained below. In the questionnaire, both employers and students were asked to rate the factors driving the demand for cultural diversity and the awareness of the demanded types of cultural diversity. For the attributes and skills, employers were asked to rate the demand for given attributes and skills from their employees to deal with cultural diversity in the Omani workplace, while students were asked to rate the extent at which they possess these attributes and skills. The questionnaire is written in both Arabic and English for wider distribution, especially within the private sector, where many do not speak Arabic.

8.1   Awareness of Local and Global Factors

The first section investigated factors driving the current demand for cultural diversity. These factors were selected based on the context of the demand for cultural diversity in the Omani workplace as explained previously in this study.

8.2   Awareness of Cultural Types

The second section asked participants about their awareness of demanded types of cultural diversity in the Omani workplace from students' and employees' perspectives. The researchers chose to focus on certain types of cultural diversity that fit the Omani context. As a traditional tribal Muslim community, gender, tribe, place of origin, region of origin, and religious beliefs including Islamic religious sects are the most visible types that are visible in everyday life in the Omani community. As indicated earlier, these types of cultural diversity reflect the traditional national culture. In addition, with nonnationals who make the majority in the workplace, other types needed to be included, so they reflect the workplace culture. These are nationalities, ethnicities, languages, and educational attainment levels, reflecting the expected influential cultural diversity types in the Omani workplace.

8.3 Attributes

Cultural empathy and open-mindedness serve as indicators of the attributes demanded in individuals to interact with cultural diversity in the Omani workplace. These were measured through a culturally modified version of the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2000) after gaining the authors' approval. The Multicultural Personality Questionnaire includes seven aspects which Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven (2000) believe are related to the success of international assignees. These are cultural empathy, open-mindedness, emotional stability, orientation to action, adventurousness, flexibility, and extraversion. The MPQ is expected to indicate multicultural effectiveness, which is defined as "success in the field of professional effectiveness, personal adjustment, and intercultural interaction" (ibid p. 293).

The cultural empathy scale in the MPQ consists of 18 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale. It measures "the ability to empathize with the feelings, thoughts and behaviors of individuals from another culture" (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2000 p. 296). All 18 items were translated, with cultural adjustment, for use in this study. In a recent study, the reliability of this scale ranged from 0.88 to 0.90 (Herfst et al. 2008). In the current study, the scale reliability measured through Cronbach's alpha is 0.752, and it could improve to 0.803 if the item "Tends to wait and see" is deleted. This is a reverse coded item. A number of reasons are possible for the effect of this item on the scale. It is possible that this item did not translate well from English to Arabic. Another reason could be that "not tending to wait and see" is not necessarily part of what makes cultural empathy in the Omani culture. The current study preferred to keep the original scale of the MPQ; therefore, it kept all 18 items. It is recommended that future studies using this scale in Arabic either rephrase this item positively or consider deleting it from the scale.

Open-mindedness to cultural diversity is measured through the MPQ scale for open-mindedness, which measures the ability to have "an open and un-prejudiced attitude towards different groups and towards different cultural norms and values" (Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2000, p. 296). The reliability of this scale ranged from 0.80 to 0.88 (Herfst et al. 2008). In this study, the scale reliability measured through Cronbach's alpha is 0.872.

8.4 Skills/Competencies

The Intercultural Competence Scale (ICS) is used to measure students' and employees' perception of the competency or skill to (1) deal with psychological stress, (2) establish interpersonal relationship, and (3) effectively communicate with others (Hammer et al. 1978; Van der Zee and Van Oudenhoven 2000). The scale for the first skill consists of six items which are ability to deal with frustration, interpersonal

Table 3.1 Cronbach's α for all study scales

Dimension	Scales	Items in scale	Cronbach's α
Cultural attributes	Cultural empathy	18	0.752
	Open-mindedness	18	0.872
Cultural skills	Ability to deal with psychological stress	6	0.801
	Ability to establish interpersonal relationship	6	0.740
	Ability to effectively communicate with others	5	0.728

Table 3.2 Demographic characteristics of the sample

	Students	Employers	Total
Male	130 (27%)	100 (73.0%)	230 (60.2%)
Female	115 (73%)	37 (27%)	152 (39.8%)
Total	245 (64.1%)	137 (35.9%)	382 (100%)

conflict, stress, social alienation, anxiety, and pressure to conform. Similarly, the scale for the second skill consists of six items measuring the ability to develop satisfying interpersonal relationships with others, maintain satisfying interpersonal relationships with others, accurately understand the feelings of another person, work well with other people, empathize with another person, and deal with different social customs. The scale for the last skill consists of five items measuring the ability to enter into meaningful dialogue with other people, initiate interaction with a stranger, deal with communication misunderstanding with others, deal with different social systems, and deal with different communication styles. All of these items are adopted from the original study of Hammer et al. (1978). Reliabilities for the three dimensions are above a coefficient alpha of 0.70 (Hammer et al. 1978; Bush and Ingram 2001). In the current study, reliability measured through Cronbach's alpha is 0.801 for the ability to deal with stress, 0.740 for the ability to establish interpersonal relationship, and 0.728 for ability to communicate with others. Table 3.1 summarizes the reliability data.

9   Study Samples

The study used a convenient sampling from two categories: (1) secondary school students (students in the last year, year 12, of public education) and (2) public and private sectors' employees in supervisory roles. They will be referred as "employers" because they represent the workplace view of the demand for cultural diversity. As the following table presents, students make 64% while employers make 36%. There are more males, 60%, than females, 40% (Table 3.2).

10 Data Analysis

Factors driving cultural diversity in the workplace are ranked based on the mean and standard deviations showing the most important factors by the overall sample and student and employer samples separately as shown in Table 3.3.

The results in Table 3.3 show that all but one, the need to hire more foreign workers, of the factors driving the demand for cultural diversity in the Omani workplace had a mean of 3 (out of 5) or above. The highest first three factors are the use of technology in the workplace, increased presence of highly educated Omani workers in the workplace, diversity of technology use among workers, and diversity of workers sociocultural background. The lowest means are for factors related to

Table 3.3 Independent samples *t*-test results for factors driving cultural diversity with ranks and means

Factor	Means for both groups	Rank by both groups	Means for employers	Means for students	*t*	df
1. Increased presence of Omani women in the workplace	4.03 (0.924)	6	4.06 (0.802)	4.02 (0.987)	−0.452	331.454
2. Increased presence of highly educated Omani workers in the workplace	4.25 (0.858)	2	4.47 (0.676)	4.13 (0.925)	−4.025**	353.708
3. Dominance of English as the workplace language	3.68 (1.149)	9	3.74 (1.008)	3.65 (1.221)	−0.822	327.868
4. Omanization policies	3.89 (0.976)	8	4.04 (0.914)	3.81 (1.000)	−2.335*	303.126
5. Diversity of workers sociocultural background	4.20 (0.805)	4	4.18 (0.759)	4.21 (0.831)	0.306	303.214
6. Increased foreign business and investment in Oman	3.91 (1.024)	7	4.18 (0.813)	3.76 (1.099)	−4.213**	351.551
7. Need to hire more foreign workers	2.59 (1.191)	11	2.84 (1.073)	2.45 (1.233)	−3.198*	315.212
8. Diversity of the educational attainment levels among workers	4.18 (0.796)	5	4.23 (0.664)	4.16 (0.861)	−0.849	342.877
9. Diversity of technology use among workers	4.25 (0.822)	3	4.31 (0.692)	4.22 (0.886)	−1.103	340.253
10. Use of technology in the workplace	4.37 (0.789)	1	4.47 (0.676)	4.31 (0.841)	−2.083*	333.761
11. Dominance of Western work ethics	3.00 (1.169)	10	2.98 (1.172)	3.02 (1.170)	0.306	281.041

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means. Degrees of freedom are based on unequal variances assumed

hiring more foreign workers, dominance of Western work ethics, dominance of English as the communication language, and Omanization policies. This highlights recognition for the role of technology in the workplace in recent years. This role is seen as a new and powerful trend driving the needed types of human resources in the workplace. In addition, the structure of workplaces in Oman is changing to a more service economy that needs specialized educated workers who are familiar with the use of technology. Use of information and communication technology was found to mitigate the negative impact on intercultural communication because it facilitates communication and reduces misunderstanding (Shachaf 2008). As shown previously, with more higher education opportunities, the number of highly educated Omani workers is increasing in the workplace. The factors considered by the sample as being less important may be attributed to the fact that these factors have existed and dominated the Omani workplace for several years, so they are taken for granted as already available factors for the demand of cultural diversity compared with the impact of more current factors associated with technology and changing educational levels of Omanis.

When comparing the samples' responses using *t*-tests, there are statistically significant differences in five factors presented in Table 3.3. These factors are (1) increased presence of highly educated Omani workers, (2) Omanization polices, (3) increased foreign business and investment in Oman, (4) need to hire more foreign workers, and (5) use of technology in the workplace. In all five factors, differences are in favor of the employers' sample, which may be the result of maturity and experience in the workplace.

As shown in Table 3.4, all types of cultural diversity investigated in the questionnaire had a mean of 3.23 or above. The *cultural-specific (traditional)* national types of cultural diversity in the Omani society such as ethnicity, tribe, and Islamic sects are ranked as less important when compared to the *more general* types such as gender, education attainment levels, and languages as presented in the ranks in Table 3.4. This orientation may reflect the samples' understanding of the workplace environment as "*culturally neutral*" or "*culturally general*." It suggests that workplaces are keen to hire human resources able to perform the work well regardless of ethnicity, religion, or nationality.

Gender, educational attainment levels, and languages are the highest ranked types. As a general cultural type, it reflects the nature of the workplace in Oman, which equally seeks both male and female employees and provides equal work rights and benefits. This is in line with Curtis and Dreachslin's (2008) meta-analysis of research studies. They found that gender diversity is less problematically reported in comparison with racial diversity. While racial diversity impacts team processes negatively, gender diversity does not affect team processes. This supports the generality of gender as a cultural type. Understanding the workplace as "*culturally neutral*" or "*cultural general*" in ranking the types of cultural diversity corresponds with the samples ranking of the factors that drive the demand for cultural diversity in the Omani workplace, mentioned above, as technology and education attainment are the highest factors. Educational attainment levels and languages are the second and third demanded types for cultural diversity as perceived by the study samples.

Table 3.4 Independent samples *t*-test results for types of cultural diversity with ranks and means

Type	Means for both groups	Rank by both groups	Means for employers	Means for students	*t*	df
1. Gender	4.35	1	4.26	4.40	1.609	323.151
	(0.882)		(0.786)	(0.934)		
2. Religious beliefs	3.81	5	3.39	4.04	5.431**	290.524
	(1.161)		(1.094)	(1.136)		
3. Islamic religious sects	3.47	9	3.05	3.71	5.129**	302.202
	(1.264)		(1.159)	(1.262)		
4. Nationalities	3.73	6	3.57	3.82	2.261*	302.340
	(1.055)		(0.991)	(1.080)		
5. Ethnicities	3.23	11	3.08	3.31	1.827	293.990
	(1.201)		(1.157)	(1.219)		
6. Education attainment levels	4.29	2	4.24	4.32	0.922	339.220
	(0.843)		(0.713)	(0.908)		
7. Socioeconomic status	3.95	4	3.97	3.94	−0.298	327.656
	(1.060)		(0.931)	(1.127)		
8. Languages	4.25	3	4.29	4.22	−0.847	375.770
	(0.897)		(0.632)	(1.016)		
9. Tribes	3.40	10	3.14	3.54	2.782*	290.537
	(1.374)		(1.329)	(1.380)		
10. Place of origin	3.57	8	3.49	3.62	0.998	311.796
	(1.238)		(1.138)	(1.290)		
11. Region of origin	3.64	7	3.51	3.72	1.560	295.521
	(1.269)		(1.219)	(1.292)		

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means. Degrees of freedom are based on unequal variances assumed

When comparing the sample responses using *t*-tests on the types of cultural diversity demanded in the Omani workplace, there are statistically significant differences in four types as Table 3.4 indicates. These differences are in religious beliefs, Islamic sects, nationality, and tribe. All of the differences are in favor of students meaning that students ranked these types of cultural diversity as more demanded in the workplace than employers. This emphasizes the above result of employers understanding workplace environment as more "*culturally neutral*" or "*cultural general*" spaces, which need the qualified employee regardless his/her religion, nationality, or tribe. Students are more ethnocentric in their view of cultural diversity.

11 Attributes and Skills

Cultural empathy and open-mindedness are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. From Table 3.5, it is clear that the sample rated cultural attributes and skills above the standard mean of 2.5. This suggests that these attributes are highly demanded by

Table 3.5 Independent samples *t*-test results for attributes and skills with group means

Variable	Means for both groups	Means for employers	Means for students	*t*	df
1. Cultural empathy	3.890	3.854	3.908	1.270	320.024
	(0.417)	(0.376)	(0.440)		
2. Open- mindedness	4.00	4.110	3.939	−3.124*	322.378
	(0.541)	(0.478)	(0.565)		
3. Ability to deal with	4.752	5.229	4.486	−8.048**	344.611
psychological stress	(0.997)	(0.773)	(1.010)		
4. Ability to establish	5.229	5.342	5.166	−2.367*	321.394
interpersonal	(0.733)	(0.652)	(0.769)		
relationship					
5. Ability to effectively	4.858	5.159	4.689	−5.378**	340.588
communicate with	(0.906)	(0.736)	(0.947)		
others					

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001. Standard deviations appear in parentheses below means. Degrees of freedom are based on unequal variances assumed

the workplace, and at the same time, students also rate their possession of these attributes highly. Similarly for cultural diversity abilities/skills, which are rated on a 6-point scale, means for both employers and students are above 3.0 indicating that employers ranked the importance of these skills highly and students ranked the availability of these abilities highly as well.

To follow up the previous results, five independent samples *t*-tests were calculated to investigate the differences between how students rate the extent to which they possess cultural attributes and abilities/competencies to effectively deal with people from cultures different from their own and how employers rate the importance of these attributes and abilities in their staff to effectively deal with people from different cultures in the Omani workplace. Because the dependent variables did not meet the *t*-test assumption of equality of variance in the two groups, the statistics here are reported on the assumption that equal variances are not assumed. This explains the reduction in the degrees of freedom for the tests.

As shown in Table 3.5, comparison of the mean score for each of the significant dependent variables suggests that employers have significantly higher scores than students on all attributes and skills, except for cultural empathy. The independent samples *t*-test proves that there is no significant difference in cultural empathy between students (mean = 3.908, sd = 0.440) and employers (mean = 3.854, sd = 0.376), *t* (320.024) = 1.270, and *p* = 0.225. This means that students rate their cultural empathy attribute at the same or similar level as the workplace demands. On the other hand, there is a significant difference in the open-mindedness attribute between students (mean = 3.939, sd = 0.565) and employers (mean = 4.110, sd = 0.478), *t* (322.378) = −3.124, and *p* = 0.002. This result indicates a discrepancy between the demand for open-mindedness attributes and its availability in students as students (mean = 3.939, sd = 0.565) rate their possession

of this attribute as being lower than employers (mean $= 4.110$, sd $= 0.478$) demand. As shown in the table, on all three abilities, students ranked their possession of these abilities as being *significantly* lower than employers demand.

12   Discussion and Conclusion

Respondents in this study perceive there is a high demand for cultural diversity in the Omani workplace. This demand is driven in the Omani workplace by both global and general factors such as technology and by local and specific factors such as the presence of highly educated Omani workers in the workplace. Figure 3.2 shows the variation between the students' and employers' perspectives of this demand. Overall, employers rated these factors higher than the students did.

As Fig. 3.3 demonstrates, when comparing the types of cultural diversity demanded by the workplace, employers conceived the Omani workplace as a *culturally neutral* environment that is looking for the qualified employee regardless of his/her cultural-specific background. Compared with students, they rated all types of diversity as being less demanded. This is the environment employers *said* they *perceived* as the demand for cultural diversity, but we question if such an environment exists in reality. Are current employees in the Omani workplace aware of the demand for cultural diversity, and do they possess the attributes and skills to competently interact with cultural diversity? From this exploratory study, we conclude that the sample from potential employees, school students, rated the level to which they possess cultural attributes and skills significantly lower than employers' expectations.
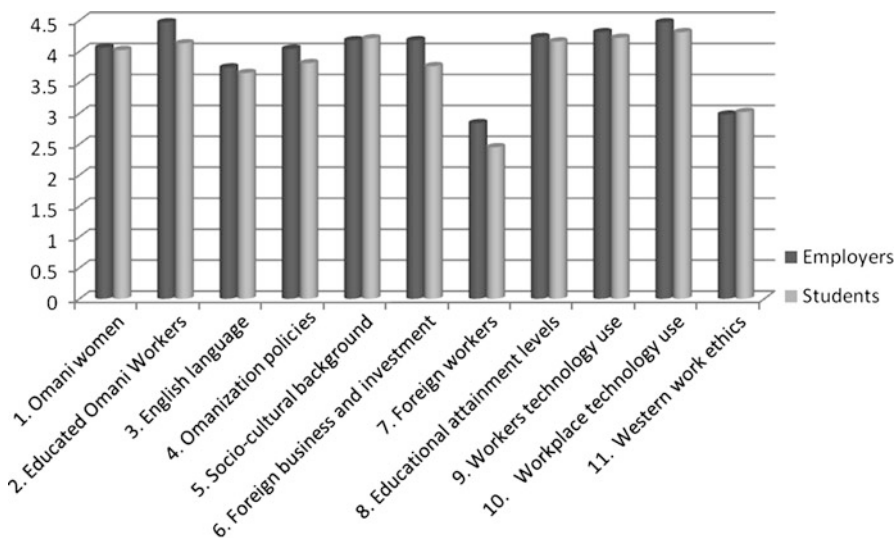
Fig. 3.2 Employers and students rating of the factors driving cultural diversity
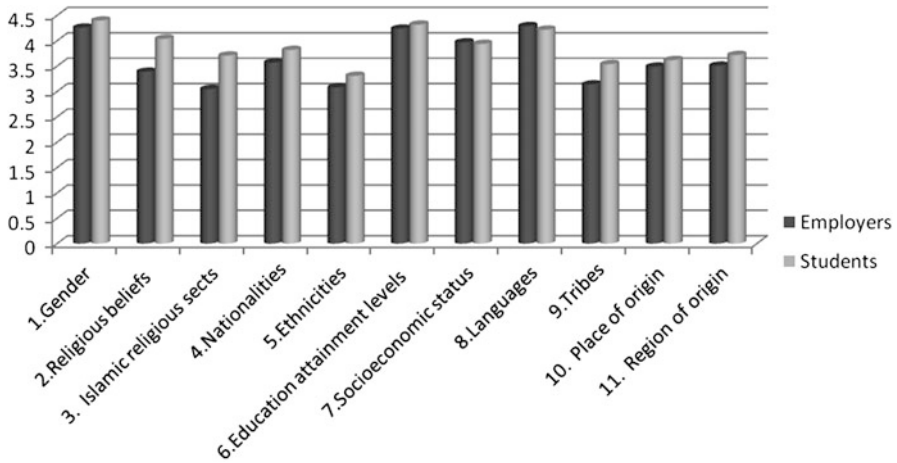
Fig. 3.3 Employers and students rating of their level of awareness of cultural diversity types

The gap between expectations and availability of cultural attributes and skills needs to be further explored. At the surface level, it appears that the Omani educational system is not preparing students well enough to meet the level of employers' expectation in terms of cultural diversity attributes and skills. This is supported by further *t*-test analyses resulting in significant differences between the workplace demand and the educational system supply in open-mindedness, ability to deal with stress, ability to establish interpersonal relationships, and ability to communicate with others. This suggests a discrepancy between the workplace demand and the educational system supply of these attributes and skills.

Students appear to be more "ethnocentric" having less acceptance of other religious beliefs, nationalities, and tribes when competing in the workplace. This needs to be viewed within the context of Omani students, who study in single-sex schools (from grades 4 to 12) in their home villages that are mostly inhibited by members of the same extended family/tribe. During their schooling, the Omani curriculum only focuses on citizenship education rather than cultural diversity. This focus is limited to promote autonomy, tolerance, and patriotism, emphasizing more cultural relativism. While this would facilitate a common ground and understanding, it is limited and ignores cultural diversity, making it a threat that blocks comfort, creativity, and innovation. This may lead to conflict, dissatisfaction, and turnover (Bush and Ingram 2001; Shorten 2010).

After general education (12 years), Omani students leave their schools and villages to either enter higher education institutions or the workplace, each of which could be located in either major cities or remote work camps in the desert. Students go to either destination with no preparation through multicultural education, which is rarely used in the Omani curriculum or teaching practice. This lack of experience and exposure to the "other" may have created ignorance and made students less culturally intelligent than employers. As Crowne (2008) concludes, "[e]xposure to various cultures allows a person to become familiar with

the products, norms, values and assumptions of that culture" (p. 393). From another perspective, this ethnocentrism by students poses a question about the general appreciation for cultural diversity in the Omani society. If we had asked questions about cultural diversity not specifically related to the work environment, would the same differences between the young and more mature segments of society have appeared?

The differences between the labor market demand and the educational system supply calls for intervention educational programs on diversity appreciation and understanding to first increase individual awareness and openness to diversity and its effect on the workplace environment (Sanner et al. 2010; Barkley et al. 2005). As summarized by Curtis and Dreachslin (2008), diversity programs can increase cultural competence and modify implicit and explicit cultural bias. These interventions are found to have a positive impact on students. For example, Probst (2009) assessed the effectiveness of a workplace diversity course and found a positive impact of the course in changing student levels of ethnocentrism and attitudes regarding cultural difference. Similarly, Herda-Hipps et al. (2001) found statistically significant increases in student comfort levels, awareness of diversity, and understanding of diversity terms between the start of a human diversity course and the completion of that course.

In conclusion, it seems that cultural diversity in the Omani workplace is perceived with "neutrality," especially from employers' perspectives. Students perceived it as less "neutral" and more "ethnocentric." We ask, does the same perception of ethnocentrism apply to the overall society, and what implications does this have on the educational system to help students be more culturally accepting and equipped with appropriate skills and abilities to deal with people from different cultures? This can be judged directly through intercultural interaction. This important link between perception and practice is beyond the scope of this study, but establishing evidence in future studies would be a more realistic indicator of cultural diversity. Accurate measurement of cultural diversity issues is challenging. Data in this study were positively skewed with high responses on the study scales. While this raises the issue of social desirability bias in using surveys, especially in collective cultures, it questions the validity of the results. The reported high demand may not reflect what in reality is desired in terms of pragmatic behaviors and deeds, but what is *ideologically desirable* reflecting what is absolute and ethically right (Hofstede 2001). Further validation studies are therefore required to support evidence presented in this research.

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Chapter 4
Cultural Diversity and the School-To-Work Transition: A Relational Perspective

William G. Feighery

1 Introduction

The concept of the *school-to-work* transition is a recent development associated with change, waiting and uncertainty and embraces many long-standing issues concerning schooling, employment and training (Ryan 2001:35; Tchibozo 2002; 2007). The *school-to-work* transition is defined as the period between the end of compulsory schooling and the attainment of *full-time*, *stable* employment (OECD 1996, 1998). The transition from education to work is a complex process that depends not only on the length and quality of the schooling received but also on a country's general labour market and economic conditions (OECD 2009:338). Thus, the *school-to-work* transition is implicated in a complex web of relations which extend far beyond the immediate context of either schooling or employment.

The process through which young people make the transition from school to work has been a focus for youth studies and the sociology of youth since the early 1960s (Goodwin and O'Connor 2007:555). The transition from school to work is among the key topics of current social research and policy interest (Kogan and Müller 2003). The school-to-work transition experiences of young people in Western industrialised societies have changed considerably over the last two decades (Lehmann 2005:109). In the European Union (hereafter EU), the expansion of educational provision as well as labour market changes have had the greatest impact on those entering the labour market for the first time. As a result, the period of transition from school to work has become more prolonged and less

W.G. Feighery
Switzerland
e-mail: william.feighery@edutf.org

predictable (Smyth 2001). Much of the research on *school-to-work* transition has focused on young people without post-secondary education and on "disadvantaged" youth (Marks 2005). According to the OECD, the length of the transition from school to work varies significantly across countries, but note that it can take up to 2 or more years before many school leavers find their first job (Martin et al. 2007:20).

For school levers seeking entry into paid work, the tourism sector offers employment opportunities across a diverse range of sub-sector. While the sector overall is one of the largest employers, as well as a major element of capital accumulation (Britton 1991), it also poses challenges to long-term engagement and career development. The tourism sector has been described as a "hyper-globalising activity" (Hjalager 2007) and can be characterised as a "poster-child" of neo-liberalism, particularly with regard to the democratisation of travel. On the one hand, the sector generates large numbers of jobs, which are well suited to those with limited skills and experience. However, the overall profile of employment in this fragmented sector is of stochastic demand and a transitory workforce with little prospect of career development for all but a minority of management positions (Baum 2007). Research by Petrova and Mason (2004) suggests that in the tourism sector, training is not seen as an important contributor to competitiveness and profitability and with few barriers to entry, specialist qualifications are not a requirement. In addition, as Peacock and Ladkin (2002:395) note, "managers in the tourism industry, who have often not had a higher education themselves, tend not to value educational background".

Regardless of the rationale for seeking employment in the sector, for those who do, cultural diversity is likely to be an important consideration for employers not only in terms of compliance with diversity policies but also in relation to "the business case for diversity". The potential of a culturally diverse workforce in delivering products and services to customers from diverse backgrounds, as well as enhancing market opportunities through diversity, is well established in the diversity management discourse. The *value-in-diversity* prospective suggests that there is likely to be a significant demand for cultural diversity in the European tourism sector, particularly considering the increasing internationalisation of the market.

Despite the burgeoning of research on cultural diversity and its management, the perceived *value* of and *demand* for diversity in public and private sector organisations are largely neglected in the literature. Focusing on cultural diversity in the European tourism sector, this chapter is a response to this perceived gap in the literature. The discussion seeks to explore the relational forces influencing cultural diversity in the context of the *school-to-work* transition in the tourism sector. In this regard, the influence of national/regional public policy on labour mobility is considered, as well as organisational perceptions of the value of and demand for diversity. In addition, individual perspectives on the value of diversity in the workplace are explored.

2 The Concept of Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity is an increasingly important factor in the development of communities across the globe, as well as in the professional and social life of individuals. Organisations worldwide have become more diverse in terms of the racial, ethnic, cultural and spiritual characteristics of their members, and tourism organisations are no exception. While there is no universally agreed definition of cultural diversity, several variants have emerged from a variety of contexts in the social and managerial literature. In the workplace, the basic conceptualisation of diversity is associated with the numerical composition of workplace demographics (Thomas 1996). Litvin (1997) identifies the dimensions of age, ethnicity, gender, physical attributes/abilities, race and sexual orientation as the primary characteristics of diversity. He further notes eight fluid dimensions as education, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs and work experience. Cox (1991, 1994) views cultural diversity as the representation of people with different group affiliations of cultural significance who "collectively share certain norms, values or traditions that are different from those of other groups" (Cox 1994:5–6). Other commentators have emphasised the cultural-historical context of diversity (Triandis 1995). Overall, the concept of cultural diversity is associated with both continuity and change in the political, social and cultural spheres.

2.1 Background to Cultural Diversity in Europe

Immigration into Europe from less prosperous parts of the world has been a long-standing phenomenon and has resulted in increasingly diverse populations in many European countries (Crouch 2008:34). European integration and mobility have further enhanced the cultural diversity of the region. During the last three decades or so, Europe has witnessed significant occupational change with the decline of manufacturing industry and the growth of the service economy as a result of realignments in the global economy. In addition, changing social attitudes as well as patterns of access to education has had a significant impact of gender roles resulting in a transition in employment forms. Demographic trends are also significant in the context of cultural diversity in the European workforce.

With increasing regulatory control in Europe, many corporations are cognisant of the need to comply with equality and anti-discrimination legislation which has been developed at both national and, in the case of the EU, at supranational level. Meeting regulatory standards, as well as meeting the expectations of increasingly well-informed suppliers and consumers, has highlighted the regulatory case for diversity management. However, under neo-liberalism, many organisations in Europe now

recognise that increasing social diversity signals the importance of the business case for diversity management, although this is still "embryonic and fragmented" (European Commission 2003:15).

2.2 *Workforce Diversity*

As noted above, there is no overall consensus on the meaning of "diversity", and consequently, there cannot be a clear-cut European multicultural model (Toggenburg 2005:735). A "diverse workplace" is an outcome of major changes in the internal culture of a company, and it is extremely difficult to measure the shifts in values that accompany changes in internal cultures. Research has shown that the identification of "diverse" workplaces is difficult to achieve and that there is, as yet, no widely accepted way of distinguishing between workplaces that are "diverse" and those that are not. Moreover, not all companies set out to achieve the same goals in their diversity policies (EC 2003:9). While the percentage of organisations which have introduced diversity policies remains patchy, there is evidence from the "mainstream" literature that for those organisations that actively embrace diversity, the overall outcome is positive. It has been suggested that the most important benefits arising from the implementation of diversity policies arise from strengthening organisational and human knowledge capital (European Commission 2003:4). According to research conducted on behalf of the European Commission, companies adopt workforce policies for three types of reason: ethical, regulatory (demonstrating compliance with anti-discrimination laws) and economic (generating economic benefits that exceed implementation costs) (EC 2003:9). The commission also identify a number of costs associated with the adoption of workforce diversity policies. These include the following: the costs of legal compliance, the cash costs of diversity, the opportunity costs of diversity and the business risks of diversity. There are two principal types of economic benefits that companies seek from investments in workforce diversity policies: (a) strengthening long-term "value-drivers" and (b) generating short- and medium-term opportunities to improve cash flows. The tourism sectors rationale for embracing and valuing a culturally diverse workforce is likely to be an outcome of both economic and regulatory drivers. In the highly international context of tourism sector, a diverse workforce is likely to be conceived of as adding value and potentially contributing to overall competitiveness.

3 Approaches to Managing Diversity

The field of scholarship concerned with diversity management is subsumed under two broad categories of "mainstream" and "critical" approaches (Tatli 2010a:1). In the context of neo-liberalism and globalisation, human populations are becoming

increasingly mobile in response to changes in the structure of regional and national economies. International migration is a characteristic feature of globalisation—a process which has made migration increasingly possible and necessary at the same time (Hamburger 2002:18). Under these conditions, cultural diversity has emerged as a prominent concern in political and policy debate. In the developed economies, much of the early discussions emerged from concerns about discriminatory practices in relation to employment, housing and civil rights. These concerns found expression in the introduction and enforcement of equal opportunities policies. Today, many of these policies have been firmly embedded in the practices of both public and private sector organisations.

Human capital models have drawn attention to the potential contribution which a culturally diverse workforce can make, and today, a growing number of organisations regard cultural diversity as a valuable asset. This has resulted in an increasing focus of the "business case for diversity" (Cox and Blake 1991; Robinson and Dechant 1997), which advocates engagement with, and management of, diversity. Proponents of the "value-in-diversity" hypothesis (Jehn et al. 1999; Watson, et al. 1993) argue that a diverse workforce, relative to a homogeneous one, is generally beneficial for business, including but not limited to corporate profits and earnings (Herring 2009:208). Management and social theorists have conducted extensive research on the impacts of cultural diversity on organisations (Dass and Parker 1997; Kandola and Fullerton 1998; Tatli et al. 2007), and much of this research seems to confirm the positive contribution which a diverse workforce can make towards business success. Among the mainstream work that has been conducted in management studies of diversity, the primary concern has been the impact of diversity on work group processes, interpersonal and inter-group interaction and diversity management and business performance (Lee and Park 2006; Naranjo-Gil et al. 2008).

In addition to this "mainstream" perspective, we are also witnessing the development of a "critical" literature on managing diversity (Bell and Mclaughlin 2006). The critical literature has focused on critiquing individualistic definitions of diversity and highlighting structural inequalities, as well as the dangers of "business case" rhetoric (Noon 2007; Zanoni and Janssens 2004). Critical commentators view the "business case" perspective as a "management rhetoric that focuses upon individualism and identifies personal traits as being more important than social group characteristics" (Noon 2007:781). For critical scholars, the danger of the highly individualistic business case perspective is its suppression of social justice in favour of an economic-based rationale. The key argument presented by critical scholars is that under the business case, the right to equality is qualified by an economic rationale which is not universal (Noon 2007:780).

The concept of "managing diversity" means different things to different people, and scholars have placed emphases on a variety of issues from national cultures (Hofstede 1984) to aspects of ensuring equal opportunities among employees, as well as the business case for diversity (Point and Singh 2003). According to Gröschl and Takagi (2008:16), managing diversity is "an evolving dialectic from inequality, fair representation and assimilation to respect, co-existence and

performance". There are a number of approaches to dealing with issues of cultural diversity, from reactive to proactive, with various degrees of integration (Dass and Parker 1997; Point and Singh 2003). In the literature on equality and diversity, much attention has been devoted to distinguishing between equal opportunities and diversity management (Taili and Ozbilgin 2009:2). In essence, these areas of concern can be distinguished by a *human resource management* focus on the one hand, while diversity managers are tasked with improving the originations performance by *valuing diversity* on the other hand (Friday and Friday 2003).

The equal opportunities and diversity management literature identifies a number of drivers for diversity policy and practice. Increasing numbers of companies stress that ethical reasons are the primary driver for adapting equality and diversity practices (European Commission 2005:14). There are also strong links between equality and diversity policies and the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR), within the broader context of "Corporate Engagement" (Schwab 2008). The perceived potential of a culturally diverse workforce in delivering products and services to customers from diverse backgrounds, as well as enhancing market opportunities through diversity, is a key driver of diversity management and is thus emphasised as an essential part of human resource management (Rosenzweig 1998). Much of the extant literature on cultural diversity management has drawn significantly on the notion of "national cultural diversity" as a key variable in studies of *leadership*, *learning* and *management* styles and *decision making* (Tesa 2009; Gröschl 2011). In practice, organisations rarely act on any one of these drivers to the exclusion of others and are likely to approach issues of cultural diversity from a variety of legal, ethical and market perspectives. Few studies explore dimensions of diversity such as disability or generational differences (Gröschl 2007; 2011; Gursoy et al. 2008). Also, the *demand* for cultural diversity and the political economy which moulds individual, organisational or social practice in this regard has received little attention. One of the shortcomings of both the mainstream and critical scholarship on managing diversity is the tendency towards single-level studies. As Tatli (2010a:3) notes, "explanations with a single-level focus are incomplete as they tend to oversimplify structural mechanisms or individual actions which result in a collapse of agency on structure or vice versa".

4   The European Tourism Sector

Tourism, one of the world's largest employment sectors, is at the forefront of servicing a global market in which human-human interaction is an integral part of the product offer. It is also at the nexus of diverse and overlapping industries and is one of the fastest growing areas of investment throughout the world (Bianchi 2009). The tourism sector is underpinned by cultural interaction in the delivery of services to clients across a multiplicity of contexts from transportation and hospitality to cultural interpretation and leisure consumption. Notwithstanding tourisms "slippery definitional boundaries" (Zampoukos and Ioannides 2011), the sector embraces a

whole host of sub-sectors including events, festivals, food service, hotels, theme parks, outdoor activities, transportation, travel services, etc. The European tourism industry generates over 5% of EU GDP, a figure which is steadily rising. Europe has the world's largest and most mature tourism industry, which in 2009 accounted for 52% of all international tourist arrivals and 48% of international tourism receipts, amounting to more than 296 billion euros (UNWTO 2010). In Europe, there are 1.8 million tourism sector businesses, generating approximately 9.7 million jobs. Tourism therefore represents the third largest socio-economic activity in the EU after the trade and distribution and construction sectors (European Commission 2010b:3). Despite the obvious importance of tourism across the EU, it has often been overlooked as it is notoriously difficult to define and measure as evidenced by the efforts of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) in establishing the "Tourism Satellite Account". The UNWTO estimates that international tourist arrivals in Europe should increase significantly in the coming years as world tourism continues to grow. In terms of employment, the sector can be characterised as having a high proportion of external labour (migrant workers) and a predominance of micro companies, often family owned (Marhuenda, et al. 2005:22). Tourism is an increasingly important element in the economic development of countries across the globe, and European economies are among those who benefit most from the sector. Despite this, tourism lacks a clear sectoral identity, a circumstance which partly explains its low political visibility, and the fact that it does not occupy a place which corresponds to its vital economic importance (International Labour Organisation 2001:91).

Meanwhile, as economic growth in the EU slows, unemployment among the 18–25 age group in Europe is on the increase, particularly for those with no or low levels of training. EU GDP fell by 4.2% in 2009, industrial production dropped back to the levels of the late 1990s and employment levels fell by 1.8%. As a result, 23 million people—or close to 10% of the economically active population—are now unemployed (European Commission 2010a:9). In early 2011, unemployment among the young in the eurozone stood at 20.4%, up from 14.6% in February 2008. While the overall goal of political reform and economic growth in Europe is a knowledge-based society, educational outcomes remain highly dependant of social origins (Moncel 2007). For many well-qualified young people, employment in the tourism sector may be regarded as unattractive. As Baum (2007:1396) concludes, the vocational and educational opportunities in developed countries for most young people are such that many areas of tourism work are much less obvious and attract long-term career options than might have been the case in the past. Yet, it does provide enter opportunities at a relatively low level for those least qualified and who generally experience the greatest difficulties in establishing a foothold in the labour market (European Commission 2010a:129). Employees in the sector tend to be geographically flexible and mobile, contributing to the diversity of the sectors workforce. This signals the importance of labour mobility in the sector and its role in the displacement of local labour by geographically mobile workers from within and outside the union. Here, individuals and groups may draw differentially on both social and economic capital in pursuance of their goals.

4.1 Human Resources in Tourism

In terms of its labour model, the industry is characterised by low skill, high staff turnover, low pay, long hours, with a low level of investment in staff training and development (Ehrenreich 2001; Riley et al. 2002). The concept of a career within this sector for all but a minority of positions of managerial responsibility is of limited and decreasing value (Baum 2007:1390). The sector offers transitory job opportunities, which mitigate against the development of long-term employer-worker relationships. In the United Kingdom, for example, perhaps as much as 50% of all tourism workers are also full-time students, which obviously raises issues of displacement (Hofman and Steijn 2003). As Martin et al. (2007) notes:

> While the stepping-stone nature of these jobs would be welcome, temporary work and low-pay traps—i.e. young people unable to move to more stable employment or better paid jobs—could pose a problem. For instance, temporary jobs tend to give fewer training opportunities than permanent contracts and low pay and precariousness may lead young people to delay emancipation from their parents as well as their own family formation (Martin et al. 2007:9).

Tourism businesses also draw on short-term or seasonal labour, as well as on "just-in-time" agency workers who can be called up to cover peaks in demand or absences among full-time staff (Lai and Baum 2005). Unfavourable working conditions and a lack of professional development prospects cause high staff turnover and outflow of skilled personnel from the sector. The demand for personal flexibility, therefore, comes into direct conflict with the demand for skills flexibility: the former based on the minimal labour costs and no interest in human capital investment and the latter requiring thorough training and human resource development policy from employers (Strietska-Ilina and Tessaring 2005:24). Additionally, the sector is fragmented across a range of discrete functional areas and is dominated by small-scale enterprises. As with the wider labour force, employees in the tourism sector operate within the context of a "boundaryless career" (Arthur 1994) trajectory. As for the HR function itself, the small scale of many tourism businesses means that owner/mangers take on this function, and for larger organisations, delayering has resulted in the role being devolved to front-line managers (Bond and Wise, 2003, cited in Baum 2007:1388). Thus, the industry's heterogeneity, geographical spread and stochastic demand cycle provides both opportunity and challenge in terms of the aspirations and expectations of those attracted into the industry, either as new entrants to the labour force or in the context of change opportunities within their working lives (Baum 2007:1388).

5 Workplace Diversity in European Tourism

Tourism businesses have long relied on a culturally diverse workforce (Baum 2006). For example, the hospitality sub-sector predominantly employs women, immigrants and young people (Zampoukos and Ioannides 2011). Operators in the tourism sector must deliver their services to an increasingly broad range of clients from a diverse

range of cultural backgrounds. The increasing diversity of both tourists and workers in the industry has resulted in a greater need for those people in the sector to possess skills to manage this diversity (Aitken and Hall 2000:1). Inherent in the service transactions of tourism is the essential contact between the producer and the consumer of the service (Hill 1977; Arndt 1989), and the cultural diversity of employees is likely to have a significant impact on the service encounter. As in other sectors of the economy, the "business case for diversity" is also being embraced by organisations in the tourism sector. Thus, it is reasonable to suggest that for many tourism sector organisations, the cultural diversity of their workforce is a key consideration in assessing their ability to engage with emerging tourism markets, as well as to service their existing clientele. However, research by Gröschl and Doherty (1999:262) in the hotel sector found that many of the organisations investigated in their study implemented "reactive diversification strategies" which tolerate rather than value diversity.

6   Theoretical Framework

Inspired by recent advances in scholarship on diversity management and adopting conceptual tools presented by Bourdieu (1977, 1986, 1998), an attempt is made to capture the interplay of structural and agentic-level aspects of diversity management in the European tourism sector. Drawing on the work of Özbilgin and Tatli (2005), Syed and Özbilgin (2009) and Tatli (2010a) and informed by Bourdieuan sociological theory, a "multi-level relational perspective" (Al-Ariss and Syed 2010) to the analysis of cultural diversity in the European tourism sector is adopted. Instead of a focus on human capital theories in terms of *achieved* competencies, the work of Bourdieu offers a relational perspective. Bourdieu's sociological approach is based on a theoretical framework comprising multiple interrelated conceptual metaphors (Mills and Gale 2007; Splitter and Seidl 2011). Specifically, Bourdieu (1998) deploys the concepts of *capital* (at the individual level), *habitus* (at the meso level) and *field* (at the macro level) to provide multilayered analysis of organisational phenomena. Özbilgin and Tatli (2005:860) identify two explicit benefits of translating Bourdieu's work to the study of management and organisations. Firstly, its potential contribution to the epistemological and methodological understanding in management and organisational research. Secondly, the potential for the adoption of its conceptual tools in order to advance work in the field. For Grenfell and James (1998:1–2), Bourdieu offers "an epistemological and methodological *third way*" which "gives us an option: a set of "thinking tools"—*habitus, field, capital*—to illuminate the social world (Grenfell and James 2004:518). The power of Bourdieuan theory is its capacity to explore the interplay between the notions of *field, habitus* and *capital*. For Bourdieu, these social spaces are increasingly colonised by "neo-liberalism"[1] which he argues has established itself as a *doxa*

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[1]Harvey (2006:145) views neo-liberalism as "a theory of political economic practices which proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial

(the process through which socially and culturally constituted ways of perceiving, evaluating and behaving become accepted as unquestioned, self-evident and taken for granted—i.e. "natural") (Bourdieu 1977:164, cited in Throop and Murphy 2002:189).[2] Certainly, the doctrine of neo-liberalism has been widely influential in shaping public policy in Europe, particularly in the United Kingdom (Peters 2001).

Bourdieu's project to dissolve the false duality between agency and structure is valuable and fruitful for diversity management research as it allows for the development of insights which move away from single-level conceptualisations towards relational perspectives. In this regard, some have argued (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008; Vaughan 2008) that social analysts have misappropriated Bourdieu's ideas because the relational component—the dynamic properties of his theory and the relation between the concepts—is lost due to the separation of three of its central concepts: field, capital and habitus. Bourdieu adopts an open-ended approach to the conduct of research which is guided by a particular philosophical stance while not being method prescriptive. According to Özbilgin and Tatli (2005:856), Bourdieuan concepts:

> Capture the layered, intersubjective, interdependent nature of social phenomena better than the mainstream concepts, which are developed to read organizations through exclusively objectivist or subjectivist perspectives that characterize organizational studies.

Bourdieu preached and practiced methodological polytheism, deploying whatever data production technique is best suited to the question at hand in his own research (Wacquant 1998 cited in Mills and Gale 2007:438). This is the approach taken here where I explore the relationship between European tourism and the prevailing political and economic systems, as well as how tourism is organised and to what ends. Before outlining the methods adopted in the study, it is useful to consider Bourdieu's key metaphors of *capital, habitus* and *field*.

6.1 Capital

"It is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory" (Bourdieu 1986:46). For Bourdieu (1986), *capital* is manifest in *social, cultural, economic* and *symbolic* forms which individuals draw

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freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, free markets and free trade". Lawrence (2005:317) takes the term neo-liberalism to describe "policies of market deregulation, a reformulation of the old liberalism, within the new context of global rather than national markets. In addition, he sees neo-liberalism as denoting "a corresponding decline in the cohesion and regulatory powers of the nation state".

[2]For Chopra (2003:421) *doxa* is "an unquestionable orthodoxy that operates as if it were the objective truth—across *social space in its entirety*, from the practices and perceptions of individuals (at the level of habitus) to the practices and perceptions of the state and social groups (at the level of fields).

on and deploy in order to pursue their life choices. For Bourdieu, "capital does not exist and function except in relation to a field" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:101):

> Capital can present itself in three fundamental guises: as economic capital, which is immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the forms of property rights; as cultural capital, which is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of educational qualifications; and as social capital, made up of social obligations ("connections"), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the forms of a title of nobility (Bourdieu 1986:243).

"It is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one reintroduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory" (Wacquant 1998:216). For Bourdieu, social, cultural, economic and symbolic capitals are interdependent. *Cultural capital* requires, unlike economic capital, an investment of time in order to be successfully transmitted. It is a product of life history, understood as the experience of and passage through a number of distinct social fields (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008:25). In achieving a successful transition from *school to work,* individuals may deploy a combination of social and cultural capital, which has been developed by drawing on economic capital over time. Successful conversion is likely to result in the acquisition of additional economic power.

Social capital is the sum of the resources that an individual or a group accrue from the possession of a network of relationships of "mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:119). It is concerned with personal networks and relationships and includes matters such as culture, language and academic qualifications. *Economic capital* is directly convertible into money and may also take the form of property rights. *Symbolic capital*—introduced to account for the economy of honour and shame (Bourdieu et al. 1963; Heilbron 2001:56)—refers to reflected power that gives individuals the ability to deploy other types of capital (Al-Ariss and Syed 2010). Symbolic capital is accrued through the specific form of capital being legitimated and valued by society. For example, money is an accepted and reified form of economic capital although it has little inherent value. This concept is formed through the "shared meanings of value" (Özbilgin and Tatli 2005:862, cited in AL-Ariss and Syed 2010:6). By linking different forms of capital, that is, social, cultural, economic and symbolic capital, Bourdieu offers a relational perspective for understanding capital accumulation and deployment (Wilson et al. 2007). Bourdieu's conceptualisation of symbolic capital embraces both subjective and objective properties formed through shared meanings of value and worth (Özbilgin and Tatli 2005:861).

6.2   *Habitus*

Based on the power of habitual practice, habitus, as Bourdieu uses the term, characterises the recurring patterns of class outlook—the beliefs, values, conduct,

speech, dress and manners—which are inculcated by everyday experiences within the family, the peer group and the school (Mills and Gale 2007:436). Habitus operates below the level of consciousness and orients individuals' practices by providing them with a sense of how to act and respond in their daily lives. Accordingly, individuals usually *know*, even without consciously knowing, the right thing to do in the sense of being able to clearly explain what they are doing (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Emirbayer and Johnson (2008:78) suggest that:

> Instead of identifying habitus as social location, defined as history and experience shared by the same class, habitus might better be investigated as the product of social location(s): positions in multiple structures that cut across class location. Understanding meanings and action at the local level sociologically means recognizing that individuals belong to multiple organizations (and to subunits and groups within them), such that the habitus is modified to fit the immediate local setting.

This perspective is useful in the context of HR managers and others with responsibilities in the recruitment process, which can be regarded as a subunit of organisational structure.

Meso level relationality operates at both intra and extra organisational relations, and for HR managers and others concerned with recruitment, social capital constitutes an important relational resource (Özbilgin and Tatli 2008). Habitus is problematic when it perpetuates social inequalities. This level is of particular interest to the analysis of the *school-to-work* transition in relation to the governance of diversity at organisational level within the broader macro regional context. As Bourdieu (1977:95) noted, the formation of habitus emerges through past experiences and feeds present perceptions and actions. The meso level can be regarded as replicating social norms of discourse and praxis in relation to the labour market. The habitus of individual agents is often expressed as the organisational ethos of senior managers (Mills and Gale 2007:440). For example, the perpetuation of institutional racism through established practices and procedures for the recruitment, evaluation or promotion of personnel. Syed and Özbilgin (2009:2442) citing Hulme and Truch (2006), suggest that:

> From a relational perspective, an organization's actions towards diversity management represent its socialized predispositions, and, as such, reflect the social attitudes directed towards diverse groups or individuals. From this perspective, habitus may be seen to be setting limits for organizational action while at the same time defining its aspirations and perceptions.

This suggests that a consideration of organisational habitus is required in order to begin to unveil the organisations pre-established logic, as well as its associated opportunities and constraints.

6.3 Field

For Bourdieu, the social world is made up of semi-autonomous, relational and multidimensional social spaces, what he calls *fields* (Tatli 2010a:7). Bourdieu's

approach to the analysis of a field is to address three distinct levels that direct the researcher to (a) analyse the position of the field vis-à-vis the field of power, (b) map out the objective structure of relations between the positions occupied by agents who compete for the legitimate forms of specific authority of which the field is the site, and (c) analyse the habitus of agents, the systems of dispositions they have acquired by internalising a determinate type of social and economic condition (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992:104–107). For Bourdieu, a central aspect of a given field is the taken-for-granted assumptions, shared by its members, what he refers to as *doxa* (Bourdieu 1977). Thus, it is the structural conditions which potentially inhibit or enhance an individual's capacity to acquire capital that is of interest here. Educational institutions, as well as the organisations employing school or college leavers, represent systems of power hierarchies organised within society. Therefore, research agendas need to consider the relationship between educational institutions, as well as the political and economic context in order to have a better understanding of the various agents involved and the forces at play in producing this aspect of social and economic capital. Additionally, the analysis requires a consideration of the habitus of those individuals who inhabit the various institutions concerned (whose routine actions drive policy or practice), as well as their clients.

The macro level of *field* (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) acknowledges the structural aspects and power dynamics that provide the context of diversity management in the EU (including the legislative framework, sociopolitical policies, labour market economics, demographics and history). This domain also includes the political and cultural traditions of the region and its individual nation states, the legal framework for employment and equality, as well as the prevailing socio-economic context. It also encompasses the generally accepted social stratifications and stereotypes relating to, for example, gender, age and ethnicity. At the level of European governance the European Union (EU) has issued a number of directives to establish a general framework for equal treatment in employment, and regulatory mechanisms have been introduced to manage cultural diversity within the expanding union. These measures are most visible at the member state level.

7 Methods

As previously noted, little research has been conducted into the attribution of *value* to and *demand* for diversity in the European tourism sector, or indeed on the extent to which such demand is perceived to be being met by those entering the labour market. While this research project has, at the level of methodology, attempted to avoid the "premature application of criteria" (Emirbayer and Johnson 2008:7), this is to some extent inevitable when attempting to gauge social relations across a broad field or "industry" like tourism, which is dispersed throughout multiple sub-sectors of economy and society. Thus, the research reported here is largely exploratory and should be regarded as a preliminary attempt at mapping the field. In addition to insights from previous studies, data was collected from both public

and private sector organisation in the tourism sector, as well as from individuals who were nearing the end of full-time education and were seeking entry into the sector. The research instruments were the following: (1) an EU wide web-based survey (online questionnaire) utilised in conjunction with email (Cobanoglu et al. 2001), (2) reflective accounts of diversity management in the workplace by interns from an undergraduate degree programme in Tourism and Hospitality Management and (3) a survey of jobseekers attending an international recruitment fair for the hospitality and tourism sector. Instrument 1 was conducted in English, French and German. Instrument 2 and 3 were both conducted in English only.

For the web-based survey, potential respondents were emailed and invited to participate in the study through a hypertext link to the online questionnaire. This particular technique was chosen for the following reasons: (a) it could be distributed quickly to a large number of potential respondents at a minimal cost, (b) the hypertext link could be easily forwarded by "gatekeepers" to other potential respondents such as those on association membership lists, (c) responses could be collected in a standardised format, and (d) the research instrument could easily be distributed to and data collected from speakers of different languages. The questionnaire comprising 24 questions was initially produced in English and subsequently translated into French and German. It was administered over a 5-month period from October 2010 to February 2011. An email inviting participation in the survey and including a link to the questionnaire in the aforementioned languages was sent to the secretariat of numerous professional and trade associations related to the European tourism sector, as well as to national and regional public sector tourism organisations. The email included a request to the various organisations to distribute the email survey link to their members or associates.

The questionnaire attended primarily to the "position-takings" (Bourdieu 1993:35) (diversity policies, attitudes and perspectives on diversity, value attributed to diversity dimensions and so forth) rather than to objective indicators of positions (size, status, number of employees, etc.). Thus, those surveyed (HR personnel and/or those with HR responsibilities) were representative of/or held positions within the organisations surveyed. According to Bourdieu (1988:67), "this mode of selection enables us to characterize the positions of power through the properties and the powers of their holders" (cited in Emirbayer and Johnson 2008:34).

The second research instrument, a reflective account of diversity management in the workplace, was generated from a cohort of final year undergraduate students studying Hospitality and Tourism Management at a UK university who had previously undertaken internships with organisations in the sector. The group, who comprised individuals from a variety of countries in Asia and Europe, were asked to complete a 500-word statement summarising their experiences of diversity management in the workplace and in particular how or in what ways, in their view, diversity was valued by their employer. In addition, they were asked to comment on what personal diversity attributes they brought to the workplace.

The third research instrument was a survey of jobseekers at a tourism and hospitality sector job fair held in Switzerland and attended by school leavers from more than 30 countries who had been studying in private sector schools in Switzerland

Table 4.1 Methods of research instruments to respondents	Method	Number of respondents
	Online instruments	109
	Reflective account	25
	Jobseeker survey	52

to diploma and degree level. Respondents who had previously worked in the sector were asked to select from three statements, which according to Thomas and Ely (1996) describe different organisational perspectives on diversity management (this question was also included in the survey of employers). In addition, respondents to the jobseeker survey were asked to provide a short statement explaining the reason for their choice (Table 4.1).

7.1 Limitations

Due to the diffusion of tourism-related employment throughout multiple sub-sectors of the economy, the difficulty of establishing what constitutes a "tourism sector" job is regarded as a study limitation. Also, the absence of in-depth qualitative discussions with respondents and the relatively small number of participants hindered exposure of the complex tapestry of relationships and networks in the European tourism sector, and this can also be regarded as a limitation. At the level of methodology, Bourdieuan critical sociology insists on that researcher occupies a position within the game—they are both analyst of science and society and actor in these fields (Postone et al. 1993; Mills and Gale 2007). While not claiming any false detachment from the construction of knowledge in and through the work, methodological reflexivity is not fully developed here, and this is a limitation of the study in terms of the approach adopted.

8 Findings and Discussion

8.1 The Macro Socio-Economic Context

The growth of the service economy in the EU, as well as unprecedented economic growth in Asia, has spawned a burgeoning middle class whose lifestyles and tastes drive the production of tangible and intangible leisure experiences of which tourism is a key component. In the context of international tourism, globalisation processes are having a major influence on the volume and profile of consumers of tourism products and services. For many destinations, their cultural diversity has become a "trademark" that makes them more attractive to international investments and tourism (Hamburger 2002:19). These forces have implications for the service

providers, including the cultural diversity profile of service organisations. In this regard, the influence of cultural diversity in the school-to-work transition in the EU can be conceptualised at a number of levels: at one level, we can view the field of EU and national state policy and regulation as a macro level of relations comprising the practices and perceptions of state agents and social groups—the doxa of the field. At another level, we can conceive neo-liberal economic policy—adherence to the logic of the market, the withdrawal of the state from social protection (social security), diminishing employment rights, the marketidization of education and the increasing mobility of economic capital (power)—as drawing into its trajectory and assigning value to diverse social groups who seek to advance their interests, what Harvey (2005:40) refers to as the "construction of consent". This is evident across the union, but particularly in the newer member states. Since the latest EU enlargements in 2004 and 2007, a number of post-communist nations are desperately trying to adjust to market-based reforms in a largely neo-liberal global regime (McDowell 2009:20). Thus, for some, the prevalence of *the market* in the EU has been cited as the catalyst for the crisis in the European project. For others, this crisis is a consequence of *too much* government (Parker 2010:1). In this sense, the opening of borders to large numbers of new migrants pursuing the right to seek paid work is in fact a conditional freedom, important only to the extent that such movement permits economic growth.

The mobility of the workforce, part of this harmonisation agenda, potentially reduces the necessity for employers to invest in their employees in terms of salaries, training and development as they have a mobile and flexible workforce available at relatively low cost. This numeric flexibility is certainly evident in the tourism sector where employers tend to recruit part-time or seasonal workers from across the union. As one employer in the hospitality sub-sector commented:

> The local people here do not put themselves forward for the vacancies we have on offer. The salary is regarded as insufficient and the hours are often unacceptable to them as we run a 24/7 operation. Also, my experience has been that local people are not service minded. Therefore, we go elsewhere to recruit.

There is also a relationship between EU and member state policies on cultural diversity and the practices of employers which also fit their organisational objectives in terms of "the business case" for diversity. The marketidization of education also relates to the need for individuals to build up their social/professional capital and the resultant displacement of full-time permanent employees with interns and part-time student labour. The "democratisation" of higher education in some states in the EU results in large numbers of students with limited access to economic capital to support their studies, many of whom undertake part-time work in the tourism/hospitality sector (Hofman and Steijn 2003). For those EU citizens in the *school-to-work* transition, neo-liberal economic policies together with political integration has, on the one hand, resulted in greater competition for available jobs, as employers struggle to compete in the global market. On the other hand, liberalisation of markets and political integration has opened up new possibilities for career development where some dimensions of cultural diversity are likely to be highly valued. For example, under neo-liberal processes of place commodification

immigrant, otherness becomes an essential element of place differentiation (Hall and Rath 2006). In negotiating these macro challenges and opportunities, individuals draw on their capital resources (economic, cultural, social and symbolic) in order to compete with an increasingly mobile and flexible labour supply.

The tourism sector is to a large extent nourished by neo-liberalism and glob-alisation. The influence of these processes not only impacts on the movement of individuals in pursuit of leisured experiences, business trips and short-term education (three of the primary segments of international tourism); they also facilitate labour mobility. As van Houtum and Boedeltje (2009: 229) have noted,

> In European cities such as London, Stockholm or Amsterdam there exist armies of migrant workers with few options other than to wash dishes or bus tables in restaurants, clean rooms in hotels, mop floors in convention centres and theatres or "build, cater, clean and nurture the houses of the working EU population".

In addition, many migrants possess high levels of skill and experience while being willing to take up positions offering relatively poor pay and conditions. Tourism sector workers often have less protection than in other branches of the economy. As Baum (2007) notes, while a core of permanent workers, who are well educated and skilled, hold managerial positions, the tourism sector is characterised by low pay, part-time, seasonality, a notoriously high turnover rate and low levels of unionisation among workers. Indeed, in many respects, organised labour in the EU has largely failed in resisting the neo-liberal project. Major cities in Europe have witnessed an influx of workers from economically weaker regions of the union. Thus, the availability of workers willing to undertake many of the poorly paid jobs in the tourism sector keeps salaries low. As McDowell (2009:201) has noted, hospitality businesses are "notorious employers of cheap, relatively docile and insecure migrant labour". A trend which, according to Mason and Wilson (2003), is accelerating. This situation is compounded by a propensity to engage agency workers as a cheap option for dealing with unexpected demand patterns (Lai et al. 2008). Thus, in the tourism sector, the utilisation of part-time and seasonal labour, together with the availability of a culturally diverse, mobile and flexible labour pool who are willing to undertake poorly paid and poorly protected jobs, mitigates against those school leavers seeking employment opportunities in the sector. As Moncel (2007:57) notes, "Stabilization, wage progression and promotion perspectives that were traditionally characteristic of adult workforce trajectories, are not easily predictable for new generations entering the labour market". This assessment seems particularly apposite for the tourism sector.

8.2 Student Reflections

Final year undergraduates enrolled on an International Hospitality and Tourism Management degree course at a UK university were asked to reflect on their personal diversity attributes and how they perceived these to be valued by their

previous employers in the sector, as well as on their experiences of cultural diversity management while employed in the sector. The cohort was requested to compile a reflective account summarising their thoughts. All of the respondents had previously undertaken either domestic (UK) or international (non-UK or student's home country) work experience placements, either paid or unpaid. The age range of respondents was 21–37 years. From these brief accounts a number of insights emerged.

8.3 Human Capital/Cultural Capital

One aspect of these reflections is the blurring of their human capital attributes and aspects of their cultural capital. Many respondents had acquired aspects of their cultural capital through informal cultural experiences (e.g. acquiring language skills through early years socialisation), while others "achieved" these through formal training. Mohamed,[3] a Swedish citizen, explained that:

> Even before turning seven, I had a knowledge of three languages. While growing up I travelled with my family to four different continents, always with an open mind and eagerness to learn about other cultures. When looking for work experience I looked for places with a culture different from my own. I worked in Brazil and Malaysia, two culturally very distinct places, where I not only learned the local languages easily, but also beliefs and values of local people.

Emanuel, from Germany noted:

> I travelled a lot when I was growing up. My family have moved several times in the years I attended school and I moved school several times. Looking back now I think I gained an immense amount of knowledge of different cultures and language as a result. That's one of the reasons I chose to study Hospitality and Tourism, I want to develop a career which involves engagement with different people from various cultural backgrounds and I think the tourism industry is an ideal place to develop.

In a similar vein, Rania, a citizen of the United Kingdom who had grown up in Indonesia, noted that:

> I come from a county which is famous for its culture and my culture creates a work ethos for me, which is to talk less and do more. I have several language skills, I speak my mother tongue, am fluent in English, intermediate in Mandarin, as well as in French and German. I have studied at degree level and might be able to offer new ideas and innovations to an organisation. I will need little training as I have completed two international internships, one in the USA and one in Bali.

The reflective accounts of these individuals who are entering a critical stage of the *school-to-work* transition exhibit aspects of capital accumulation (economic, cultural, social and symbolic) associated with the requirements of the market in

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[3]In order to maintain confidentiality, the names of respondents have been changed.

the field of tourism. While they may represent the segment of the workforce most likely to obtain managerial status in the sector, this form of capital is likely to be acquired over many years. Their entry to work is likely to be influenced by both their "achieved" competencies (qualifications) and by their capital accumulation in the form of international experience, communication skills, cultural knowledge and understanding. They exhibit aspects of the relations between educational institutions, the requirements of neo-liberal economics and the political context in the EU in producing a flexible and mobile labour pool willing to invest significant amounts of capital in anticipation of deferred rewards. As Tomlinson (2001:137) in his study of education in the United Kingdom found, "privileged parents had the required cultural capital and education knowledge for them to emerge as winners in local school markets" in terms of their children's access to "better schools".

8.4 International Experience

International experience through having received formal training in a foreign country, or having completed work experience in a foreign country, was also a notable aspect of responses in relation to personal attributes. Karina, a citizen of Germany commented that she had:

> A lot of experience of working and studying with different cultures and ethnicities. Prejudice is the worst quality a person can have. Language barriers and cultural beliefs were the biggest challenge to me, but I was able to adapt and in return I had a very fulfilling experience.

In addition to his comments on family influences on his early experience of cultural diversity (above), Emmanuel continues:

> My work placement provided excellent experience of the sector and the diversity of the workforce was amazing, people from all corners of the globe.

David, from the United Kingdom, also placed emphases on his international experience:

> My job placements, which I organized myself, were in France and the United Arab Emirates. Saying that, my experience has shown me that today one can be working in a particular country, but the people you are working with in the hotel are from many varied backgrounds. Sure there are locals, but in the companies I worked for the majority were not originally from that country. Even the senior management were not locals, which surprised me. Most of the locals I dealt with were customers of the hotel.

For several of the respondents, the establishment of a network of contacts while undertaking internships was a prominent feature of their responses. Here, the specific organisation or location seems to have a bearing on the level of symbolic and social capital attained. For example, reference to work experience in exotic or prestigious locations, or having obtained personal references from senior executives of international organisations, was highly valued. Social capital

was further strengthened through alumni networks linking those with established positions in the field with particular educational or training institutions in the sector. These contacts and networks contributed to the acquisition of cultural and social capital in international management, a resource that will potently benefit their future success in the field. Internship experience, together with alumni networks, provides useful examples of the relation of various forms of capital, within the context of organisational habitus in the field of business management (tourism).

Student reflections on their experience of diversity management highlighted a number of important considerations including having encountered engagement with diversity issues predominantly during the induction period of their employment in the sector and also, the predominance of language skills as the most valued dimension of cultural diversity in the sector. Jamie, from the Netherlands, commented on his work experience as follows:

> From my experience the most serious problems emerge from the lack of a common language which resulted in huge problems in communicating the work tasks. When I worked in (the Agency) during my first internship the manager was unable to speak English very well so I was able to assist her in communicating with the staff and with the tour operators. In many respects, she relied on me quite heavily in managing the business day-to-day. I feel that my language skills were highly valued by my employer during that time.

8.5   Physical/Cultural Characteristics

Respondents also considered that there was a hidden or covert diversity agenda operating in some establishments, with country of origin or ethnic background playing a significant role in recruitment outside of any formally identified diversity dimensions sought by employers. For example, discrimination in recruitment and selection associated with physical appearance was noted by respondents. Sophie, from France, commented on the recruitment practices of her employer as follows:

> I saw the process of hiring people there and mostly employees who worked as front office staff were chosen for their appearance rather than their skills. Also, they only hire trainees from overseas, or with overseas education. For local school leavers the only work was cleaning public areas, room attendance or kitchen. Equal opportunities is not well developed in (the company) and unfair treatment sometimes happens.

Paul, from the United Kingdom, explained:

> I felt that as Europeans once we had been employed by the company the branch managers selected us for roles which required direct contact with clients. Personally, I did not encounter very much of a focus on involving those from ethnic minority backgrounds in thee positions. The company did stress equal opportunities, but there were definite divisions in the way staff members were deployed.

The trustworthiness of these reflections is supported by the literature. For example, Gröschl (2011:15) noted that physical appearance was regarded as "an unofficial selection and promotion criteria in the hotel industry". Also, Zampoukos

and Ioannides (2011:30) reported that in the tourism sector in developed countries, higher profile front-end positions requiring face-to-face encounters with customers were effectively barred to immigrants. Yet, despite the predominance placed on language as a dimension of cultural diversity and the potentially discriminatory recruitment and deployment practices noted in these reflections, there was no reference to protective legislation or the contravention of stated diversity policies by employers. One interpretation of this is that employees in the field, particularly inexperienced and vulnerable interns, have, to some extent at least, absorbed the doxa of the field. This interpretation is to some extent supported by the findings of the jobseekers survey (below). On the other hand, the respondents do provide a glimpse into the composition of a contemporary tourism sector labour force "not constrained by the territorial frame of the nation state" (Khilnani 1999) and in possession of considerable reserves of social and cultural capital. As has been noted above, for both employers and jobseekers, language skills are regarded as the paramount dimension of that capital. However, as Gröschl (2011:21) suggests, this is likely to be "a byproduct of the labour market rather than the result of proactive recruitment and integration policies and actions".

9   Survey of Jobseekers

In attempting to inform the research question, the study utilised Ely and Thomas' (2001:234) "diversity perspectives" in seeking to establish the dominant perspective on cultural diversity was prevalent in the sector. These perspectives were regarded as providing a useful framework for gauging how organisational view and/or value cultural diversity. The perspectives are the following: *discrimination and fairness*, *access and legitimacy* and *integration and learning*. Respondents were asked to select from three statements which one best represented their organisations perspective on cultural diversity. Each statement is associated with one of the perspectives noted above. Each of these perspectives is likely to comprise both explicit and implicit attitudes, beliefs and opinions regarding cultural diversity and its perceived influence on the organisation. Diversity perspectives provide a basis for investigating attitudes, beliefs and opinions relating to cultural diversity in the tourism sector, as well as the extent to which cultural diversity is desired at organisational level, why it is demanded and for what purpose.

All jobseekers surveyed had previous work experience, although for the majority their experience was as interns. The responses of jobseekers to the "diversity perspectives" statements (Ely and Thomas 2001) produced results which to some extent correspond with the organisations who responded to the same question (Table 4.2). The largest number of respondents (43%) identified the *integration and learning* perspective as applicable to the organisations they have previously worked for. Similarly, the *access and legitimacy* were identified as the applicable perspective in 36% of the responses, with *discrimination and fairness* being regarded as the dominant organisational perspective by 21% of respondents. As

Table 4.2 Jobseekers
diversity perspectives

Perspective	% of respondents
Discrimination and fairness	21
Access and legitimacy	36
Integration and learning	43

for the reasons given for selecting a particular statement (representing a specific perspective), respondents experience during employment had a major influence, including, induction programmes which focused on cultural diversity and company policies. Few respondents selected the discrimination and fairness perspective as representing their former employers.

Of those that did, many referred to the importance of diversity dimensions such as language skills in relation to the organisations markets/clientele, which can be more clearly associated with the access and legitimacy perspective. However, several noted issues of legislation and compliance with the legislation on diversity in the particular context of the employment. Karina noted that:

> When I was first recruited the HR department discussed diversity with me and I was informed that they not only consider race, gender, cultural background, they have to consider a wide range of diversity dimensions which come under the employment legislation.

Sergei stated that:

> The company I worked for was based in Frankfurt and it has a very diverse market. The company tends to recruit employees from around the world who speak different languages, in order to provide better communication and provide a higher level of customer satisfaction. They also keep statistics on the cultural make-up of the workforce in relation to employment law.

Those who identified their former employer as having an access and legitimacy perspective on cultural diversity noted the importance of their personal diversity dimensions to the organisation. Denial commented that:

> The organisation I previously worked for did not have a diversity strategy. However, my employer expected me to deal with most of the Western customers and by doing so acknowledged my language skills and cultural background to be an advantage to the company.

Another respondent considered that their employer:

> Always sought to benefit from cultural diversity with necessarily focusing, supporting or especially paying for it. The advantages are openly welcomed and used for competitive advantage but little is given back.

For those who selected *integration and learning* as best describing their former employers perspective on cultural diversity, respondents identified the placement of employees in different geographic/cultural settings as an indication of their "diversity perspective". Also, the cultural diversity of the workforce was itself seen as an important indicator of the organisations perspective. Some organisations were reported to be using the diversity of the workforce as the basis of a learning tool for personal development and client awareness.

10 Survey of Employers

Organisational agents habitus is likely to have significant influence on the perceived value of diversity within individual organisations as well as across the sector through networks and sector level discourse (e.g. trade publications, associations). Being immersed in such organisational networks assists such agents to understand and operate in the organisational field and doxa. Also, national culture influences organisational culture and values and thus impacts on job design and expectations. Applicants outside the national culture may not hold the required cultural characteristics and thus may not fit the ideal candidates profile (Syed and Özbilgin 2009:2448). For example, the perceptions of recruitment personnel or operational managers regarding members of ethnic minorities populations and their role in the organisation—what Tatli and Özbilgin (2009) refer to as their "doxic experience", is likely to have a considerable influence during the recruitment process. In this sense, habitus is both "generative" and "structuring" (Codd 1990:139). In the context of the European tourism sector, migrant workers, who are poorly organised and often on temporary contracts, tend to mask the poor investment in training and development which perpetuates a lack of opportunity for these employees to move into managerial roles. Thus, work opportunities in the sector (including the *school-to-work* transition) are framed by the macro-social field of labour market dynamics, as well as by institutional and relational factors.

Organisations in eight countries responded to the online survey. The geographical profile of the organisations was as follows (Table 4.3).

In terms of organisational perspectives on diversity management, only 11% of responding organisations identified the *discrimination and fairness* approach to describe their perspective on diversity (in contrast to 27% of jobseekers). The focus of this perspective is compliance with equal opportunities, legal requirements in employment and an expectation on employees to assimilate to the dominant culture. The approach tends to reproduce the macro level conditions that sustain monocultural dominance in organisations (Syed and Özbilgin 2009). Twenty-seven per cent of organisations identified the *access and legitimacy* approach as best describing the organisations perspective on diversity. This approach values a diverse workforce in accessing and servicing their diverse clientele, what McDowell (2009:201) refers

Table 4.3 Respondents by country

Country	% of respondents
Belgium	6
France	18
Germany	26
Ireland	3
Malty	1
The Netherlands	3
Spain	9
United Kingdom	34

Table 4.4 Categories of responding organisation

Category	% of respondents
Public sector national tourism organization	5
Local government tourism organization	2
Hotel chain	3
Independent hotel operator	16
Restaurant (multiple operator)	7
Restaurant (single site)	7
Tour operator	3
Travel agency (multiple)	5
Travel agency (single site)	9
Online travel agency	2
National park authority	3
Public sector transport operator	2
Private sector transport operation	4
Other tourism-related business	11
Museum	8
Heritage attraction	5
Visitor attraction	7
Other	1
(Events planner)	

Note: Some respondents may operate multiple units but have responded as a single entity

to as "doing ethnicity". However, according to Syed and Özbilgin (2009:2442), this approach does not fully integrate diversity in the organisation and tends to "pigeonhole" employees to deal with specific client groups of a similar background (this view is supported by data from the reflective accounts above). It also tends to replicate macro-social difference codes within organisational hierarchies and inequalities. Almost two-thirds of organisations (62%) identified the *learning and effectiveness* approach to diversity as best describing their perspective on cultural diversity (in comparison to 43% of jobseekers). From a relational perspective, the *learning and effectiveness* approach represents an inclusive work environment, which not only values multiculturalism but also acknowledges individual agency and the resources possesses by diverse employees (Syed and Özbilgin 2009:2442). These perspectives can be regarded as representing the organisations socialised predispositions reflecting the social attitudes directed towards diverse groups or individuals (Syed and Özbilgin 2009:2442).

The 109 organisations who responded to the survey are segmented into the following categories and representative percentages (Table 4.4).

Table 4.5 outlines the percentage of organisations associating themselves with particular perspectives on cultural diversity using the categories identified by Ely and Thomas (2001). As can be noted from the results, a majority of respondents associated themselves with the integration and learning perspective.

Of the organisations that responded to the online questionnaire, language was regarded as by far the most valued diversity dimension (in the survey, respondents

Table 4.5 Organisational perspectives on diversity

Perspective	% of respondents
Discrimination and fairness	11
Access and legitimacy	27
Integration and learning	62

Table 4.6 Most valued dimension of diversity

Dimension	% of respondents
Age	1
Ethnicity	3
Family status	2
Gender	2
Language	84
Nationality	8
Physical characteristics	0
Religion	0
Social class	0
Sexual orientation	0
Other	0

Table 4.7 In recruiting school or college leavers do their "diversity dimensions" meet the organisations needs in relation to a culturally diverse workforce?

Response	% of respondents
Always	43
Sometimes	28
Not sure	29

could only select the most valued dimension). Nationality was also identified as an important dimension. Age, ethnicity, family status and gender were all valued fairly equally by the organisations (Table 4.6).

The stated rationale for selecting language was associated with the facilitation of communication with an increasingly diverse client profile. Despite the vast majority of respondents identifying language skills as the most valued dimension of cultural diversity, more than half of respondents were not sure if school or college leaver's diversity dimensions met the organisations needs in relation to a culturally diverse workforce. This raises the question of whether organisations in the sector have a clear understanding of the dimensions of diversity in their workforce, outside of any mandatory records required under employment legislation. The data outlined in Table 4.7 further highlights the rather low level of awareness of diversity dimensions among employers.

Gender was not acknowledged as a significant diversity dimension among respondents to the survey. The low level of value attributed to gender may be related to anti-discrimination legislation on gender. Organisational agents (primarily human

resource managers) are acutely aware of the potential negative consequences of assigning value to one gender over another as a dimension of diversity. However, as McDowell (2009:201–202) has demonstrated, in a wide range of service sector workplaces, gender remains a crucial discriminator of workplace acceptability and runs through hiring decisions, as well as structuring the relations between managers and employees. Closely related to issues of gender are physical characteristics. In contrast to individual reflective accounts (above), none of the responding organisations identified physical characteristics as a valued dimension of diversity. Yet, as noted above, this can be regarded as a covert recruitment rationale which is potentially embedded in the doxa of many organisational agents.

11   Conclusion

The tourism system is not a unified totality but is dispersed across a wide range of institutions and agents in both the public and private sector. Thus, conceptualising cultural diversity in the tourism sector as existing in a specialised field is useful in drawing macro sociopolitical forces into the trajectory of analysis. It also highlights the relations of power associated with cultural diversity and how external determinants potentially influence organisational praxis in this regard, including aspects of the *school-to-work* transition. These forces can be encountered at the macro level of field, as well as at the meso level of habitus. Under neo-liberalism, cultural diversity has come to be increasingly addressed in terms of cost-benefit rationalisation within production—consumption dialectics. Approaches to cultural diversity in the workplace have shifted from collective rights and equal opportunities to the *value-in-diversity* rhetoric of business management focused on the individual. This is part of what Bourdieu (1998:95) refers to as the "methodical destruction of collectives". Organisational policy and practice in the field of tourism are directed by external forces (economic capital, international trade and globalisation), which in large part determine the dimensions of diversity accorder cultural and economic value, as well as their spatial configuration at any temporal moment.

    For subjects of this "liquid modernity" (Bauman 2000), social, cultural and symbolic capital, which in the competitive labour market can be translated into economic capital, takes central stage in the performance of diversity. However, as insights from this study indicate, we need to reconsider the assumptions that individuals and organisations in the tourism sector value cultural diversity in any formal sense outside of narrow operational necessities. As noted earlier, the tourism sectors workforce is geographically, operationally and numerically flexible and mobile. And as the findings of this chapter have shown, the most valued dimension of diversity among employers is language, indicating the extent to which organisational agents are engaged in processes of "interpellation" (Althusser 1971) in the construction of idealised workers. Yet, both the demand for, and supply of, this aspect of diversity in the tourism sector are to a large extent an outcome of

neo-liberalism. Thus, the relation between the field of global tourism and the cultural and social capital of individual agents is clearly evident.

Under conditions of neo-liberalism, both migrant and local labour are exploited and restrained as the state is reconfigured in line with a market-based free enterprise system. This includes a relationship between diminishing access to social benefits for certain categories of the unemployed and state coercion to take up *any* "paid work" available. Related to this, high level of staff turnover seems to have entered the doxa of the field of tourism business, being perceived by both employer and employee as "natural" and a significant feature of neo-liberal economies need for a numerically flexible labour force, under the command of functionally flexible management agents. At the micro level of the individual, the data indicates that power and agency are employed to respond to the policies, strategies and practices of the workplace within the context of broader macro discourse on diversity. The economic capital available to individuals has had a major influence on their access to educational institutions as well as on the accumulation of cultural capital and thus impacts on their professional, technical and social skills. In turn, this enhances their potential transition from *school to work*. Related to this, physical characteristics (perceived attractiveness or desired "difference") may be regarded as a diversity dimension which has a significant impact on "employability" in the tourism sector, although this operates covertly.

Drawing on Bourdieuan conceptual tools, this chapter provides insights into the relationship between individuals, organisations and the macro sociopolitical context of cultural diversity in the European tourism sector. Specifically, the study provides insights on the perceived value of, and demand for, diversity in the European tourism sector, as well as highlighting the impact of macroeconomic restructuring on employment practices in the sector. As the "new economy" further influences the social body, employers (and their clients) are likely to increasingly demand individualised, flexible, mobile, decentralised and deregulated relationships with their workforce. The impact of these influences may be particularly acute in relation to the *school-to-work* transition. Further research focusing on the experiences of school/college leavers in developing and mobilising held capital at multiple levels is needed to further enhance understanding of the evolving *school-to-work* transition in the tourism sector. This would take into account the agency of those in the labour market as well as the structural and institutional influences shaping the *school-to-work* transition.

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Chapter 5
Workforce Diversity in Malaysia: Current and Future Demand of Persons with Disabilities

Rosly Othman

1 Introduction

Workforce diversity in organizations is not something unexpected, especially in recent times. In general terms, workforce diversity refers to the efforts made by the organizations to include people within the workforce who are in some ways different from the majority of the population. The reasons for having workforce diversity varies from one organization to the other. However, the idea emerged mainly to strengthen the concept of equal opportunity in the workplace. One of the most recent additions to the idea of workforce diversity is the inclusion of persons with disabilities (PWDs). The advancement of technology as well as awareness about the ability of PWDs in contributing toward organizational excellence has made it possible for these people to have access to employment. In fact, according to Metts (2000), exclusions of persons with disabilities from employment have caused a worldwide total loss of the gross domestic product of between USD 1.37 trillion to USD 1.94 trillion. In relation to Malaysian economy, the loss is estimated to be around USD 1.68 billion (Khor 2002). In order to overcome the losses, organizations need to be able to tap into the underutilized labor market of persons with disabilities. This will significantly determine their overall operational success because these people have the potential to be a valuable workforce. Therefore, the ideas of accommodating workers from PWDs have received great attention for quite some time. In the UK, for example, a group of companies known as the Social Firms UK has been actively hiring PWDs, and as in 2005, from the total of more than 1,550 jobs created by this group, 55% were held by PWDs (Social Firms 2010).

R. Othman, Ph.D. (✉)
Graduate School of Business, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Penang, Malaysia
e-mail: roslyothman@yahoo.com

The implementation of the Biwako Millennium Framework for Action toward an inclusive, barrier-free and rights-based society marked the hallmark for promoting the rights of PWDs in Asia and the Pacific (Perry 2003). The framework for action calls for, among others, equal opportunities for PWDs to obtain decent work. In line with the move toward workforce diversity and equal employment opportunities, the Malaysian government has recently gazetted the Person with Disability Act 2008. This act ensures that they are not only able to secure employment but also are not discriminated during recruitment, selection, and promotion practices (Social Welfare Department 2010). However, many of the persons with disabilities still failed to secure employment. Statistics showed that in some countries, as high as 80% of the persons with disabilities within the general population are found to be unemployed. In Malaysia, even though the federal government has targeted to have people with disabilities to form at least 1% of its total workforce, this quota was never reached even though many have been actively seeking for employment (Ng et al. 2008). It is, thus, important to understand current demand of PWDs, the profiles of organizations that hired and did not hired PWD, why and how they are hired, and the future trend of PWD as workforce in Malaysia.

1.1 Demand of PWDs as Workforce

Literature reviews show that employers have demonstrated conflicting views about disability and about potential employees with disability. The way in which disability employment was marketed to employers, which were often motivated by charitable appeals, often resulted in prejudicial views of disability, as early studies often found (Luecking 2008).

Hence, it is not surprising that employers were less likely to extend an invitation for a job interview to individuals when their personal information indicated that they had a disability (Pearson et al. 2003). On the other hand, employers expressed generally positive and affirmative attitudes toward workers with disabilities (Hernandez et al. 2000; Unger et al. 2006). Studies consistently found that there are companies that are keen in hiring PWD (Luecking 2008). One of the most widely cited series of studies of employers' perspectives on hiring PWDs was conducted by DuPont Corporation, and the results showed that managers have positive perceptions toward hiring PWDs, generally regarding them as easy to supervise and as producing as much as or more than their coworkers without disabilities (DuPont and Company 1993).

Large organizations with more experience with PWDs have reported more positive attitudes toward having employees with disabilities and more favorable attitudes toward hiring persons with disabilities, which often occur among (a) employers in the government sector, (b) companies with more employees and lower annual sales, (c) female employers, and (d) employers with college or graduate school degrees (Levy et al. 1995; Lowman et al. 2005; Weber 2007). In fact, many present-day employers have a relatively sophisticated understanding of disability, and often, employers even make a credible case for how companies' profitability

require the effective inclusion, accommodation, and management of previously marginalized workers, including those with disabilities (Sinclair 2002). According to Padolina (2004), an organization like Microsoft has corporate commitment to the principle of diversity because diversity empowered it to provide excellent customer service and enhances the lives of their employees by giving more opportunities and better prospects, as well as generating bigger community engagement. An excellent source of disability empowerment and support at Microsoft is the employee resource groups that are initiated and chartered by employees. These self-organized groups support networking, continuing education, career development, mentoring, social activities, and community outreach. Among these groups are the attention deficit disorder (ADD) group, the visually impaired persons in multiple sclerosis (MSVIP), and the deaf and hard of hearing group. However, Waterhouse et al. (2010) found that while large enterprises may be leading the way in equal employment and diversity policies and practices, small- to medium-sized enterprises are actually employing the majority of PWDs. In terms of business type, Nietupski et al. (1996) discovered that there was no interaction effect between business type (banks, credit unions, grocery stores, and retail stores) and hiring of PWDs.

The existing literature on employers' views of PWDs suggests that employers are generally willing to consider hiring PWDs but still hold confused and stereotypical beliefs about various aspects of disability, and they tend to be more negative when specific attitudes toward workers with disabilities are assessed. For instance, workers with physical disabilities are viewed more positively than workers with intellectual disabilities or psychiatric disabilities (Diska and Rogers 1996; Hernandez et al. 2000). Due to the negative perceptions, many employers may still be hesitant in hiring workers with disabilities. Therefore, the overall employment rate of PWDs is still far from satisfactory even though there are noted progress in most countries.

1.2 Challenges and Strategies in Employing PWDs

Research found that the level of knowledge about information and assistance available is high among government agencies and large organizations with human resource departments and low in most small- to medium-sized enterprises (Waterhouse et al. 2010). Most existing literatures on disability employment tend to focus on the experiences of employees. Few researchers have addressed the impact of disability employment on organization operations, costs, and benefits. Waterhouse et al. (2010) discovered that most employers are worried about the cost in terms of money, time, and productivity when hiring PWDs, not only of the employee with disability but of the work teams which bear some of the responsibility for each other's performance. In other words, the operational costs of hiring PWDs workforce have always been the main reasons for not hiring. In small- to medium-sized organizations, one key concern raised by the employers was the cost of extra supervision and training to support an employee with disability. In addition, there are also concerns about cost of hiring and contingent loss of productivity (Peck and Kirkbride 2001; Domzal et al. 2008).

According to McIlveen (2004), concerns about incurring extra costs have made the process of integrating youth with disabilities into the workplace as one of the main challenges that organizations face. In the case of the American Institute for Cancer Research, for instance, most of the staff in the organization had never worked with PWDs, and they had to learn how to interact with them and how to provide guidance and instruction. The employees often had preconceived notions about PWDs' abilities and shortcomings. These concerns were usually related to perceptions about PWDs' ability to keep up with the work so that they would not interrupt the overall work flow. Due to this initial skepticism, there was an overall low level of acceptance among the staff at the organization with regard to this idea. Therefore, it is crucial to convince the staff to have PWDs in the workplace in order for the integration to be successful. McIlveen (2004) further emphasized that one of the main factors for young people who have disabilities to be successful at workplace is the assistance from staffs who serve as job coaches. The staff, also known as bridges staff, provides initial information and guidance about particular students with disabilities who are interested to work at the organization as well as initial assistance in getting them situated. The organization then works with bridges staff to assess the job requirements and match it with the students' skill level, resulting in tasks at which the students can perform and excel. One of the effective employment strategies that were taken by the organization was to bring PWDs into the organization on trial basis. Not only that this practice was able to give the students time to become acclimated on their new jobs, but it also enables the other employees to accept their presence.

Enabling workers with disabilities to adapt at workplace and carry out their assigned task efficiently is another challenge faced by employers. Burke (2004) stated that many young PWDs are inexperienced in proper workplace behavior. Often, they are not familiar with such basic expectations as attendance, punctuality, responding to supervision or coworkers, or showing interest in the work. Often, interpersonal behavior, such as looking at someone when speaking, has to be taught through role-playing. Hence, work-based experiences are critical for students with disabilities to gain the necessary skills and experiences prior to joining the workforce (Doren and Benz 1998). The arrangement for work-based experiences can be made possible through the collaboration between organizations and special education providers. Unfortunately, according to Zhang et al. (2005), internship and supported employment were the two least common experiences that students received through their schools. This implies that not many PWDs are adequately prepared to move into employment directly after leaving schools.

1.3 Future Trends

On the other hand, McIlveen (2004) states that employers may hire PWDs for the following reasons: (a) meeting a perceived community need, (b) meeting an

ongoing industry need, and (c) meeting a company's specific need. Regardless of the underlying reasons, hiring and retaining PWDs workforce is a win-win solution to a number of problems (Lengnick 2007). First and foremost, many PWDs who want to work but currently are unemployed will be hired, which will secure their financial independence and dignity. Secondly, employers need the best talent available to compete effectively in a global economy. Thus, capitalizing on a source of good employees could make the difference between success and failure in the marketplace. And thirdly, the benefits of hiring PWDs will eventually contribute back to the society as it is estimated that society could save as much as $37 billion a year in benefits payment alone if more PWDs were employed (Riley 2006; Lengnick et al. 2008).

Generally, there is a positive outlook on disability employment. With increasing disability advocacy movements, corporate social responsibility culture, stronger supported employment services, such as job coaches, greater awareness toward workforce diversity, equal employment opportunities, and the realization of potential untapped human resources, there may be higher demand for PWDs workforce. Nevertheless, the current and future demand of PWDs workforce in Malaysia is still unclear due to a lack of research in this area. Furthermore, organizations may not get similar supports and services in hiring workers with disabilities in view that the supporting services are still emerging in the country.

2 Research Objectives

This study looks into the current and future demand of PWDs as part of a productive workforce in Malaysia. Therefore, the following research objectives were developed:

2.1 To Compare the Profiles of Organizations That Hired and Did Not Hire PWDs as Workforce

The organizations' characteristics will be analyzed in terms of size, sector, and profit/nonprofit orientation and location, in relation to their demand of PWDs as part of their workforce. To obtain a holistic picture of the current status of demand, organizations are sampled from the open employment (industry), government, and nonprofit organizations (NGOs). The current structures in hiring PWDs will also be identified according to the organization profiles. PWDs in Malaysia may be placed in these organizations through job coach, placement system carried out by the government, or via PWDs' own efforts in competitive employment environment.

2.2   *To Examine Organizations' Views About Demands on PWDs as Workforce*

In order to understand the demand of PWDs as workforce, this study compares the organizations' views on the employability of PWDs and their culture and policy, as well as needs in hiring PWDs. In other words, the study set out to determine whether there are differences in the views of organizations that have hired and did not hire PWDs with regard to the disability employment. It is also crucial to understand the growth strategies of organizations which hired this special population as part of their workforce.

2.3   *To Explore the Future Demand of PWDs as Workforce*

The study also aims to explore the future demand of PWDs workforce. To achieve this objective, organizations which did not employ PWDs as workforce were asked whether they will do so in the future and their reasons if they are not interested to hire them in the future. As for organizations which employed PWDs, they were asked whether this practice will be continued or not and the reasons behind their decisions.

3   Theoretical Perspective

In the past, having profit-oriented organizations employing PWDs would seem far fetched, especially if the main agenda for these organizations is to maximize profit as well as shareholders' value. In fact, review of literatures showed that some organizations even adopted socially irresponsible corporate behaviors in the pursuit of profit. However, at the same time, literatures also highlighted organizations that go the great lengths to support the local and international communities in achieving their social aspirations. Such contrast responses indicate that organizations view and react toward issues related to social responsibilities differently. Thus, it is important for researchers to be able to identify reasons for the different responses in order to generate greater employment opportunities for PDWs.

In addition, concerns over organizational commitment to employ PWDs have slowly started to take center stage in Malaysia, especially when issues related to the employment of PWDs are highlighted by the media from time to time. It is interesting to observe how some organizations adopt the policy of hiring PWDs that go beyond their official recruitment policies, while others decided to refrain themselves from getting involved in such recruitment efforts. The situation has encouraged this study to investigate the conditions and the corporate behaviors that are more likely to produce socially responsible behaviors such as providing
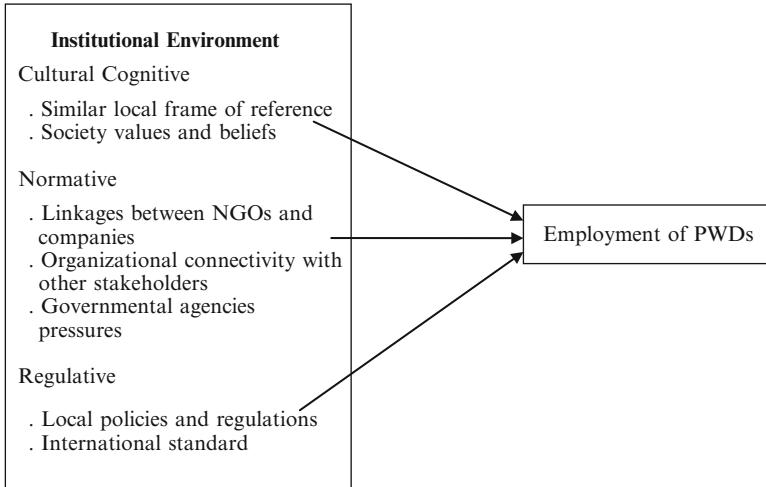
Fig. 5.1 Model of influencing factors in employment of persons with disabilities (Source: Self-designed)

employment for the PWDs. This study used the institutional theory to explore several sets of institutional influences under which employment of PWDs is likely to occur as depicted in Fig. 5.1.

In essence, institutional theory focuses on several factors that influence organizational decisions. According to DiMaggio and Powell (1983), they believed that managerial decisions, including employment of PWDs as part of the organizational workforce, are strongly shaped by three main institutional mechanisms, which are the coercive, normative, and mimetic isomorphism. This notion is further supported by Scott (1992) who stressed that apart from organizational characteristics, culture as well as social pressures plays important roles in influencing organizational practices and structures.

Thus, the institutional pressures include several aspects such as the cognitive, normative, and regulative structures and activities that govern the understanding on the general social activities (Scott 1992). The cognitive aspect refers to the cultural elements that govern the organizational choices without the involvement of conscious thought. This aspect is also known to act as a mental frame of reference that interprets any situations faced by the organizations (Scott 1992). These frames of reference will act as facilitator to the adoption of similar practices by the industry members. Therefore, some organizational decisions may be adopted even though they are many other attractive alternatives because it is perceived as appropriate within the framework established by the members of the group. Apart from that, Isaksson et al. (2004) have also conducted a study on the Swedish venture capitalists and their contractual strategies. It is understood that most venture capitalists differ in their preferences for early- or later-stage investments. Little difference was found

between the contractual choices made by experienced and inexperienced venture capitalists. This indicated that companies tended to mimic each other within the industrial setting.

The normative aspects on the other hand are sets of requirements and conditions upheld by the local communities. In order to garner positive reputations, organizations will ensure that they conform to the local norms as closely as possible. In fact, Guthire (2003) suggested that 91% of companies reported that strong to moderate local norms are applicable for charitable activities. Thus, it can be deduced that social norms might play significant roles in employment of PWDs by Malaysian organizations.

Apart from that, past studies have found that the aspect that can strongly influence the organizational decision to be involved in socially responsible decisions such as employing PWDs are the various regulatory agencies or those who have the power to exert coercive influence (Edelman 1992). For example, Jennings and Zandbergen (1995) found that coercive pressures, in the form of regulations and regulatory enforcement, have been the main reason for organizations to implement practices imposed by the industry. Thus, coercive interventions can be influential in persuading organizations to get into philanthropic activities and act as important guides for the organizations to channel their social focus (Campbell 2007).

As the theory allows researchers to understand how the industry will respond to the opportunities as well as challenges offered by PWDs as part of the productive workforce, it is proposed that the institutional pressures faced by the organizations might influence their decisions to provide employment opportunity to PWDs.

4 Methodological Framework

Past study suggests that while larger organizations may be leading the way in equal employment and diversity policies and practices, small- to medium-sized organizations actually employ the majority (Waterhouse et al. 2010). Hence, to gain a holistic understanding of the issues around disability employment and to determine the current and future demand of disability workforce in Malaysia, the sample should comprise organizations with diverse profiles (e.g., sizes, type of industry, sector, orientation in profit, and location). In order to achieve that as close as possible, this study has used the eight employment sectors specified in the Malaysian Economic Report 2011/2012 (Ministry of Finance 2012). These areas are listed in Table 5.1. However, it was difficult to achieve representativeness of the actual Malaysian organizational landscape as some of the employment areas were not readily accessible to the researcher.

This study adopted an exploratory approach to examine the current and future demands of PWDs workforce in Malaysia. A total of 36 organizations with diverse profiles were sampled for this study. Details of the profiles are showed in Table 5.2.

About one third of the organizations involved in this study are from the manufacturing industry, followed by the retail industry, government, and NGOs.

Table 5.1 Employment areas specified by the Malaysian Economic Report 2011/2012

No	Employment area
1	Manufacturing
2	Construction
3	Transportation, storage, and communication
4	Government services (including public administration, health, education, and defense)
5	Finance, insurance, real estate, and business services
6	Mining and quarrying
7	Agriculture
8	Other services (including utilities, wholesale and retail trade, and accommodation and restaurant, as well as others)

Source: Self-designed

Close to 40% of the employers were factories, and the remaining 60% were training organizations, hypermarkets, retailer, expressway, universities, government schools, and fast-food companies. This is a positive indication for PWDs to get jobs in the open market as many of the traditionally hostile working environments like manufacturing organizations are also hiring PWDs.

Semi-structured, qualitative interviews were conducted with employers to explore their views about the demand decisions on disability employment. Thirty-six were interviewed of whom 18 are current employers of PDWs, while the remaining 18 employers did not have any prior experiences in hiring workers with disability. The lists of employers who hired PWDs were obtained from the Labor Department of Peninsular Malaysia, the Social Welfare Department, and also through press documentation. The employers which did not hire PWDs were taken from organizations within similar industries and sectors to provide a fair overview of the employment situation. These organizations were located in the Peninsular Malaysia and with a breadth of both government and private organizations. The samples ranged from small to large organizations, with rather equal representation from both large and small- to medium-sized organizations. Included in the samples of employers were organizations in the manufacturing industry, retailers, government, NGOs, food industry, infrastructure, and automotive industries. This sample covers diverse sectors (e.g., factory, training organization, hypermarket, expressway, university, schools, fast food, and local council) and both profit- and nonprofit-oriented organizations. However, due to various technical and logistical difficulties, the samples were not the exact representative of the Malaysian industrial structure.

The data collection approach aimed to be sensitive, flexible, and responsive and to draw employers into a conversation which allowed exploration, not only of policies and employment practices, but also of perceptions, values, and possibly prejudices that may not be immediately volunteered. A set of generative questions was used to stimulate dialogue, and, as the conversation unfolded, some questions were omitted, others added or substantially reshaped, depending upon circumstances and the particular conversations. These data were synthesized and analyzed, and the emerged themes could shed light on the current and future demand of disability workforce in Malaysia.

Table 5.2 Profiles of organizations sampled

No	Employing PWD	Type	Sector	PO	Size	Location
1	√	Retail industry	Hypermarket A (103 outlets nationwide)	√	Large	Urban and suburban
2	√	Retail industry	Hypermarket B (77 outlets nationwide)	√	Large	Urban and suburban
3	√	Manufacturing industry	Factory A (2 manufacturing plants)	√	Medium	Rural
4	√	Manufacturing industry	Factory B (1 manufacturing plant)	√	Small	Suburban
5	√	Retail industry	Retailer A (1 shop)	√	Small	Rural
6	√	Government	University A (3 campuses)	x	Large	Urban
7	√	Government	School A	x	Small	Suburban
8	√	NGO	Training organization A (3 sheltered workshops)	x	Medium	Urban
9	√	NGO	Training organization B (3 business centers)	x	Medium	Urban
10	√	NGO	Training organization C (1 sheltered workshop)	x	Small	Urban
11	√	Manufacturing industry	Factory C (3 manufacturing plants)	√	Large	Urban
12	√	Food industry	Fast food A (more than 500 outlets)	√	Large	Urban and suburban
13	√	Infrastructure industry	Expressway A (own 8 expressway projects)	√	Large	Urban and suburban
14	√	Retail industry	Hypermarket C (27 outlets nationwide)	√	Large	Urban and suburban
15	√	Automotive industry	Factory **D** (2 assembly plants)	√	Medium	Urban
16	√	Manufacturing industry	Factory **E** (2 manufacturing plants and 2 R&D plants)	√	Large	Urban
17	√	Manufacturing industry	Factory **F** (1 manufacturing plant)	√	Large	Urban
18	√	Manufacturing industry	Factory **G** (2 manufacturing plants)	√	Large	Urban
19	x	Retail industry	Hypermarket C (27 outlets nationwide)	√	Large	Urban
20	x	Retail industry	Hypermarket D (3 outlets nationwide)	√	Medium	Suburban
21	x	Manufacturing industry	Factory **H**	√	Large	Rural
22	x	Manufacturing industry	Factory **I**	√	Small	Suburban
23	x	Food industry	Fast food B	√	Small	Rural
24	x	Government	University B (2 campuses)	x	Large	Urban
25	x	Government	School B	x	Small	Suburban
26	x	NGO	Training organization	x	Small	Urban

Table 5.2 (continued)

No	Employing PWD	Type	Sector	PO	Size	Location
27	x	NGO	Training organization	x	Small	Urban
28	x	Government	School C	x	Small	Urban
29	x	Food industry	Fast food C	√	Large	Urban and suburban
30	x	Retail industry	Retailer B	√	Small	Suburban
31	x	Retail industry	Retailer C	√	Small	Rural
32	x	Manufacturing industry	Factory **J**	√	Medium	Suburban
33	x	Private education industry	Private school D	√	Medium	Urban
34	x	Manufacturing industry	Factory **K**	√	Medium	Suburban
35	x	Retail industry	Retailer D	√	Large	Urban
36	x	Government	Local council	x	Large	Urban and suburban

Source: Self-designed
Note: PO = profit orientation

According to Van Manen (1997), there were three main ways of isolating thematic statements. In general, a researcher can use three approaches in uncovering the thematic elements of a phenomenon in texts. The first approach is known as holistic approach, the second approach is known as selective approach, and finally, the third approach is called the detailed approach (Van Manen 1997). This study also followed guidelines recommended by Streubert and Carpenter (1999). According to them, thematic analysis involved the identification of patterns related to the meaningful connections and then followed by another observation of the whole text in order to generate significant words relevant to the study. Those words then would be highlighted, extracted, and later pasted into a new document. Once pasted, these words were then carefully labeled to signify their relevance to the phenomenon. Apart from that, there was also a continuous process of checking and rechecking to ensure that all extracted words and phrases were properly labeled.

5 Findings and Discussion

5.1 Organizational Profiles and Demand of PWD Workforce

5.1.1 Profiles of Employers Who Are Hiring PWDs

- Currently, the highest number of PWDs employed by a single private employer is 105 people, which is by Giant Hypermarket (Support program for the disabled 2011).

- All organizations that hired PWDs stated that they have used job coach to create the natural environment and provide the necessary support to ensure successful employment of PWDs. These job coaches are normally trained by NGOs such as the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) as well as other institutions like the Joy Foundation.
- Majority of the employers are large organizations as many of them have the capacity to accommodate PWDs in their working environment.
- Greater accessibility and facilities readily available to cater for the mobility of PWDs are also found to be one of the drivers for employment of the PWDs.
- Interview findings show that many of the PWDs are able to secure employment through existing assistance extended by the government agencies. Ninety percent of the organizations who are currently employing PWDs admitted that they have job coaches to assist them in placing PWDs into the working environment. Only 10% of the organizations use their own initiative to absorb PWDs as part of their current workforce.

5.1.2 Profiles of Employers Who Did Not Hire PWDs

- Data from the respondents showed that employment of PWDs is less common in infrastructure, automotive, and private education.
- Apart from that, the study also found that most of the reasons highlighted by organizations not hiring PWDs are related to the lack of funding to accommodate the PWDs as part of their workforce.
- The interviews also highlighted that many of the organizations that did not hire PWDs experienced difficulties in accommodating PWDs as part of their current workforce. These organizations have little knowledge and capabilities in hiring the PWDs and did not have access to the assistance provided by various government initiatives.
- These organizations also find it difficult to assess the PWDs' capabilities and believed that the PWDs are lacking of suitable knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the jobs.

5.2 Demand of PWDs Workforce: Viewpoint of Organizations with Disability Workers

The study found that even though hiring PWDs as part of the organizational current workforce is still at infancy in Malaysia, many organizations that have started to tap into this labor supply highlighted their interest to continue employing PWDs in the future. These organizations believed that the training that some of the PWDs have received in the past have made them as competitive as any normal workers available in the labor market. In fact, in some cases, the organizations felt that the PWDs

do have superior skills and knowledge, thus making the idea of hiring them more appealing. Apart from that, the employed PWDs also have positive work attitudes and are willing to work hard for the organizations.

Even though some of these organizations rely on written policy to employ PWDs, many of the organizations hire the PWDs based on their own capabilities and treat them as equal as any other normal candidates when applying for the jobs as shown in Table 5.3.

- Surprisingly, only two out of 18 employers who have PWDs have disabilities employment policy to uphold equal employment principles.
- Three organizations have corporate social responsibility program (CSR) and corporate social and environmental responsibility program (CSER) that are in line with hiring of workers with disabilities.
- More than 50% the organizations have no written policy on disability employment at all. Majority hired PWDs based on the suitability criteria, which imply that there is no barrier to hiring as long as the individuals' skills match the job requirements.
- In addition, employment of PWDs is more likely when the organization is owned by PWD and also when most of the other employees are PWDs.

During the interviews, it is also found that these organizations usually rely on their own corporate social responsibility initiative in hiring PWDs. These organizations also generally are satisfied with the performances of the PWDs and do not have problems in dealing with PWDs as part of their current workforce. They also believed that the training the PWDs have received so far have enabled them to be independent and equipped them with the necessary skills to survive in the real working environment. Most importantly, these organizations are aware that the PWDs also can be as productive as other workers. In fact, some of the PWDs are more talented and dedicated in getting the jobs done. Apart from that, they also have different cultural policy and needs in hiring diverse workers as compared to their counterparts which did not.

Nevertheless, a study conducted by Luecking (2008) found that corporate social responsibility is still often invoked when companies articulate a policy about workers with disabilities, rather than a belief in their potential for productivity. In fact, many of these organizations admitted that they just followed the current trend portrayed by other more established organizations when they created their recruitment policies. Hence, a written policy may not predict employment of PWDs because the establishment of such policies by the organizations is a result of imitating other organizations. However, results from this study indicated that the demand and actual employment of PWDs by Malaysian large organizations are still based on their corporate social responsibility (CSR) policy. From the employer's perspective, the hiring of the individual must also do one or more of the following: save the employer money, help the employer make money, or help the employer's operation run more efficiently by providing a means to accomplish more work and deliver better products or services. This necessitates an approach to job development that goes beyond simply presenting a potential candidate to employers. As a result,

Table 5.3 Profiles of organizations and PWDs employment policy

Org	Employing PWDs	Type	Type of PWDs employment policy
1	√	Retail industry	Included in the company human resource policy
2	√	Retail industry	No written policy but initiative by individual outlet
3	√	Manufacturing industry	No written policy. Recently started to employ
4	√	Manufacturing industry	No written policy. All employees are PWD
5	√	Retail industry	No written policy. Owner is PWD
6	√	Government	No written policy. Hiring PWD based on suitability
7	√	Government	No written policy. Hiring PWD based on suitability
8	√	NGO	Rehabilitate PWDs and operate sheltered workshops
9	√	NGO	Rehabilitate PWDs and operate sheltered workshops
10	√	NGO	Rehabilitate PWDs and operate sheltered workshops
11	√	Manufacturing industry	Corporate social and environmental responsibility program
12	√	Food industry	Hiring policy included in the CSR program
13	√	Infrastructure industry	Included in the company human resource policy
14	√	Retail industry	Hiring policy included in the CSR program
15	√	Automotive industry	No written policy. Hiring PWD based on suitability
16	√	Manufacturing industry	No written policy. Hiring PWD based on suitability
17	√	Manufacturing industry	No written policy. Hiring PWD based on suitability
18	√	Manufacturing industry	No written policy
19	x	Retail industry	No written policy
20	x	Retail industry	No written policy
21	x	Manufacturing industry	No written policy
22	x	Manufacturing industry	No written policy
23	x	Food industry	No written policy
24	x	Government	No written policy
25	x	Government	No written policy
26	x	NGO	No written policy
27	x	NGO	No written policy
28	x	Government	No written policy
29	x	Food industry	No written policy
30	x	Retail industry	No written policy
31	x	Retail industry	No written policy
32	x	Manufacturing industry	No written policy
33	x	Private education industry	No written policy
34	x	Manufacturing industry	No written policy
35	x	Retail industry	No written policy
36	x	Government	No written policy

Source: Self-designed

from the total employers who employed PWDs, three organizations stated that they are merely complying with their CSR requirements when hiring PWDs and these workers are stationed at noncritical departments.

Although many of the organizations employ PWDs as part of their corporate social responsibility program, subsequent efforts implemented to fully integrate the concept of workforce diversity has proved that this is not just a temporary program. There seems to be a paradigm shift from "selling" to employers of potential PWDs to accommodating the workforce needs of the employers as evidenced in the roles played by job coach. These job coaches ensure that the PWDs are hired based on suitability of the job openings. Thus, the job coaches ensure that there is a match between organization needs and the skills possessed by PWDs. When the job coaches and also the job development professionals can identify specific job tasks that potentially improve company operations, they can help employers recruit suitable people to perform these tasks. This job-task identification process often leads to finding what has been called the "hidden job market" (Luecking 2008). This study also found that many of the PWDs employed by the organizations are placed into these niche work areas.

Even though there are some regulations being introduced by the Malaysian government with regard to the employment of PWDs, these organizations claimed that they are not influenced by the regulations when employing PWDs. Many of the organizations also claimed that the regulations pertaining to the employment of PWDs are either ineffective or inadequate to encourage recruitment activities. Furthermore, they also pointed out that the government itself failed to fulfill the targeted percentage of employment of PWDs as part of its workforce. The enforcement of these regulations is also weak, and as a result, they failed to assist PWDs in securing employment.

Therefore, employment of PWDs in Malaysia by various organizations is primarily being influenced by the establishment and implementation of the organizational CSR and CSER policies as well as the organizational own initiatives. In fact, the organizational own awareness about the potentials of hiring PWDs as part of their productive workforce is the main catalyst that support the employment of PWDs in Malaysia.

5.3 Managerial Strategies of Organizations with PWDs

One common managerial strategy that has emerged from the interviews with the organizations that hired PWDs as workforce was "turning the PWDs into organization assets that could help the organization to grow." Based on the findings from this study, five main managerial strategies were taken by the organizations in order to achieve this aim:

- It is essential for the organizations that hired PWDs to establish smart partnership with competent professionals such as job coaches, government organizations

(e.g., Social Welfare Department, special education schools, and labor department), and NGOs (e.g., job-link) to link them with PWDs, assist in job placement, ensure effective job accommodations, and provide follow-up to PWDs and the company. Without these intermediary links, organizations' ability to offer work experiences for PWD would be very challenging.

- Most employers are open to hiring PWDs as workforce and they prefer to follow typical human resource procedures when bringing PWDs into the workplace, but they are willing and able to make extensive accommodations and adaptations to procedures when they have competent help from disability professionals, such as job coaches, who can offer assistance to the organizations to ensure organization growth, while upholding the principles of workforce diversity. This finding is supported by literatures that employers often need the expertise and support of vocational rehabilitation professionals who are well versed in not only disability support methodology but also in developing and managing employers' relationships (Luecking 2008).

- Organizations that hired PWDs promote continual examination and adjustment of companies' internal process to optimize organizational performance to ensure productivity and profits. This is supported by literatures (Rothwell et al. 1995), whereby internal processes in organization development refer to job design, work accommodation, employee selection and management, employee role clarification, and work flow dynamics. Supported employment can make a difference in the employment outcome of PWDs in Malaysia and benefits the organization growth as well.

- As one of the most common managerial strategies, organizations that hired PWDs are willing to provide internship working experiences for students with disabilities to gain the necessary job-related skills and real site working experiences before actually taking them into the organization. Offering work experiences to many organizations is a no-risk way for them to screen potential new employees. It is crucial to note that whether the organizations' motivation for hiring PWDs into the workplace was to meet a company, industry, or community need, employers provide work experiences to PWDs because they believed that they have benefited in some way.

- Organizations that hired PWD embrace and nurture workforce diversity culture among their employees. Disability awareness and training, either formal or informal, for the coworkers is considered an integral step to integrate PWD into the organizations. Internal champions often arise within organizations that make work experiences beneficial for both PWDs and the company. Employers both large and small generally agreed that the organizational culture is critical to successful employment of PWDs. There was also an agreement that an organizational culture conducive to such employment is defined by a proactive stance of the top management. Hence, one of the key managerial strategies to sustain growth lies in the organizational leadership which places both ethical and practical value on creating a workforce that is inclusive of employees with disabilities (Waterhouse et al. 2010).

5.4 Demand of PWDs Workforce: Viewpoint of Organizations Without Disability Workers

Service organizations involved in this study (e.g., automotive, private education, and infrastructure) are mainly customer oriented. These organizations constantly aim to provide quality goods and services to the consumers, which will determine their abilities to remain competitive in the industry. They are accustomed to operate in a consistent and stable manner, in which daily operations of the organizations is predictable, systematic, and manageable. Hence, majority of the organizations interviewed who are yet to hire PWDs as workforce are concerned about the potential risks toward the daily operations of the organization if PWDs are taking in as part of their workforce. The ideas of hiring PWDs workforce seem to drag these organizations into the unknown and uncharted areas. They felt that they were dealing with areas that they were not familiar with, and many found themselves at loss even before initiating the ideas.

Based on the interviews, the main concerns are (1) lack of knowledge in providing suitable training for the PWDs, (2) limited information available on managing PWDs in a workforce, (3) unawareness of the PWDs' abilities to perform jobs, and (4) inability to gain access to various assistance provided by NGOs and government agencies.

5.4.1 Lack of Knowledge in Providing Suitable Training for the PWDs

This is one of the persistent themes that relates to being in the dark. Insufficient knowledge is a state of having limited understanding on issues. This theme emerged when the participants talked of what it is like to receive PWDs as part of their workforce. Organizations need to work as one coherent group in order to work efficiently. Thus, everybody works to ensure that the coherent group exists. The workers have their own specific roles to play, and they must know their jobs well. However, if the jobs are not known, the group cannot proceed to operate.

Therefore, in the organizations, it is desirable that the workers have the knowledge and expertise to perform their jobs. Training provided by the organization will ensure that the workers are well equipped to do the jobs. However, many organizations claimed that they are still not prepared to train PWDs as they do not have the knowledge to do that.

> I don't know whether we've all the knowledge to train them. I mean, in providing training, we even have problems with the normal workers, so I'm afraid that it'll be worse with the disabled people. (Manager, Hypermarket D, did not hire PWDs)

It appeared that without the know-how on conducting effective training, it will be very difficult for the organization to take the PWDs as part of their current workforce. The organizations also claimed that they may not know how to assess the effectiveness of the training provided to the PWDs and also to determine whether the PWDs will be able to follow the training programs prepared for

their new employees. Furthermore, most of the PWDs seeking for employments were not properly prepared by the education system to face challenging working environment.

5.4.2 Limited Information on Managing PWDs as Part of the Workforce

Apart from having little knowledge on providing effective training, some of the participants also claimed that they do not know how to properly manage PWDs as part of the workforce. It should be noted that most people spend huge amount of their time at workplace. Therefore, it is not surprising that many of them appreciate the importance of being able to work together as a team. In other words, the organizations have put strong emphasis on getting the workers together professionally as well as socially.

> We're working as a team, so if one of the team members did not fit well, I guess it'll affect the bond that we've created among the team members. So, I'd prefer to have a team player in my team so that we work things out together. (Store manager, Factory I, did not hire PWDs)

A team within the organization is like a society of its own where the rules, code of conducts, and attitudes need to be agreed upon in order to achieve shared expectations. The participants claimed that PWDs with their unique mix of personalities, needs, and demands posed huge challenges to them in creating and promoting teamwork. One participant shared his experience dealing with such situation:

> So now we've a new group member and we're already have our little gang, all set up and ready for work and it's a bit challenging when I was approached to have the PWDs put in my team. And I start to think, well, yeah, this situation might not only pose challenges to me but I'm concerned that this new kid might not even how to say it, not slot in as well to what we do and things like that. (Section manager, Hypermarket C, did not hire PWDs)

When explaining the term "does not slot in" properly, another participant stated that his main concern is related to the PWDs' abilities to socialize with their coworkers and to contribute to the productive work environment. He also highlighted the broad spectrum that covers disabilities, and he felt some of them require expert interventions and, thus, make it inappropriate for employment:

> We're dealing with heavy machinery and I think this kind of work environment is definitely not suitable for the PWDs. I mean, I know that they're and definitely capable workers. It just that the whole thing is not suitable, you know. (Production manager, Factory H, did not hire PWDs)

5.4.3 Unawareness of the Ability to Perform Jobs

The concerns highlighted in this aspect are about the extent to which PWDs are prepared to work in an integrated working environment as studies show that many young people with disabilities entering the workforce are not well prepared to meet the demands of a dynamic work environment (Burgstahler 2001).

Employers consistently have reported that they are unaware of or naïve about the availability of PWDs as supplement labor pool (Fabian et al. 1995). Thus, another dominant emerging theme is related to the participants' failure to see the PWDs' capability in performing their jobs. Revealed in the description of being unaware of the ability is a powerful dimension of being in the dark as a barrier to see. In addition, one of the meanings that the participants attribute to experiencing being in the dark is that it acts as a filter. A participant describes some of her experiences with the filter:

> This guy came to work with us, spoke very little with us and for a week we had this guy. It was quite awkward, yep it's nice to have new guy but then he was gone. I think he just couldn't take the challenge of meeting the job demand. Come to think of it, I didn't really see whether he did his job properly or not. In fact, I didn't have the chance to know his name. (Supervisor, Fast Food A, hired PWDs)

Being unaware of the PWDs' capabilities had changed the opportunities into something highly disadvantaging to the PWDs. Many of the organizations strongly argued that the current operations of the organizations cannot be changed to suit the conditions of PWDs when they join the workforce. This situation has hindered few organizations from hiring PWDs.

> I'm not sure whether they can work and do all the jobs. I mean, do we have to give them a different kind of jobs? Can they really perform? I mean, we need everybody to be able to perform their own jobs because we don't have much room for leniency. (Operations manager, Factory J, did not hire PWDs)

Some participants cannot imagine working with PWDs in their respective organizations. In relating his experience, the production manager for Factory H tells of hearing tales where in many instances, other workers may have to do the jobs assigned to the PWDs:

> I heard that in another factory, people have to cover the jobs; you know finishing the jobs given the disabled workers. I don't really want to force people to meet their target, but if we've to give exceptions all the time, then others may not happy with it. It'll give my headache. (Quality controller, Factory K, did not hire PWDs)

5.4.4 Inaccessible Assistance

One of the main catalysts to encourage private sector to have greater involvement in employing PWDs is the benefits provided. This is because, although many organizations claimed to be concerned with the conditions of PWDs, only few have taken the initiatives to employ them. This can be clearly seen in this study. No doubt that the number of organizations employing PWDs have increased in recent years. However, their commitments often lacked the details required to ensure continuous support for employment of PWDs. Even though this study only covers a small number of organizations, it reflects major opportunities for improvement across all of the sectors. These improvements would be a boost for efforts of employing PWDs in a workplace.
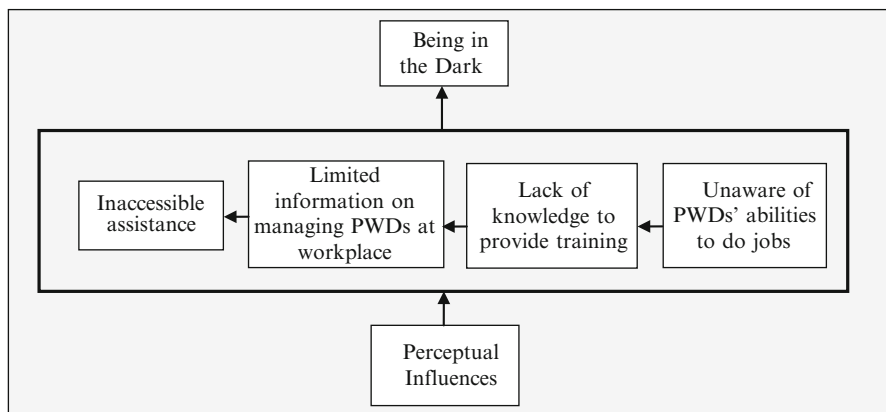
Fig. 5.2 A schematic presentation of participants' views of including PWDs in the workforce (Source: Self-designed)

However, many of the participants claimed that the assistance provided for organizations hiring PWDs are not readily available to them, hence creating doubts on the feasibility of employing PWDs.

> Even if we're prepared to hire these people, we have no idea on how to do that. I mean, who will help us to do it and if we've problem later where can we get the help? (Quality controller, Factory K, did not hire PWDs)

Such issues can easily be resolved with the assistance of job coaches. In fact, McIlveen (2004) stated that the service of job coaches is imperative in ensuring the successful placement of PWDs for employment. However, there are very few professionals existing to help the industry to rope in the participation of PWDs as part of the productive workforce. The services of job coaches in Malaysia are not widespread, and currently, only a small number are being employed.

In general, the participants believed that the assistance needed in recruiting and employing PWDs are not readily available when they are required. The schematic presentation of views from employers who did not hire disability workers is showed in Fig. 5.2.

In addition, the interested organizations also have to face with limited financial assistance in making the working environment more PWDs friendly. So far, the government has helped the organizations by providing tax exemptions and few other incentives, but these may not be adequate in the long run.

> I don't even know that we can get exemptions on various aspects when we hire people with disabilities. Of course we've the intention to hire from the beginning, but knowing all these could be more helpful and encouraging. (Store supervisor, Retailer D, did not hire PWDs)

5.5 Future Demand of PWDs Workforce

Interview findings with both categories of employers revealed that there seems to be a paradigm shift from "selling" to employers of potential PWDs to accommodating the workforce needs of the employers. In other words, more constructive approach was taken by the government and NGOs involved in disability employment to convince employers to hire PWDs. The move to train, match, and accommodate disability workers' skills to tailor make the needs of the employers may contribute positively toward greater demand of diverse workforce in Malaysia. This study also discovered that organizations that are hiring workers with disabilities have greater interest in hiring more PWDs in the future as they are confident with the capabilities of these workers to contribute toward their organizations, just like other workers. This is supported by Hernandez et al. (2000)'s reviews on 37 studies of employers' attitudes toward disability, which show that employers views about disability tend to positively change with exposure. In other words, employers with prior experiences in hiring PWDs as workforce are more likely to hold favorable attitudes toward workers with disabilities than those who have not.

Employers with disability workforce also indicate that the presence or absence of disability was not a primary concern when making hiring decision (Luecking 2008). These findings suggest that organization's hiring experiences may predict future demand on PWDs workers. It is therefore important to encourage employers to make the first move and open up employment opportunities for PWDs. This is supported by findings from Luecking and Fabian's (2000) study that regardless of the nature or severity of the disability, more than 75% of youth who have completed work-based internship programs in high school were offered ongoing employment by their host companies, even though the companies were under no obligation to retain the interns beyond the internship period.

The large majority of organizations that did not hire PWDs as workforce generally are willing to consider hiring PWDs but still hold many confused and stereotypical beliefs about various aspects of disability. Their overwhelming concerns about disability employment (Fig. 5.2) have turned into a mental block that hinders them from realizing that PWDs is an untapped workforce that can serve as assets to the organization given adequate supports and trainings. As a whole, the future demand of PWDs workforce in Malaysia is still low and are more likely to take place in large organizations, and those with smart partnership with competent professionals such as job coaches, government organizations (e.g., Social Welfare Department, special education schools, and labor department), and NGOs (e.g., job-link).

6 Conclusion

Advocacy movement on workforce diversity and equal employment opportunities no doubt, may drive greater awareness among organizations about the untapped workforce of PWDs. Yet, such awareness can only be translated into

actual employment statistics when workers with disability are able to fulfill the organizations' demands as productive workers. The charity appeals approach is not an effective and sustainable marketing strategy to "sell" PWDs to potential employers. For this reason, work experience for PWDs is one of the most critical factors that set the stage for employment success. Research and practice show that PWDs benefit from frequent and continuous exposure to real work environment. These experiences, however, occur only when employers are available, willing, and prepared to provide employment opportunities for PWDs (Luecking 2004). This calls for more effective school-to-work transition programs, supported employment system, and smart partnership between education and business. Such collaboration makes it possible for students with disabilities to gain job-related skills (e.g., time management, problem solving, communication, and basic technology) and real-world working experiences that can enhance their employability (Bryen et al. 2007; Luecking 2004, 2008).

Organizations can also work with local special education teachers to arrange for internships, job shadow, and career days and to make appropriate matches between students and employment opportunities (Padolina 2004). Introducing young people with disabilities into the workplace also brings about positive cultural changes in organizations (Rutkowski et al. 2006). This is because employees are able to move beyond stereotypes and learn to see PWDs as unique individuals that can make real contributions. For successful job placement to take place, there are needs to strengthen the supported employment services in the country so that organization interested in hiring PWDs get timely and adequate support from disability professionals, such as job coaches, to ensure growth while upholding the principle of workforce diversity. In short, the smart partnership between the various stakeholders in disability employment will contribute positively toward the future supply and demand of PWDs workforce in Malaysia.

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Part III
Responses from the School-to-Work Transition Systems

Chapter 6

A Capability Approach to Cultural Diversity in School-to-Work Transitions: Amartya Sen and Young Adults' Diversely Different Education and Work Communities

Roberta (Bobby) Harreveld, Michael Singh, and Bingyi Li

1 Introduction

The effects of a global financial crisis, technological advances, political instabilities and ongoing environmental issues are impacting young adults' transitions from secondary school education to work. This chapter interrogates recent case study research findings in this area through Amartya Sen's (1992, 1999) capability approach, in which educators are challenged to provide culturally respectful school-to-work transitions for young indigenous adults. It exposes some elusive practicalities of the conceptual foundations of the capability approach with its emphasis on individual well-being, while seeking systems-level responses to making cultural diversity strengthen, rather than diminish, transitions from school to working life.

Transitions research has identified that geographical location, gender, socio-economic status and cultural and linguistic backgrounds are among a range of factors that impact on the nature of school-to-work transitions (UNESCO 2001, 2009). Engaging transitions within the broader frameworks of institutions and systems provides a way of examining large-scale innovations through culturally diverse work-life trajectories (OECD 2000; Sweet 2009, 2010). Accordingly, both conceptual and contextual engagement with the "wider disparities in the distribution of power, wealth and opportunity" that reflect policy-driven "unfair distribution of life changes" (UNESCO 2009: 6) are timely. This view is first explored conceptually through an analysis of the challenges and opportunities offered through taking a

R. Harreveld (✉)
Learning & Teaching Education Research Centre, Central Queensland University,
Rockhampton, QLD, Australia
e-mail: b.harreveld@cqu.edu.au

M. Singh • B. Li
Centre for Educational Research, University of Western Sydney, Sydney, NSW, Australia

capability approach (Nussbaum 2003, 2011; Sen 1992, 2006) to investigating the ways in which young adults' school-to-work transitions may be shaped structurally as they adapt to culturally diverse learning and work environments.

A review of international and national issues at the point of intersection between socio-economically aligned transitions and considerations of cultural diversity at individual, institutional and systems levels then provides contextual insights into this issue. National models for school-to-work transitions are reviewed, and their success, or otherwise, for identifying cultural diversity of both individuals and groups and using them explicitly in successful transitions is analysed. A specific case from Australia is presented through a descriptive analysis of transitions brokered for indigenous and non-indigenous young adults living in metropolitan and non-metropolitan (i.e. rural, regional and remote) communities in Queensland. Our authorial non-indigenous perspective is constructed throughout this chapter.

2   Conceptualising Cultural Diversity and Transitions: A Capability Approach

A capability approach provides practitioners and policy actors a way of "understanding the place of education and training in capability deprivation and enhancement" (Harreveld and Singh 2008: 212). Amartya Sen's (1992, 1999) premise that we are "diversely different" (2006: xiv) advances our argument that "education is one of the critical dimensions through which public policies for economic growth and human development can be assessed and analysed" (Lanzi 2007: 424). Sen's capability approach provides fresh perspectives to debates about equality in education, educational choice and education reform (Flores-Crespo 2007). This is significant because the latest report monitoring progress towards the Dakar Framework of Action and the Millennium Development Goals (UNESCO 2009) finds that while enrolment in secondary education is rising, inter- and intra-regional enrolment ratios, attainment rates and completion outcomes for culturally diverse young adults vary markedly.

A capability approach to cultural diversity and school-to-work transitions incorporates Sen's work on inequality (1992), freedom (1999) and identity (2006) through an explicit engagement with "the evaluation and assessment of individual well-being and social arrangements, the design of policies and proposals about social change in society" (Robeyns 2005: 94). Its focus is on young adult's valued actions and ways of being in their worlds, and as such, it incorporates both what individuals actually manage to achieve *and* the conditions of choice in which they make their decisions (Gasper 2007). Smith and Seward (2009: 214) argue that "conceptualizing and incorporating the social aspects of capabilities requires a basic understanding of how societies and individuals together constitute capabilities". Here, inequality and freedom of choice are analytical concepts that are closely linked. This means that viewing young adults' capabilities to achieve ways of doing school-to-work transitions that are meaningful for them in being what they want to be provides a specific lens to evaluate preparations for and outcomes from transitions.

In terms of equality of opportunities and freedom to make choices among transition pathways, the capability approach concentrates on "capacity to achieve valuable functionings that make up our lives, and more generally, our freedom to promote objectives we have reasons to value" (Sen 1992: xi). When considering opportunities for young adults to earn an income, establish and maintain social relations with peer groups in the workplace, and acquire the ability to exercise freedom of choice regarding future work/life options, a capability approach challenges the notion that "opportunities of choice" can be constructed "only as means to acquiring preferred bundles of commodities" (Sen 1992: 35) such as financial income, goods and services in a market economy. Because of pre-existing conditions over which they may have little control, young adults can at various times during their school-to-work transitions lack the capacity (economic, social and/or cultural) to gain access to or knowledge of how to transition successfully into the workplace or among work sites. In such instances, their professional and personal well-being is "influenced by not only economic inputs (money and things directly obtainable with money), but also 'non-economic' factors such as family, relations, friendships, beliefs, purposeful activity, exercise and health and so on" (Gasper 2007: 338). It is this inclusion of *both* economic *and* non-economic factors that constitutes a capability approach to transitions, and it follows that this approach is challenged through policy settings that aspire to address *both* for individuals *and* systems.

Sen (1999) leaves the capability approach's operational considerations to others, and it can therefore be conceptually elusive when used in the field of education (Flores-Crespo 2007; Gasper 2007). We are interested in neither an economic analysis of the outcomes of programmes designed to enhance school-to-work transitions nor the naming of specific capabilities (Qizilbash 2007). Our purpose in using the capability approach is to evaluate one particular aspect of government reforms to the senior secondary schooling. Specifically, we are concerned with the assessment of equality and inequality of indigenous students' post-school transitions through case study evidence from recent research. Before that though, it is timely to consider some of the contextual issues encountered in school-to-work transitions.

3 School-to-Work Transitions: Some Contextual Issues

Research into young adults' work-life trajectories from senior secondary school to further education, training and/or work around the world shows that

> their success or otherwise depends partly on the social, economic and labour market context, partly on young adult's personal qualities, and partly on the quality of institutional arrangements in the education system and the labour market. (Sweet 2010: iv)

From a focused analysis of international and national literature, Sweet (2009, 2010) asserts that context and institutions can impact positively their transitions from school to work. Within and among these contexts and institutions, cultural differences exist as "culture [. . .] consists in those patterns relative to behaviour

and the products of human action which may be inherited, that is, passed on from generation to generation independently of the biological genes" (Parsons 1949: 8).

In the transition phase from school to work, young adults are expected to learn about and then adapt their behaviours and attitudes to values, symbols (e.g. artefacts, tools), understandings and different points of view on life and living in different small, medium and large workplaces. In this sense, cultural diversity is known and experienced through the ways in which individuals and groups interpret, use and perceive these similarities and differences. This view accords with UNESCO's (2001) Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity in which "culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs" (Preamble to the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, 2001).

At multiple points of transition from school to work, young adults are vulnerable. In many countries, this vulnerability is widely recognised and is a focus of not only governments but also social welfare agencies. In Australia, non-government organisations work tirelessly to push the agenda for consideration of "a generation growing up largely accepting that the future is all about mobility, adaptability and change" (Carter 2008: 88–89). However, many young adults throughout the world still experience a lack of even the basic functionings of life with minimal opportunities for meaningful learning and/or earning (l/earning) and consequent lack of social and economic adaptability to changing life and work circumstances. However, positive policy-framed responses are being made throughout the world.

In the islands of the Pacific Ocean, an Australian government-funded initiative has been established in partnership with 14 Pacific Forum nations, two Australian registered training organisations, a consulting firm for strategic support services, seven large multinational private organisations, public employers and a range of small to medium enterprises in urban and rural areas across the region. Known as the Australia-Pacific Technical College, this is a "multi-dimensional regional education and development initiative" (Barnaart and Peacock-Taylor 2010: 38). It provides a scaffolded framework for sustainable development that is inclusive of equity concerns for traditionally marginalised groups such as those with disabilities, prevention of transferable lifestyle diseases, issues of child protection and the gendered division of labour, which is a feature of many Pacific labour markets (Barnaart and Peacock-Taylor 2010). When coupled with lower participation rates in education generally across the island nations, there has been a concerted effort to expand accredited health and community service learning opportunities as well as the more traditional trades for both men and women.

In the USA, Canada and Australia policy settings have traditionally sought to alleviate intergenerational inequities in education outcomes for indigenous First Nation peoples (Gray and Beresford 2008). National equity policies have been directed towards cultural, linguistic and social diversity among "women, Indigenous people, people from a non-English speaking background, people with a disability and people living in remote and rural Australia" (Dumbrell et al. 2004: 20). Yet, educational policies are also imbricated in policies addressing social factors such

as welfare and health needs, cultural identity, literacy and numeracy, academic aspirations and involvement of parents/carers, all of which were identified in the 1989 Aboriginal Education Plan and all of which impact the "attendance, retention and resilience of Indigenous students" (Gray and Beresford 2008: 211). Individual resilience, and culturally respectful schools and workplaces are required to not only overcome entrenched racism and social and economic disadvantage but also to make sense of the mosaic of pathways into sometimes fragmented school-to-work transitions (Abbott-Chapman 2011) undertaken by young adults as a consequence of policy changes in senior secondary schooling (Harreveld and Singh 2009). At particular risk are those young adults in communities that are also experiencing unprecedented demand from the resources sector and related service industries for increasingly higher technically skilled workers.

4   Education Policies and Young Indigenous Adults

In an analysis of vocational education and training outcomes (1997–2001) for equity target groups, Dumbrell et al. (2004: 19) found that while "indigenous people have a relatively high growth levels in enrolments, especially for males", but "despite improved pass rates and employment outcomes, these are still well below those compared with non-Indigenous students". Long et al. (1998: 6) had already argued that indigenous adults were over-represented in VET in Schools (VETiS) commencements but that "participation and qualifications are at the lower skills levels, and they are underrepresented in a range of vocational streams, particularly at the higher skills levels". They concluded that the barriers to developing capabilities for successful school-to-work transitions faced by indigenous students include:

- Relative absence of curriculum related to indigenous cultures
- Lack of cross-cultural understanding of indigenous cultures
- Lack of indigenous adult employed as teachers and trainers and the lack of senior secondary schools in some areas
- Relative isolation of many indigenous communities
- High levels of poverty among indigenous communities
- Lack of attention given to the retention of indigenous students post year 10 (Long et al. 1998: 5)

There are many reasons for their education outcomes such as "circumstances of poverty, poor health, high mobility and shocking histories of past engagement [with] Western-style formal education and training" (McRae et al. 2000: 2). When reviewing indigenous students' VETiS outcomes by location (urban, rural, remote) and by scale (multi-site, single site), McRae et al. (2000: 6) found that

location factors (on this broad measure) appear to have made little difference to levels of project achievement, although there were a small number of cases reported where students at more remote projects sites did not achieve the same level of improvement as students at sites that were less so.

However, research commissioned by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research found that location does matter:

> Many regional Indigenous students move between VET courses and programs in an unproductive journey that does not lead to employment. The system is fragmented and poorly resourced, relative to the considerable needs of Indigenous students, and lacks strong links with regional industries and employers. The net result is a perpetuation of the community's low formal skill base and associated outcomes, including unemployment, underemployment, unskilled and intermittent employment. (Alford and James 2007: 42)

Clearly, these findings have implications for young indigenous adults' capability development in metropolitan, regional, rural and remote communities.

Critical analysis of policy outcomes may be undertaken in different ways according to the contexts in which they are read and their effects on various groups within those contexts (Codd 2007). Perry (2009: 425) claims that education policies are expected to "exhibit degrees of 'democraticness,' with the ultimate aim being to become as fully democratic as possible". Sen (1992) argues that capability development requires a combination of both processes (where the individual is a genuine actor and not simply a passive recipient of benefits or an obedient subject complying with normative prescriptions) and opportunities (where the individual is offered a set of valuable opportunities). The *Melbourne Declaration* (MCEETYA 2008) is a programmatic policy proposing key educational goals for all young Australians over a 4-year period (2009–2010). The policy entailed an understanding of which groups of young adults are to benefit from its implementation. In particular, two of the issues addressed include "supporting senior years of schooling and youth transitions, [and] improving educational outcomes for Indigenous youth and disadvantaged young Australians" (MCEETYA 2008: 3). To achieve these goals, the Australian government committed to ensuring that "the learning outcomes of Indigenous students improve to match those of other students [and] socioeconomic disadvantage ceases to be a significant determinant of educational outcomes" (MCEETYA 2008: 7).

Vocational education and training (VET) in senior secondary school reforms has been a key part of Australia's social and economic development with apparent policy consensus at state and commonwealth levels (MCEETYA 2008). Except for the Australian Capital Territory where the leaving age is set at 16 years, all students in Australia are required to remain at school until the end of year 10 (notionally 15 years), and after completing year 10, students will be required to remain in some form of education, training or employment until they turn 17 years (Lamb 2010). The boundaries between school, vocational training, further education and the workforce have been blurred over the last 14 years as VET has become integral to each state and territory's senior secondary certification processes in response to concerns about school-to-work transitions and consequential requirements to increase year 12 retention rates (Nguyen 2010). The landscape has evolved to such complexity that secondary schools are individually or in partnership with a range of education and training providers and employers offering a curriculum smorgasbord of university pathway subjects, vocational competencies, structured workplace learning opportunities, school-based traineeships and apprenticeships.

Recent analyses of data from the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY) have found that ongoing changes to senior secondary programmes have meant that "variation in program delivery across Australia means that measuring exactly what impact VET in Schools has on young people is difficult" (Nguyen 2010: 35).

5   A Methodological Note

To explore these issues further, we have used a case study design (Merriam 2009) incorporating policy documents (MCEETYA 2008; Queensland Government 2008a) and descriptive analysis of statistical data from Australian and Queensland collections (e.g. Longitudinal Survey of Australian Youth; Next Step survey data). The purpose of the descriptive analysis is to ascertain if government education policies do provide equal and diverse choice for indigenous young adults to participate in VETiS and if VETiS policies are ensuring successful transitions from school to further education, training or skilled work.

The descriptive evidence was generated from two data sets. The first was the *2006 and 2007 VET in Schools statistics* (NCVER 2008, 2009). These data presented the performance of senior school students in terms of VETiS course enrolment, qualification attainment and completion. These latest available statistics made it possible to compare Queensland indigenous students' performance and outcomes against the Australian average. Another evidence source was the *Next Step* surveys (Queensland Government 2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009). They reported the results of annual surveys of the destinations of all students who completed year 12 at the end of the previous year. These provided information about the transition of young adults from different backgrounds to gaining full-time, skilled jobs and/or a better future via further education and/or training. This made it possible to compare young adults' immediate post-school destinations following their completion of year 12. Here, we chose the statistics related to the indigenous students' post-school destinations. In addition, they were analysed in terms of specified categories in relation to the foundations of capability building viewed from a systemic perspective: course enrolment, attainment of competencies and completion of an award (e.g. certificate I or II or III). Post-school capability-building efforts are identified through the systems-level data on destinations, for example, work (full-time, part-time); further education (college or university) and/or training (on-the-job apprenticeships or traineeships); or unemployment (i.e. neither earning nor learning).

It is impossible to obtain data on all variables that would be required to analyse a multiplicity of causes for disadvantage or outcomes from policy implementations for indigenous young adults. Furthermore, the availability of data was limited to that which was publicly available from the sources identified. NCVER's public data (2008, 2009) provided VETiS course enrolments, attainment and completion but not student numbers. The *Next Step* surveys (Queensland Government 2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009) provided year 12 students' post-school destinations based on their characteristics including indigenous identity, but there was no clear publicly

available information about students' specific locations, although responses were identified according to whole of state and each of the ten statistical divisions in Queensland. In the following section, comparisons of VETiS outcomes and post-school destinations between indigenous and non-indigenous groups are provided. Then, data analysis moves to the comparisons within indigenous cohorts and their main education and work destinations cross-referenced for gender and geographical location.

6 Findings: (Not) Closing the Gap

Current policy initiatives at national and state/territory levels are focused on "closing the gap" between indigenous and non-indigenous year 12 completions and successful transitions to work, further education and/or training. In 2008, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to an integrated policy framework covering healthcare, disability, housing, education, skills and workforce development for indigenous Australians (www.facs.gov.au).

Comparison of VETiS course enrolment, attainment and completion in terms of indigenous identity across Australia and Queensland state shows that the number of course enrolments, attainments and completions by indigenous students is a small percentage of the total number of all secondary school students (Table 6.1).

Across Australia in 2007, VETiS non-indigenous course enrolment comprised 88% ($n = 247,600$) of total course enrolments. Indigenous course enrolment accounted for 4% ($n = 10,000$). Indigenous course attainment percentage is 56% ($n = 5,600$), 8% lower than non-indigenous course attainment percentage (62%, $n = 154,100$). Indigenous course completion percentage is 16% ($n = 1,600$), 9% lower than non-indigenous course completion (25%, $n = 60,800$). In Queensland, the course attainment rate by indigenous students was 37% ($n = 1,100$), 10% lower than that of their non-indigenous peers (47%, $n = 41,200$). The percentage of course completion by indigenous students (23%, $n = 600$) in Queensland was only 2% less than their non-indigenous peers (25%, $n = 22,100$). This is an optimistic result given the lower enrolment rate for indigenous students.

Table 6.1 VETiS course enrolment, attainment and completion by indigenous identity in Australia and Queensland state, 2007

	Enrolment		Attainment		Completion	
	Aust.	QLD	Aust.	QLD	Aust.	QLD
Non-indigenous	247,600	88,400	154,100	41,200	60,800	22,100
	88%	94%	62%	47%	25%	25%
Indigenous	1,000	3,000	5,600	1,100	1,600	700
	4%	3%	56%	37%	16%	23%
Not known ID	22,700	2,600	13,500	900	3,100	600
	8%	3%	59%	35%	14%	23%

Source: The *2007 VETiS statistics* (NCVER 2009)

Table 6.2 Main destinations of Queensland's year 12 completers by indigenous status, Queensland 2006–2009

	2006		2007		2008		2009	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
University								
Indigenous	92	15.3	97	12.6	113	14	134	14
Non-indigenous	11,286	37.1	11,925	37.1	11,433	34.9	12,127	35.7
VET								
Indigenous	217	36.1	256	33.2	257	31.9	289	30.5
Non-indigenous	8,631	28.4	8,683	27	8,531	26	8,260	24.3
Full-time								
Indigenous	82	13.6	111	14.4	133	16.5	107	11.3
Non-indigenous	4,106	13.5	4,917	15.3	5,705	17.4	4,179	12.3
Others								
Indigenous	210	34.9	306	39.7	306	37.5	419	44.1
Non-indigenous	6,365	21	6,653	20.7	7,104	21.7	9,387	27.7
Total								
Indigenous	601	2	770	2.4	805	2.4	949	2.7
Non-indigenous	30,388	98	32,178	97.6	32,763	97.6	33,953	97.3

Source: The *Next Step* reports 2006–2009 (Queensland Government 2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009)

Post-school transition destinations of young adults in Queensland are collected annually. Table 6.2 shows the main post-school destinations of Queensland's year 12 completers by indigenous identity.

According to these *Next Step*'s data (Queensland Government 2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009), indigenous year 12 completers made up 2% ($n = 601$), 2.4% ($n = 770$), 2.4% ($n = 805$) and 2.7% (949) of the total cohorts across 2006 and 2009 (see Table 6.2). Indigenous year 12 completers were less than half as likely to enter university when compared with their non-indigenous peers. However, proportionally, more indigenous young adults choose VET destinations, being 7.7, 6.2, 5.9, and 6.3% more likely to do so than their non-indigenous peers during the period from 2006 to 2009. The rates for full-time work for these two groups were similar across these 4 years. However, there was a large gap between indigenous and non-indigenous year 12 graduates in the "other" category. More indigenous students were in the "other" category than their peers, the gap ranging from 13.9, 18, 15.8 to 16.4% across the period 2006–2009.

Having completed year 12, young indigenous adults remain over-represented in enrolment statistics of lower-level VET certificates. Table 6.3 provides information about year 12 graduates' VET destinations based on the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) for recognised VET qualifications for certificates I–IV.

The positive result is that indigenous young adults are more likely to choose certificate I–III destination than their non-indigenous peers. However, young adults from non-indigenous backgrounds were more likely than their indigenous peers to choose a certificate IV or higher-level destinations, for example, diploma or advanced diploma. Those choosing the higher-level qualification trajectory—and

Table 6.3 VET destination of Queensland's year 12 completers by indigenous identity 2006–2009

	2006		2007		2008		2009	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Cert I–II/other								
Indigenous	30	5	51	6.6	40	5	60	6.3
Non-indigenous	1, 246	4.1	1, 092	3.4	1, 073	3.3	1, 221	3.6
Cert III %								
Indigenous	17	2.8	21	2.7	31	3.9	39	4.1
Non-indigenous	682	2.2	581	1.8	574	1.8	793	2.3
Cert IV + %								
Indigenous	26	4.3	29	3.8	34	4.2	39	4.1
Non-indigenous	2, 184	7.2	2, 173	6.8	2, 034	6.2	2, 308	6.8

Source: The *Next Step* reports 2006–2009 (Queensland Government 2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009)

able to choose it—are likely to be able to access to more highly skilled work and/or higher education. In another way, approximately 0.9–3.2% more indigenous young adults chose lower-level VET certificates I–II compared to those in the non-indigenous grouping. This result confirms the previous research finding that indigenous young adults participated and qualified at the lower skill levels (Long et al. 1998). Even though it is more than 10 years past since Long et al. (1998) pointed out this weakness in VETiS, the findings indicate there is not much improvement in increasing indigenous students' skill levels.

Table 6.4 shows the variation in destinations among *indigenous* year 12 graduates by gender and regions throughout Queensland. More female indigenous graduates chose to enter university compared to their male indigenous peers, being 11.9, 7.8, 6.8, and 5.3% higher from 2006 to 2009. However, the choices they made with respect to VET were the opposite; 14.2, 8.1, 8.7, and 4.6% more indigenous males than females chose to take VET programmes across year 2006–2009, which indicates that the gap between indigenous males and females for VET may be getting narrow. Further, there were substantial regional differences between the indigenous year 12 completers in metropolitan and non-metropolitan areas.

The indigenous year 12 graduates in the metropolitan area were more than twice as likely as those in non-metropolitan Queensland to enter university in 2007 and 2008. Likewise, the "other" destination of neither earning nor learning was 8.6, 13, 9, and 6.4% higher for indigenous year 12 graduates from non-metropolitan Queensland than those from the metropolitan area across the years 2006–2009 respectively.

Taken together, these findings suggest that during the years 2006–2009:

1. The course attainment and completion rate by indigenous students were lower than that of their non-indigenous peers across Australia and in Queensland.
2. Indigenous year 12 completers were less than half as likely to transition to university when compared with their non-indigenous peers, but proportionally,

Table 6.4 Main destinations of Queensland's indigenous year 12 completers by gender and location 2006–2009

	2006	2007	2008	2009
University %				
Male	8.5	8.6	10.5	11.3
Female	20.4	16.4	17.3	16.6
Metro	20.5	22.4	21.8	19.7
Non-metro	12.6	8	8.1	11.1
VET %				
Male	44.2	37.5	36.5	32.8
Female	30	29.4	27.8	28.2
Metro	37.5	33	29.6	31.2
Non-metro	35.3	33.3	33.7	30.2
Full-time work %				
Male	15.9	16.1	17.7	11.6
Female	12	12.8	15.4	11
Metro	12.7	14.3	16.3	9.1
Non-metro	14.1	14.5	16.7	12.4
Other%(neither earning nor learning)				
Male	31.4	37.8	35.4	44.3
Female	37.6	41.6	39.5	44
Metro	29.3	30.2	32.4	40
Non-metro	37.9	43.2	41.4	46.4

Source: The *Next Step* reports 2006–2009 (Queensland Government 2006, 2007, 2008b, 2009)

more indigenous young adults choose VET destinations than did their non-indigenous peers. More indigenous students were in the "other" category than their peers, the gap ranging from 13.9, 18, 15.8, and 16.4% during those years.

3. Young adults from non-indigenous backgrounds were more likely than indigenous peers to choose a certificate IV + destination. In other words, relatively more indigenous young adults transitioned to lower-level VET certificates (I–II) compared to those in the non-indigenous groupings.

These results show that students' transitions to school to further education, training and/or work are unequal in relation to the location they are living and their indigenous identity.

7 The Freedom of Indigenous Young Adults to Choose

There are gaps in the achievement of education outcomes and post-school destinations between non-indigenous and indigenous students and comparisons within the indigenous student cohorts. It has to be asked whether Queensland's young adults from indigenous, non-metropolitan backgrounds have the freedom to achieve

desired destinations given the social, cultural and economic resources they need to convert into valued capabilities or well-being. The course attainment and completion rate by indigenous students was lower than that of their non-indigenous peers across Australia and in Queensland. Moreover, relatively more indigenous young adults chose lower-level VET certificates (I–II) compared to those in the non-indigenous groupings.

The Australian governments' policies promise to provide Queensland's indigenous, non-metropolitan year 12 completers the resources with which to achieve a range of valuable post-school destinations such as university, high-level VET certificates or full-time skilled work. This is preferred over other less-valued destinations such as unemployment, lower-level VET certificates or part-time, unskilled work. However, following Sen's (1992) argument, the post-school destinations for these young adults are not solely the result of their own activities; otherwise, there would have been no need for government policies to enhance their school-to-work transitions.

Evidence from the *Next Step* reports indicates that there may be circumstances beyond the control of individual indigenous youth that aid some of them while hindering others to transition successfully to meaningful work and/or training and further education. For example, particularly in remote communities with large proportions of adults who have never worked consistently in full-time, well-paid jobs, it is difficult for young adults to even imagine how their school-to-work transitions could be different.

Considerations of the relations between individual choice and freedom to achieve can take many different kinds of diversity into account (Sen 1992, 1999). However, we would end up in a mess of empirical confusion if we tried to take note of all possible diversities, and therefore, the demands of practice indicate discretion and suggest, "we disregard some diversities while concentrating on the more important ones" (Sen 1992: 117). The question is what significant diversities are to be taken into consideration with regard to transitions of young indigenous adults. Sen (1992: 117) argues that "analyses of inequality must, in many cases, proceed in terms of groups—rather than specific individuals—and would tend to confine attention to intergroup variations".

In doing group analysis, government policymakers have chosen between different ways of classifying young adults, and these classifications involve selecting and thus privileging particular types of transitions rather than others. In the *Next Step* surveys, young adults are classified by gender, socio-economic status (based on domicile postcodes), location and indigenous identity, echoing those groups identified in the policies of the Australian governments. These statistics suggest that the groupings of the lowest SES, indigenous identity and non-metropolitan localities provide important diversities for interpreting young adults' post-school choices.

For some students, "mainstream education is inappropriate to the needs of at least some young people" (te Riele 2007: 56) to achieve an alternative to general education. Sen (1992) proposes the identification of an evaluative space for testing equality, which can be of various types, depending on the context. The space for the assessment of policies on education equality can apply to any geographical space or

any cohort grouping. The evaluation of policy in terms of equality must then take into account the freedom of choice inherent in students' opportunities as much as their observed choices and outcomes. In capability terms, this means that research on school-to-work transitions should combine post-school destinations with an explanation of the social, cultural and economic factors influencing these outcomes. While current Australian and Queensland education policies treat students from indigenous background as a distinct equity target group, government equity policies and programmes in education have not diminished the impact of regional and economic diversity.

8   Conclusion

The relevance of Sen's (1992, 1999) capability approach to assessing education policies for a multilevel system reform impacting school-to-work transitions has been explored in this chapter. The key element of choice, and the freedom to choose, has been used to frame a theoretically informed descriptive analysis of one l/earning model of transitions for a particular cohort of culturally diverse young adults. There is no evidence that education policies alone can shift differences in learning attainments as measured by completions of courses and transitions into further education, training and/or full-time work. Policy-induced legislation has done its job to provide legal entitlements for all indigenous young adults thereby enshrining "a minimum threshold of capability as a necessary condition for social justice" (Nussbaum 2011: 76). However, there remains the fundamental element of "choice" that is central to the capability approach. We cannot assume that all these young people had equality of physical, social, emotional and economic freedoms to make choices about their school-to-work transitions. Even when working at the level of descriptive analyses of statistical data, it was evident that geographical location, gender and indigeneity impact negatively on transitions in the early phases of post-school life, as evidenced from the *Next Step* reports.

Indigenous students' learning outcomes are influenced by many factors such as their locations, family backgrounds, community culture and languages and economic status of families and communities. These factors impact individuals in various ways. Systemically, the capability approach seeks to address these in terms of policy settings through which basic functionings to enact choices among a range of transition options would be developed through supportive, nurturing integrated policies enacted coherently among education, employment and community service agencies.

Yet, the effects of policy-induced structural changes in the arrangements for socio-economically aligned education and training during the compulsory years of secondary schooling have impacts that are neither simple nor straightforward to measure (Nguyen 2010). For those who leave school early because they have secured a job, with or without workplace training arrangements, such transitions may provide successful employment outcomes and social adjustments. Once in

the workplace, however, their transition may re/commence with more vocationally oriented learning required. From a capability perspective, inter-systemic policies and processes identified in the national and international literature have the potential to enhance "the instrumental, intrinsic and positional value" (Lanzi 2007, 9. 425) of school-to-work transitions. However, challenges remain as there are still young adults who "need additional support to attain life's basic functionings—such as being nourished, healthy and literate; as well as being respected, able to work and being part of a community" (Harreveld 2010: 6). Theoretically, the capability approach is found to rely for its potency on the unrealised potential it offers to explore different norms and values in complex environments in which learning for work/life transitions is potentially more useful than short-term job placements which in some communities cannot be sustained or have yet to be created.

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Chapter 7

Ranciere and Leadership for Reforms to School-to-Work Transition: The Presupposition of Equality of Theoretical Assets from Diverse Educational Cultures

Michael Singh, Roberta (Bobby) Harreveld, and Xiafang Chen

1   Introduction

The research reported in this chapter focuses on how the Western Anglophone system of higher degree research training can build on non-Western students' diverse intellectual heritage and linguistic assets in their transition from education to work. One approach to researching cultural diversity in school-to-work transition is to treat students of non-Western backgrounds as a source of data for analysis by Western theories. While ever mindful of the debates over and stereotyped constructions of 'the West' (Bonnett 2004), this is a familiar practice exemplified in the work of Bourdieu (1977) with respect to his studies in Algeria. However, a key challenge in the twenty-first century is how to prepare educational researchers for much needed intellectual dialogues between the 'East' and 'West', as much as 'North' and 'South', problematic constructions though these are. Thus, a contrary position is emerging in research education which takes diverse, non-Western metaphors, concepts and diagrams (Turner 2010) as resources for forming theoretical tools (Singh 2009, 2010, 2011b). Alatas (2006), Chen (2010) and Connell (2007) have argued for engaging with diverse intellectual cultures in terms of their theoretical tools, especially those diverse intellectual cultures they characterise as 'peripheral', 'Asian', or 'non-Western'. However, none of these social theorists address, let alone provide, any educational theory to account for pedagogies that are necessary for internationalising Western Anglophone education and educational research. For instance, Lane (2012: n.p.) states, 'Australia largely ignores the theoretical

M. Singh (✉) • X. Chen
Centre for Educational Research, University of Western Sydney, Sydney, Australia
e-mail: m.j.singh@uws.edu.au; x.chen@uws.edu.au

R. Harreveld
Learning & Teaching Education Research Centre (LTERC), Central Queensland University,
Brisbane, QLD, Australia
e-mail: b.harreveld@cqu.edu.au

concepts that Asian students bring with them, thereby missing an opportunity to internationalise research and create new knowledge'. Teaching students from diverse educational cultures to create theoretical tools from the metaphors, images and concepts available in non-Western languages is important.

Here, the internationalisation of Western Anglophone education is defined as extending and deepening the capabilities of non-Western students—local, international, immigrant and refugee—to create theoretical tools from non-Western languages and to use them in their research into education and training in the West. This proposition raises questions about how these students are to be regarded in terms of equality and how they are to learn to form these analytical tools. Regarding the first question, this chapter explores the potential of Jacques Ranciere's (1991) concepts of 'ignorance of inequality' and 'intellectual equality' for interrupting the prevailing sense and sensibilities of Western Anglophone education and research education. Pedagogically, for Rancière (1991), a teacher can ignore any sense of inequality students might be suspected to have and focus instead on developing their capabilities for acquiring a second language by creating opportunities for them to learn. With regard to forming theoretical concepts, Foucault's (2010: 56–63) ideas on forms of succession, configurations of coexistence and procedures for intervention are drawn upon.

Given the dynamics and stakes in the transition from education to work, the research reported in this chapter is exploring ways in which non-Western students' bi- and multilingual capabilities might be used to enhance their career trajectories in the world's multilingual knowledge societies (Singh and Han 2009, 2010a; Singh and Meng 2011). The particular project reported upon in this chapter focuses on research into students from diverse educational cultures engaging non-Western metaphors, images and concepts to theorise the leadership of Western reforms to school-to-work transition (Singh 2010). This research is contributing to an understanding of how research education may take this key dimension of cultural diversity as a vehicle for producing *'worldly theoretic-linguistic connectivities'* (Singh 2011c) made possible by the presence of research students from diverse educational cultures in Western Anglophone universities. Here the concept of *worldly theoretic-linguistic connectivities* refers to the work of each research candidate 'to verify our shared presupposition that they have or can access non-Western languages for concepts, metaphors and diagrams which they can use to develop scholarly arguments which theoretically analyse evidence of education in Australia' (Singh 2011c: 99).

Specifically, this chapter provides insights into the education of higher degree research students from China in the use of metaphors from China's diverse intellectual heritage to analyse evidence of leadership of reforms in school-to-work transition. The key research question concerns how Western Anglophone research educators can engage culturally diverse students in using metaphors available to them from their homeland as theoretical tools to analyze evidence of leadership for reforms to the transition from senior secondary to work, training or further education. To understand possibilities for making research students' diverse intellectual cultures an asset for studying the transition to life beyond school, this chapter begins with an account of how cultural and linguistic diversity has enriched the conceptual tools available for studying leadership.

To do so, the first section of this chapter uses Weber's (1991) ideal types of bureaucratic and charismatic leadership to contrast Fullan's (2005) bureaucratic leadership with Lear's (2006) charismatic Indigenous leadership and concludes with an account of Ranciere's (1991) charismatic educational leader. It would seem from this analysis that charismatic leadership is useful for engaging cultural devastation as much as linguistic diversity. Next, the development, interventionist mode of research used in this study is explained, along with the research context and the data analysis procedures. Then, the presupposition concerning the capabilities of culturally diverse research students to develop scholarly arguments using theoretical tools derived from non-Western languages is verified. The emergence of the conceptual tool used in this study is explained; its context or discursive network is described; its use in making a challenging argument is explained, and ways of connecting new concepts into coexisting fields is clarified.

2 Diversifying Theoretical Tools for Studying Leadership of Reforms in the Education-to-Work Transition

Weber (1991) provides three approaches to conceptualising leadership for reforming school-to-work transition, namely, traditional, bureaucratic and charismatic. Each of these has its own forms of legitimacy relating to judgements about whether it brings success and/or prosperity to a relevant community. Traditional leadership is associated with patrimonial, patriarchal and/or monarchical forms of social conduct acquired through a hereditary order and appeals to established authority, beliefs, customs and ways of doing things. Bureaucratic leadership is based on the rules of legally established authority and is concerned with the institutionalisation of routines, and is thus guided by instrumental rationality. Charismatic leadership tends towards the exceptional or extraordinary, is associated with creativity and innovation and is guided by value rationality. Because it challenges bureaucratic rationalisation, Weber (1991) favours the cultivation of dynamic, charismatic leaders. Focusing on Weber's latter two categories, this conceptual framework is elaborated through analyses of Fullan's (2003, 2005) bureaucratic leadership of educational reforms, Lear's (2006) charismatic indigenous leadership in the face of cultural devastation and Ranciere's (1991) charismatic educational leadership for linguistic diversity.

2.1 *Fullan's Bureaucratic Leadership*

Fullan (2005) offers a model of bureaucratic leadership which focuses on rules, the institutionalisation of routines, legally established authority and the instrumental determination of values. His concept of tri-level leadership, namely, the school, district/regional and system levels, assumes and reinforces a hierarchical authority

structure for analysing leadership of reforms to school-to-work transition. Fullan (2005: 53) sees these different but hierarchically related levels of leadership engaged in 'a mixture of technical and adaptive work'.

System level leadership has a dual role: 'make system coherence more and more evident and accessible, [and] foster interactions—horizontally and vertically— that promote system thinking in others' (Fullan 2005: 65). Regional and district leadership affects the possibility for capacity development across schools and across districts. Bureaucratic leadership, working for the system as a whole, is secured by obligating school leaders 'to seek out and be responsive to opportunities to practice system thinking in action with other school leaders in structured initiatives within and beyond the district' (Fullan 2005: 63). Fullan's (2005) bureaucratic leaders are guided by the degree of accommodation necessary between rule-governed and authority-driven bureaucracy and their rational concern for values such as efficiency, among others.

2.2 Lear's Charismatic Indigenous Leadership in the Face of Cultural Devastation

In contrast, Lear (2006) offers insights into the charismatic leadership required when confronted with exceptional or extraordinary challenges, which calls for creativity and value-driven rationality. He opens up the possibilities for a culturally diverse lens for analysing leadership for changing school-to-work transition through a study of Plenty Coups—a chief of the Crow Nation—as he engaged in the cultural devastation wrought by Western colonisation. Lear (2006) presents novel insights into leadership through the story of Plenty Coups. He developed the concept of radical hope as a theoretical tool for analysing the kind of leadership which plays a critical role in the sustainability and reform of societies and cultures.

Lear (2006) uses the concept of radical hope to characterise Plenty Coup's leadership which incorporates courage, tracking reality and vindication. Lear's (2006: 95) concept of radical hope finds expression in leadership which can 'witness the death of the traditional way of life and [commit] to a good that transcends these finite ethical forms'. For Lear, radical hope is integral to conceptualising charismatic leadership. This is important for rethinking the complexities of the leadership of education and training reforms given Fullan's (2005) concept of tri-level bureaucratic leadership. Leaders of educational reforms might learn from Plenty Coups: 'not because he has some special alternative wisdom that the Western mind lacks ... but because he is an exemplary human being living through an extraordinary time' (Lear 2006: 105). However, like Bourdieu's (1977) Algerian studies, where we learn about his theoretical capabilities rather than that of the Kabyles, Lear (2006) engages in the familiar practice of treating culturally diverse peoples as a site for mining data. We learn more about Lear's theoretical tools than we do about Plenty Coup's theoretical skills.

2.3   Ranciere's Charismatic Educational Leadership for Engaging Linguistic Diversity

Bourdieu's (1977) argument sanctions the proposition that students misrecognise or are unconscious of how their own culturally diverse practices reproduce the situation they are in. This allegedly 'causes' their learning deficiencies and requires pedagogues, who know otherwise, to transform their social world for them. This approach to cultural diversity focuses on celebrating students' identity and fails to ask how might we be otherwise? An alternative is to focus on intellectual equality and to ask with what intellectual assets should we argue ought to have a part in the education of all students, even though they now have no part?

Rancière's (1991) account of charismatic leadership focuses on the educational creativity and innovation of a nineteenth-century teacher, Joseph Jacotot, who found himself in an exceptional situation of having to teach French to Flemish students in the Netherlands when neither party knew the other's language. Ranciere's (1991) argument is that educational leaders who are guided by value rationality work from the presupposition of equality of intelligence to engage students, with diverse cultural and/or linguistic assets, in the struggle to have their knowledge counted where it presently does not count. Like Jacotot, the pedagogical challenge for such leaders is to verify the presupposition that these students' can make such knowledge count by having them identify and reinforce points of intersection with knowledge that does count. As indicated in the next section, the research reported in this chapter is part of a longitudinal case study of an approach to the education of culturally and linguistically diverse higher degree research students that is informed by Ranciere's (1991) account of charismatic leadership.

3   Research Method

This investigation studied Chinese research students' capabilities for turning concepts, metaphors and images from China into analytical tools—for their research into and original contributions to theorising leadership of Australian reforms to school-to-work transition (Singh and Han 2010b). This approach to research education for the transformative co-construction of theoretical tools has been defined as being:

> inflected with global flows of non-Western languages and theoretical knowledge through fluid and ever-changing modes of globally networked learning, albeit in a context dominated by Western intellectual culture and English. As a curriculum activity it encourages intellectual exchange, the co-construction of theoretical tools, and promotes students competencies with respect to their linguistic capabilities, as well as supporting an ethos of non-West/West, East/West, South/North theoretical dialogues. Pedagogically, this involves a processes integrating or infusing non-Western theoretical tools into Western research and research education. (Singh 2011a: 11)

The project's research questions concerned the use of pedagogies of intellectual equality to have the research students' bi- or multilingual communicative capabilities to develop *worldly theoretic-linguistic connectivities* that contribute to internationalising Western Anglophone research education programmes and pedagogies (Singh 2009, 2011b). Thus, we began with the two key presuppositions (i) that Chinese research students are capable of scholarly argumentation and (ii) that metaphors, concepts and images of China's intellectual culture can form theoretical tools for them to do so (Singh 2009, 2010, 2011b). The purpose of the study was to see what these research students could achieve based on this presupposition of intellectual equality. Our pedagogical task as Western Anglophone research educators was to create conditions for these students to verify this presumption. We worked on the presupposition that research students from diverse non-Western educational cultures are equally capable of using intellectual assets from non-Western languages as theoretical tools for scholarly argumentation (Singh and Han 2009, 2010a, b). In effect, we presumed that they brought with them some knowledge about non-Western modes of critique, that they could use the internet to access further knowledge and that they had the potential to develop their capabilities for scholarly argumentation and to question the intellectual hegemony of 'Western' theories (Bonnett 2004).

3.1   Research Context

The evidence presented in the next section comes from a 3-year investigation into the leadership of reforms to school-to-work transition in Queensland (Australia). This Australian Research Council (ARC) project was undertaken in conjunction with the Queensland Department of Education and Training (DET) (Harreveld and Singh 2008). The focus of this ARC study was the characteristics of leadership for engaging young adults (16–18 years old) in innovations in senior learning (years 10–12) which aim to (re)align learning and earning (Harreveld and Singh 2009). This research is illuminating the qualities of innovation leadership involved in enabling nationally significant advances in the brokering and integration of learning and earning for young adults through 'pathways pedagogies'.

The Australian Research Council project team conducted interviews with key actors, chosen because they were able to provide details of their experiences, perceptions and conceptions of leadership for school-to-work transition. Forty-seven ($n = 47$) interviews were conducted, and 57 participants were interviewed for this project. The interviewees were all directly involved in the reforms to senior learning, including those related to institutionalising vocational education and training in schools (VETiS). The interviewees included leaders from schools, Queensland DET, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges and other registered training organisations (RTO), businesses, agencies offering apprenticeships, traineeships and workplace learning, reform coordinators and local community groups. These key informants who were selected according with the following criteria, namely the need to include representatives from different sectors (state, independent and Catholic

schools, industries, agencies, RTOs, TAFE) at different localities (cities, regional area, rural area) at different organisational levels (leaders at top level, middle level and bottom level, middle and bottom levels).

Xiafang Chen (2011), from China, was one of three doctoral research candidates invited to participate in this Australian Research Council study. By participating in this nationally significant ARC study, Chen (2011) has been able to contribute to the team's re-articulation of the concept of 'leadership' as it applies to school-to-work transition. She contributed to the team's advances in conceptualising the leadership required to form multilevel, inter-systemic and cross-sectoral innovations in the transition from senior secondary to work, training or further education. Given that the dynamics of the global financial crisis which began in late 2008 raised the stakes in the transition from education to work, Chen was also encouraged to identify Chinese concepts, metaphors and diagrams that might be used as analytical tools in this research and to enhance her own career trajectory in the world's multilingual knowledge societies.

3.2 The Intervention

We have developed a research education programme and pedagogies to enable research students from non-Western countries to extend and deepen their capabilities for scholarly argumentation (Singh 2009, 2010, 2011b). For research students to use non-Western metaphors as theoretical tools, we developed the analytical scaffold of *conceptualise, contextualise, challenge and connect* as part of the conditions that made this possible. These conceptual tools made it possible for them to an original contribution to knowledge of, for and about transition from education to work. In Foucault's (2010) terms, these conditions of possibility focused on the situations that made for the formation of a heterogeneous multiplicity of concepts. The focus was not concerned with recovering the thought processes of culturally diverse students. These conditions of possibility for generating *worldly theoretic-linguistic connectivities* were defined in the following terms:

> *Conceptualisation* is concerned with taking a non-Western metaphor, such as an everyday saying, refining and enriching its content so it can be expressed in terms of an analytical concept. This conceptualisation is informed by, and against an understanding of the pre-existing norms in the West to treat such metaphors as data about non-Western folklore or popular culture. *Contextualisation* entails explaining the metaphor's historical specificity and its current uses in a particular non-Western country through translating it for use in a different kind of intellectual endeavour. *Challenging* means engaging non-Western metaphors as analytical tools in scholarly arguments by elaborating critiques of extant theories, such as those concerning leadership for education-to-work transition. *Connecting* involves reflecting on, and making case for the coexistence and concomitance of the world's diverse linguistic and theoretical assets by blending these into conceptual tools investigating research problems in local sites. (Singh 2011a: 11)

As illustrated in the next section, the order in which the ideas of *conceptualise, contextualise, challenge* and *connect* are used for forming non-Western metaphors, images and concepts into theoretical tools depends upon what the research students judge as appropriate for the task at hand.
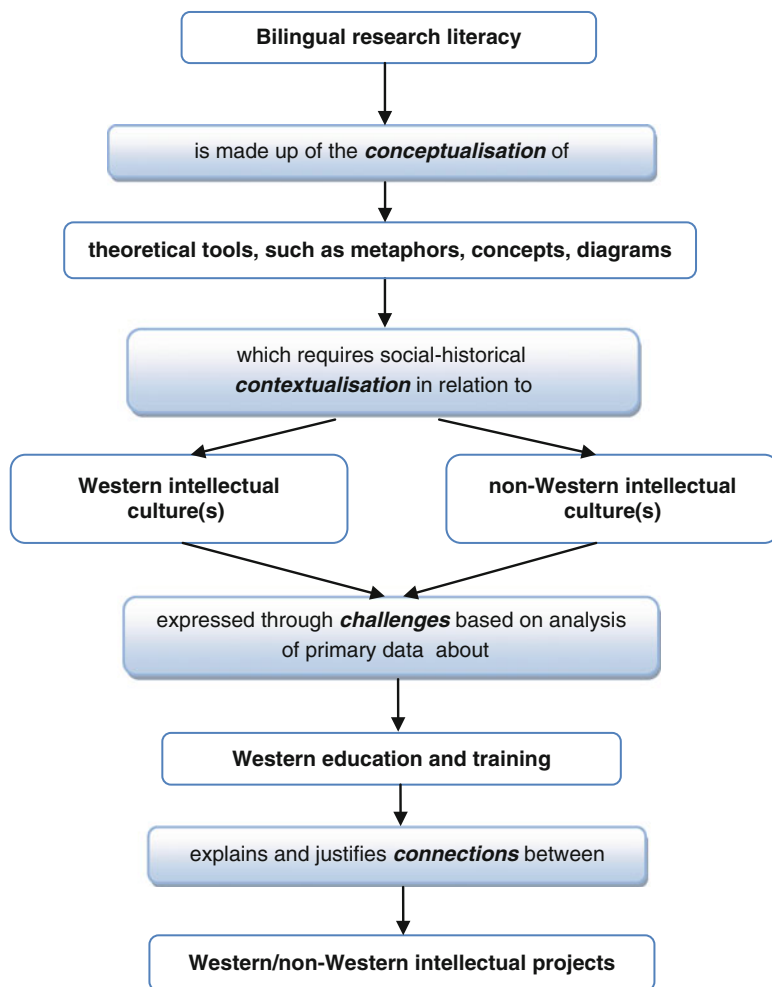
Fig. 7.1 Transformative, transnational dialogical research process (Source: Singh 2011a: 23)

The concept of *bilingual research literacy* (Singh and Cui 2011) is used to describe the use of conceptual tools from two languages for the purposes of generating, interpreting and/or analysing evidence so as to contribute internationalising Western Anglophone research education programmes and pedagogies (see Fig. 7.1). *Bilingual research literacy* signifies possibilities for expanding the range of research students' learning capabilities, as well as the potential to build novel contributions to knowledge through accessing and engaging a wealth of intellectual assets from culturally diverse sources. It is no longer just a question of English and Western knowledge being provided for students from non-Western countries. The problem is the West's intellectual engagement with the diversity of non-Western languages and theories represented by the presence of non-Western students in the West.

3.3 Data Analysis

There are a range of methods for data analysis. For instance, Cope and Kalantzis (2000) offer a four-step analytical process that involves situating practice, overt instructional explanation, proposing transformations to practice and critical framing. Likewise, Blau's (2003) three-dimensional analytical procedure focuses on textual retelling, intertextual sense-making and the performative activation of other knowledge. However, this study, reported here, was designed to investigate the reconfiguration of what is meant by internationalising education through the use of non-Western conceptual tools in Western educational research. These approaches do not provide an explicit focus on the conditions of possibility for generating *worldly theoretic-linguistic connectivities.*

In contrast, Singh's (2011a: 12) method of evidentiary conceptual unit analysis is theoretically oriented and represents an advance on the data analysis approach developed by Emerson et al. (1995). Evidentiary conceptual unit analysis is characterised by structuring research writing/analysis as follows: [1] a relevant evidentiary excerpt is selected, [2] the criteria for the excerpt's selection is made explicit, [3] either 'etic' or 'emic' procedures are used to identify one or more key concepts in the excerpt, [4] a conceptual commentary is provided, being either grounded in the details of the excerpt or drawn from the relevant research literature, [5] an introductory sentence is given to foreground the analytical concept and [6] orientating information is supplied to link the conceptual analytic and the evidentiary excerpt.

The evidentiary excerpts below are from Chen's (2011) thesis. Using the method of evidentiary conceptual unit analysis, these excerpts were selected because they illustrate the formation of non-Western conceptual tools and their use in theorising leadership for reforms to the transition from senior secondary to work, training or further education. The conceptually driven commentary was developed for each selected excerpt and inserted after each. Following this, a statement was written to introduce the conceptual analytic, and an orienting sentence was generated to connect this concept with the evidence.

4 Presupposition and Verification of Non-Western Students' Argumentative Capabilities

Below is one example that illustrates the two key presuppositions that non-Western research students are capable of scholarly argumentation and that capability can be deepened and extended by having them draw on non-Western intellectual assets to provide theoretical tools for doing so. In this instance, Chen responded to our presupposition as Western Anglophone research educators that she could identify a Chinese metaphor which could be formed into a conceptual tool and used for the analysis of evidence concerning the characteristics of leadership required of Queensland's reform of school-to-work transition.

Working together we developed the concept of *lì tǐ leadership* as being suitable for this analytical task. Thus, this presupposition was verified by having Chen respond to extensive feedback from us, her Western Anglophone research educators. This included frequent feedback about the register in which the text was written, making wide-ranging suggestions for rethinking and restructuring what had been written and advising on the inclusion of relevant references to the literature. We worked together through a series of iterative drafts to produce the following analysis of *lì tǐ leadership*. It illustrates possibilities for building on non-Western students' diverse linguistic and theoretical assets.

4.1 Challenging

Challenging means engaging non-Western metaphors in the critique or questioning of Western educational concepts and/or theories:

> Looking at leadership through the lens of Fullan's (2003, 2005) concept of tri-level leadership all we could expect to see is a bureaucratic hierarchy. However, Queensland's education and training reforms to Senior Learning involved leaders from different organisational levels working together across different education systems and sectors.
>
> School leaders, including principals, Heads of Department (HODs), vocational education and training (VET) coordinators and career advisors work together across different levels across different systems and sectors. Regional and district leaders partnered with business, industries, and training organisations, universities, Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges helping to establish networks among them to support schools in their partnerships. State-level leaders created innovative partnerships and initiatives with different sectors such as aerospace, wine industry, mineral and energy industries, TAFE and universities. Leaders from registered training organisations, service agencies and local government authorities were also involved. In addition, there were also State, Catholic and independent schools including senior technical colleges.
>
> Queensland's reforms to Senior Learning through VET in schools (VETiS) deliberately promoted intra-organisational and inter-organisational partnerships. This means that their leadership was more complex than Fullan's (2005) concept of tri-level leadership or Lear's (2006) concept of heroic leadership. Such complexity can be better understood using the Chinese metaphor of *lì tǐ leadership*. This novel concept is explained below. (Chen 2011: 314–315)

The concept of *lì tǐ leadership* was produced because it provided Chen with a critical standpoint from which to foreground the linguistic and cultural diversity around Fullan (2003) and Lear's (2006) theoretical ideas. Following Foucault's (2010) advice, Chen refused to engage in identity politics by saying nothing about herself. Instead, Chen focused on extending her capabilities for argumentation in terms of the norms of scholarly expression, the constitution of critical statements and the intellectual networks that structure research communities. With encouragement, she scrutinised the evidence related to Queensland's reform of school-to-work transition. This made it necessary for her to critique the applicability of Fullan's (2003) concept and her own hitherto unquestioned investment in bureaucratic leadership. We assisted her in generating a concept that was more suitable to explaining the operation of leadership in this context.

4.2   Conceptualising

Conceptualisation involves selecting a non-Western metaphor and then refining and enriching its meaning so as to express it as an analytical concept. This departed from Bourdieu's (1977) use of more than 90 Kabyles' proverbs and sayings as data about non-Western folklore. In contrast, Chen provided a literal translation of the metaphor to identify its specific features, then explained the meaning and significance with which it is saturated and its relevance to this particular study:

> *Lì tǐ* is an everyday Chinese word. To make it into a theoretical tool I explored its meanings and contexts of usages so as to enrich its content rather than leaving it be treated in terms of its literal meaning. In order to achieve this deeper level of conceptualisation of this Chinese metaphor, my first step was to translate the literal meaning of the Chinese characters *lì tǐ*. The next step was to make clear the specific features of *lì tǐ* in terms of its meaning and significance for my research . . . The two characters for *lì tǐ* are themselves separate words. However, when they are combined, they form a new word. *Lì tǐ* literally means standing or upright body.
>
> Thus, from the forgoing it can be seen that *lì tǐ leadership* is not flat, or two-dimensional, nor is it merely horizontal, hierarchical, or multi-level. *Lì tǐ leadership* is multi-dimensional. In Queensland, one leader in VETiS partnered with several other leaders from different sectors. State-level leaders partnered with industry, TAFE and universities. A school principal partnered with industry, State or Regional leaders, other schools and regional coordinators. A regional coordinator worked with the Regional Executive Director, the Executive Director Schools, local industries, schools and local government authorities. A Head of Department and school coordinator worked directly with industries, TAFE colleges and local youth support agencies. Such leadership is different from either Fullan's (2003, 2005) tri-level leadership or Lear's (2006) heroic leadership. (Chen 2011: 316–317)

Chen's intervention proceeded through translation and redefinition of a metaphor to form a novel concept that could accompany the argument for making an original research-based contribution to knowledge. This required an exposition of different forms of intellectual life. The conditions of possibility for concept formation enables Chen to make explicit presumptions she might otherwise have taken for granted about ideas from the fields with which she was very familiar. Representing the world's linguistic and theoretical diversity, this particular research student was encouraged to reflect on and to put into writing her previously unquestioned assumptions about Chinese metaphors.

4.3   Contextualisation

Everyday metaphors can contain insightful and multifaceted meanings for the evidence they are analysing. *Contextualisation* entails providing background knowledge to explain to Western Anglophone researchers a metaphor's history and its current uses in non-Western contexts:

> To support my use of the concept *lì tǐ leadership* in this research I provide the following background knowledge, so as to explain the history and current usages of *lì tǐ* in China. The

metaphor *lì tǐ* is used in China to refer to a substance that has length, width and thickness, as in *lì tǐ tú xíng* (a solid figure); or *lì tǐ jǐ hé* (solid geometrical body); *lì tǐ zhàn zhēng* (triphibious warfare); and *lì tǐ shng chàng piàn* (stereo record) ... in China *lì tǐ* is used to discuss multi-dimensional objects, as opposed to flat or two-dimensional phenomenon ... *Lì tǐ* means multi-dimensional, solid, comprehensive or stereo.

The leadership involved in the partnerships which were a key feature of Queensland VETiS reforms were complex, if not unique. The Chinese concept *lì tǐ* can capture the complexity of the leadership involved. The concept of *lì tǐ leadership* provides a more meaningful interpretation of this complexity, than does Fullan's (2003, 2005) notion of tri-level leadership, or Lear's (2006) notion of individual heroic leadership.

In the education and training reforms in Queensland, the hierarchical structure of organisation is still visible. However, the analysis of evidence of Queensland's reforms to Senior Learning reveals a more complex picture of leadership. In this instance, leadership exhibits multi-dimensional features through partnerships in VETiS, such that it can be called *lì tǐ leadership* (Chen 2011: 317–318).

Concepts have a historical specificity that affects their transnational circulation (Foucault 2010). Individual researchers, Westerners and non-Westerners alike can tackle the limitations of their own parochial and/or ethnocentric conceptions. However, in Foucault's (2010) terms, the 'surfaces of emergence' have to be considered. This includes the norms and the degree of tolerance the pre-existing field, in this instance, the field of Australian educational research, allows for any redefinition of non-Western metaphors before they are rejected as unacceptable theoretical tools. Here, it can be seen that the concept *lì tǐ leadership*, which draws together Chinese and English terms, opens up opportunities for seeing the evidence differently, as well as pointing to the limitations of extant theories.

4.4 Connecting

A fourth analytical moment invites critical reflections on the making of *worldly theoretic-linguistic connectivities* by showing how non-Western metaphors can add to the understanding of the issue under investigation, namely, the characteristics of leadership required for reforms to school-to-work transition. Also, at this stage, the assertions, assumptions and rules governing these claims on 'non-Western theoretical tools' may be subjected to critical scrutiny.

Doing research and teaching in Australia, I found my Chinese metaphors could be used in my research and teaching in a Western country. In doing this research into leadership for the reform to Senior Learning in Queensland through VETiS, I identified a phenomenon that I could not explain by using either Lear's (2006) or Fullan's (2003, 2005) concepts of leadership. My Chinese metaphors helped to provide an expressive and vivid way of conveying my ideas about this phenomenon. The metaphor of *lì tǐ leadership* provides a useful way of explaining Queensland's VETiS leadership.

The late Chairman Mao Zedong, the founder of new China in 1949, promoted the learning foreign knowledge for China's use. He advocated the concept of *yang wéi zhōng yòng*, which means 'to make foreign knowledge serve China'. Mao's intention was to encourage Chinese people to learn about the beneficial achievements of foreign, advanced cultures so as to develop China's culture. Every culture has always developed by learning

from others. Just as China learnt from Western knowledge for its use, Chinese knowledge may be also useful in Western academic world, especially in educational research.

> When I began teaching a unit, *Education in a Cosmopolitan Society*, at my Australian university, the students were representative of this multicultural society. There are a number of international, immigrant and ethnic minority students in my classes; they come from India, China, South Africa, Nepal, South Korea, Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Ireland to name but a few. Being from a different educational culture and being multilingual myself, I understood that these students have knowledge from their homelands – metaphors, concepts and symbols – they can use in their education and teaching in Australia's multicultural schools. Just as I have been encouraged and leant how to use my Chinese metaphors in my teaching and research, I encouraged them to do likewise.

> These students are themselves multicultural and bilingual, and as such represent a valuable source of theoretical knowledge. Encouraging them to interpret education in cosmopolitan Australia using these resources would seem to be an intellectually promising way for them to better understand contemporary teaching and learning in its multicultural schools. It seems desirable for these future teachers to know how to engage the intellectual resources of their future students who are growing up in a society with access to intellectually diverse resources. (Chen 2011: 319–320)

Chen was encouraged to look at the forms of conceptual coexistence and concomitance (Foucault 2010) in this field and to note the exclusions and inclusions of key concepts that are presently accepted as central to educational leadership. The use of self-generated metaphors drawn from diverse educational cultures as part of the process of knowledge production means that Western and non-Western research students can broaden the scope of their intellectual imagination. Research students, non-Westerners and Westerners alike, can become aware of the existence of alternative theoretical tools available in other languages. They are all encouraged to think beyond theoretical frameworks beyond their own and to see how this can broaden what it means to internationalise Western Anglophone research education.

5   Conclusion

There are various approaches that can be taken to researching cultural diversity in school-to-work transition. Following Bourdieu's (1977) approach to the studies he undertook in Algeria, it is possible to treat students of culturally diverse non-Western backgrounds as a source of data for analysis by Western theories. Through reference to German (Weber 1991), Anglo-American (Fullan 2005), Native American (Lear 2006) and French (Ranciere 1991) theories of leadership, this chapter has opened up to consideration intellectual engagement with an even greater diversity of theoretic-linguistic assets.

This chapter contributes to research endeavours which take diverse, non-Western intellectual cultures as a source of theoretical tools which can be used to analyse evidence of the characteristics of leadership for reforms to school-to-work transition in Australia. The problem here is that those social theorists who argued for engaging diverse, non-Western intellectual cultures in terms of their theoretical potential have not used such tools in their arguments nor did they provide pedagogies for enabling

non-Western research students to do so (Alatas 2006; Chen 2010; Connell 2007). This chapter has taken Ranciere's (1991) concepts of 'ignorance of inequality' and 'intellectual equality' as a basis engaging non-Western students in using non-Western metaphors to theorise evidence generated in the West.

This chapter points to possibilities for the internationalisation of Western Anglophone research and education by turning to the diverse intellectual culture of students from non-Western countries into strategic theoretical assets. Specifically, it has contributed to knowledge of the pedagogical and theoretical possibilities for using non-Western metaphors for the analysis and critique of Western theories of leadership, reform and school-to-work transition. Evidentiary excerpts from Chen's (2011) thesis have been analysed to explore the use of the analytical concept of *lì tǐ leadership* to characterise the multiple organisational levels, the inter-systemic and the cross-sectoral dimensions to Queensland's reforms to school-to-work transition for senior learning (years 10–12). The concept of *lì tǐ leadership* provided a useful means for developing a scholarly argument that questions Fullan's (2005) notion of multilevel leadership and Lear's (2006) construction of individual, heroic leadership. Pedagogies of intellectual equality provide an important basis for bringing culturally and linguistically diverse intellectual assets into theorising the transition from education to work and enhancing non-Western students of their career trajectories.

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Chapter 8
Empowering Teacher Students for Diversity in Schools: Mentorship Model as a Mediator in Sweden

Ayse Kizildag and Anita Eriksson

1 Introduction

A recent OECD study, the Teaching and Learning International Survey – TALIS (OECD 2009), reported an increased need for professional support to teachers in dealing with diversity issues in the classroom. In many countries, the society has been more socially diverse in terms of ethnic background and cultural differences, where as a response to this, teachers should have the skills to develop a culturally responsive pedagogy. That teachers should be prepared (both pre-service and in-service) to embrace this diversity according to policy documents and curriculum is also emphasised by UNESCO (2009). Similarly, this idea is expressed as a core part of school education in policy documents in Swedish teacher training programmes (Swedish Code of Statutes 1993:100).

Diversity, in its most general meaning, can be defined as "significant difference[s] among people" (Sonnenschein 1997, p. 2). Streater (1999) exemplifies this as follows:

> Diversity is the variety that exists in race, gender, ethnic and cultural background, age, sexual orientation, religion, and physical or mental capability. Diversity can also refer to differences in personality, job function, class, educational level, marital status, familial status, and demographic status. In other words, **diversity** is a word that describes the ways in which each individual is unique. (p. 1)

Rasmussen's (2007) definition of the term diversity is expressed as "the mosaic of people who bring a variety of backgrounds styles, perspectives, beliefs and

A. Kizildag (✉)
Aksaray University, Faculty of Education, Foreign Languages Unit, Aksaray, Turkey
e-mail: akizildag@gmail.com

A. Eriksson
University of Borås, School of Education and Behavioural Sciences, Borås, Sweden
e-mail: Anita.Eriksson@hb.se

competencies as assets to the groups and organisations with whom they interact" (p. 1). The way he is inclusive in defining the term by using *mosaic* and *asset* emphasises that diversity is enriching rather than categorising. The present study encompasses several of the definitions as the empirical data revealed that multiple meanings of diversity were expressed by the participants.

In literature, diversity in education has also been described in relation to mentorship programmes (Gudwin and Salazar-Wallace 2010; Parla 1994; Parla et al. 1996). Mentoring is common in education as an effective tool for personal and organisational development since the human capital is the most valuable asset (Engström 2003). In this study, mentor means an experienced teacher who meets teacher students[1] throughout their university education to support them in identifying and developing their professional role and identity (Eriksson 2009). In other words, mentorship is a model to enhance the transition from university studies to work settings at schools. As a result, in this chapter, we broadly describe the mentorship model used during pre-service teacher education and how this model supported the teacher students' development of professional competence in relation to various diversity issues.

2 Background to the Study

Mentorship has been used in many different ways in relation to novice teachers and within teacher education but also in different educational contexts for the last three decades. In this model, the mentor is often described as an adviser who supports a novice teacher's professional development. However, the model has also often been used as a tool to prevent attrition among novice teachers (Siniscalco 2002), to introduce them into the professional work and as a way to support their professional growth (Lindgren 2005; Long 2009; Parker et al. 2009).

According to studies on teacher education, mentorship is also used as a way to support students in pre-service teacher education with the purpose to promote, on the one hand, the students' introduction to and socialisation in the academic context (Filella et al. 2008; Heirdsfield et al. 2008) and, on the other hand, as a means to support teacher students in their professional development (Eriksson 2009; Kihlström et al.2007). Different mentorship models are used, and they vary in length from one or two semesters (Heirdsfield et al. 2008) to the whole education (Eriksson 2009; Honkimäki and Tynjälä 2007; Kihlström et al. 2007); in some models, the teacher students have a mentor only during teaching practice (Laker et al. 2008;

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[1]*Teacher student* is a term used in Sweden interchangeably with *student teacher*, *pre-service teacher*, *prospective teacher*, *teacher candidate* and such similar concepts, referring to students having teacher education at pedagogy departments. The term *pupil*, on the other hand, refers to school kids. Therefore, they are going to be used accordingly throughout the text.

Paker 2005). Many of the described models are those which contain a one-to-one relation (Long 2009), but there are also models where one mentor meets a group of teacher students (Eriksson 2009; Filella et al. 2008; Kihlström et al. 2007).

Different evaluations and earlier studies of conversations between mentors and teacher students have been described as functional for the development of professional identity, role and knowledge since they have supported the teacher students in their attempts to relate theory to practice or vice versa (Arvidsson 2006; Eriksson 2009; Kihlström et al. 2007). As the literature on mentorship in relation to diversity usually focused on minority groups in educational settings (Clutterbuck and Ragins 2002), we could only find a few research studies focusing on mentorship as a tool to prepare teacher students to handle diversity in the classroom setting. In most other studies, mentorship is used in a more indirect way to help diverse groups of pupils integrate in upper secondary schools, colleges or higher education.

Filella et al. (2008) described mentorship as a way to deal with the growing of heterogeneity among university students and implemented a mentorship plan to integrate the first-year students into academia so as to maximise their learning process and support their personal development. According to Landefeld (2010), mentoring always has been an important factor in academia, which, he believes, is particularly important for students lacking support from parents or close relatives who did not have a university education or career.

In another study of mentoring, Parla (1994) put great emphasis on educating teachers for cultural and linguistic diversity. She suggests some mentorship guidelines to be followed by mentors and pre-service teachers throughout their meetings. Parla et al. (1996) provide a detailed in-service training programme for prospective mentors who will experientially sustain pre-service teachers' professional learning on linguistic and cultural diversity issues.

Schlosser and Foley (2008) highlighted the ethical issues in mentorship in relation to a multicultural university context and described the pivotal role determining who can be an effective mentor for those with different cultural background. Though the mentors' attitude and personal feelings can interfere with their work with the students, the Ethics Code (APA 2002) prohibits them to engage with "multiple relationships when doing so [as this] could impair their ability to perform their job functions, or if doing so could harm or exploit the mentee" as expressed by Schlosser and Folley (2008, p. 67). Their study focuses on diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, religion and ability. Moreover, they point out the importance of considering that all faculty and students have multiple identities depending on a variety of circumstances, which means that the world will be looked upon from a multiple of minority group perspectives. They also highlight that mentors need to understand "how the intersection of multiple identities can lead to potential ethical problems" (p. 73), such as for instance, when a power relation exists between the mentor and the student.

3 Theoretical and Methodological Framework

Teacher student learning studied in this chapter is theoretically grounded upon three perspectives: sociocultural (Vygotsky 1978), conversational (Bachtin 1981, 1986, 1991) and experiential (Dewey 1997, 1999). The sociocultural and conversational perspectives are our points of departure for the analysis of our findings as the mentorship meetings are seen as an arena for interaction in terms of conversations between teacher students and the mentor but also between the students belonging to the same mentoring group. In line with Vygotsky's ideas, the present study also accepts that knowledge is something that teacher student understands and develops via social interaction and participating in these conversations. This perspective offers a way to understand how teacher students can benefit from the conversations and to develop professional knowledge as an outcome of their interaction with the experienced mentor and the other teacher students in the process of sharing, discussing and reflecting over knowledge and experience.

We adopt Bachtin's (1981, 1986, 1991) ideas about conversations as a way to meet and develop through social interaction both individually and collectively. The conversations are described as situated in a social context, that is, the mentoring group meetings in a teacher education programme. In other words, the conversations observed are considered as a continuum of interaction where teacher students and mentors act and reflect on a variety of pedagogic content and the representations of them. This means that practical and theoretical knowledge and values get their meaning from both the meaning for the individual teacher student and through the interaction between the students and the mentor. According to Bachtin (1991), the social interaction does not necessarily mean a fusion of horizons rather a mutual enrichment when different voices challenge each other through the conversation. That is, the conversations in the mentoring group offers a possibility to express individual and collective thoughts, and through reflection over these, it is possible for the teacher students to develop an awareness, self-consciousness, professional identity and knowledge. The conversations take place in an institutional context that comes with a framework which is both limiting and enabling for the knowledge that is and can be developed within (Fairclough 1995).

During conversations, experience has been a point of departure for the developmental process. Our way of regarding experience is inspired by Dewey (1997, 1999), according to whom knowledge is both related to and dependent on experience. This is described as an evolving process containing traces from previous knowledge and experience, both of which affect the emerging situations on how to handle with, react to and make sense of. In return, it influences the created knowledge about and for the different situations.

Our analyses are based on an ethnographic study on how diversity takes place in mentorship meetings throughout teacher education programme at the researched university. The "key strength of ethnography is its emphasis understanding the perceptions and the cultures of the people and organizations studied" (Walford 2001, p. vii). Furthermore, an ethnographer interprets and reconstructs what she/he observes (Beach 1995; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

Hammersley and Atkinson (2007) propose five core features for an ethnographic study. In an ethnographic research design:

1. Everyday life is studied under untouched and non-manipulated conditions in the field.
2. Data sources are many; yet, the participant observations and interviews are the most basic.
3. Data collection is rather "unstructured" and does not follow a fixed research schedule.
4. The focus is on the small-scale cases rather than many participants.
5. The analysis of data involves understanding the personal/institutional reality, meanings and functions, all of which have pivotal role. On the other hand, statistical data might only play a subordinate role.

As understood from the list above, ethnographic researchers typically employ an open-ended approach. Ethnographic research design is compatible with the aims of the current study in that diversity is presented in line with participants' conceptualisations and reflections. Moreover, the data production was done by the researchers spending intensive time in the field (observations and interviews), and the process of analysing the interpretations were interchangeably expanded or reduced throughout the course of the research considering the institutional perspectives as well as individual ones. The data (feedback forms) coming from the other members of the same field from previous years were used to frame the interpretations of the findings.

3.1 Participants, Data Production and Analysis

The participants consisted of mentors, teacher students and a mentor coordinator involved with the teacher education programme. Mentors are teachers who have been teaching the same school subject that the teacher students have been specialising in. They have several years of teaching experience and have been collaborating with the teacher education programme for mentorship meetings. Teacher students varied from freshmen to seniors. The mentorship coordinator has been working with the mentorship programme since 2004 and replaced the previous one who started the programme in 1997.

Data production was mainly done through a series of audio-recorded observations of mentorship meetings and interviews with the teacher students and mentors. Furthermore, feedback forms written by graduate teacher students who attended such meetings in the previous years were also used to frame the role of these meetings in teacher students' professional learning. The observations have the purpose of having a solid understanding about how mentorship meetings deal with diversity as a theme. A total of nine mentoring group conversations were recorded. The duration of conversations ranged between 45 and 85 min, and the number of group members varied between four and nine teacher students.

The interview questions focus on topics around how mentors and teacher students deal with learning/teaching issues in multicultural settings. The questions to the mentorship coordinator were about the procedural and administrative perspectives of the model. Feedback sheets aim to evaluate the mentorship programme in terms of the importance of the meetings for teacher students in the topics of work socialisation and personal and professional identity and development.

The methodology used in analysing and interpreting data is a form of content analysis. There are different ways to utilise this kind of analysis, one of which takes the empirical data as a point of departure and is a common kind of structure in many qualitative research studies within the interactionist tradition (Charmaz 1990; Glaser and Strauss 1967; Strauss and Corbin 1990). Another way is to start from inductively generated categories from the relevant literature as referred to by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Strauss (1987) as "sociologically constructed codes". In the current study, we employed both strategies. Contextually specific data were represented via the participants' own terms.

For data analysis, we adopted and adapted the procedures followed by Baş Collins' (2000) in six steps. These steps are chronological and are repeated, where necessary. They involve transcription and familiarisation of the data by listening and re-listening and reading and rereading; data segmenting; coding or labelling by naming the meaningful relevant chunks to the theme of the current study; definition of the codes to avoid overlapping; clustering the codes under general headings; and critical reading to find out further interrelations between the codes and headlines.

3.2 Context of the Study

The mentorship model in this study was implemented in 1997 by the School of Education and has been financially funded since then. The responsibility for executing the model is shared between the mentorship coordinator, the mentors and the mentees.

The model is a group mentoring model where each group consists of a mentor and six to ten teacher students who meet three times per semester, starting from the second semester to the last one (Eriksson 2009). Teachers are selected as mentors for two particular reasons. First, because she/he is an experienced teacher and works with the same grades of pupils or subjects that the teacher students are majoring in. Second, because they are interested in teacher education and in supporting a group of teacher students during their education.

A mentoring course for teachers is offered by the university. All the new mentors get an introduction about the assignment from the university coordinator, and there are follow-up meetings during each semester. This seems to be quite uncommon among other mentorship schemes. Another is that the mentors *do not* assess the teacher students; they only keep a record of attendance at meetings and report it to the coordinator because participation is obligatory. The *non-grading* policy is a strategy to limit the existing power relations between mentors and students

(cf. Mathisen 2009). The students normally continue in the same mentoring group during the whole of their education, and the group consists of students that have chosen to teach at the same level and/or subject.

The mentorship model aims to give the students time for reflection over the coming profession and their own professional development. It also aims to support the teacher students' personal development and social competence, highlight and strengthen the relation between theoretical knowledge and teaching practice and be an arena for discussions about pedagogical and didactical questions and practical experiences. These have also been targeted aspects in Swedish teacher education in recent policies such as Government Bill (1984/85:122; 1999/2000:135). Furthermore, it is a place for teacher students to develop their professional role in relation to constant social changes in the content of the education system. To conclude, the mentorship model has the purpose of serving as a mediator for the teacher students' transition from university to the coming professional settings.

4 Findings

The data analysis shows that the concept of diversity was discussed in two different ways during mentoring meetings. On one hand, the teacher students and the mentors shared experiences of teaching in diverse educational settings (see Sect. 4.1), that is, diversity in its common use, which takes its point of departure in the idea that every individual is unique (Streater 1999). During the conversations, this was highlighted in terms of ethnicity and cultural background, physical or mental capability, knowledge levels, personality, religion and gender. On the other hand, diversity was highlighted as a contribution to the teacher students' own professional development as a result of the diverse composition of the mentoring groups (see Sect. 4.2). This is more in line with Rasmussen's (2007) definition of the concept, that is, a group where the mentor and the teacher students with different cultural background, perspectives, beliefs and competencies interact around the different experiences and knowledge that is brought to the group discussions and enrich the understandings that develop.

Discussions usually started with the experience, which was sometimes also linked to the theoretical knowledge from the university coursework, that is, professional issues, school rules and/or policies. Personal and professional, local and international experiences were shared, which seemed to play a role as a source to enrich the reflection over diversity in multicultural settings enhancing the teacher students' capabilities of dealing with such cases.

Reflection as a key action to be supported by the mentor (Rodd 2005) in the model presented was used as a strategy to promote professional development for work settings. Asking questions for a detailed description and understandings or personal views, challenging with another perspective on the same issue, comparing and contrasting views and evaluating the cases from various viewpoints were some

of those approaches used. The mentor was not the only provider of points of view. The teacher students also contributed to each other's professional learning, particularly via group diversity in mentoring meetings.

4.1 Mentoring for Handling Diversity in Classroom

Teacher students seek knowledge during meetings on how to handle diversity in the workplace in relation to multicultural classroom settings, pupils with special needs and issues on gender. In this respect, diversity was framed within the learning and teaching issues by the participants.

4.1.1 Diversity in Multicultural Classrooms

One area that mentors and teacher students shared their various ideas about was the diversity in multicultural classrooms. Multiculturalism in the classrooms originated from variety in cultural habits, mother tongue, religion and ethnicity.

Different cultural behaviour was an example that was discussed during the conversations, and sharing experiences led to a comparison of similar opinions on multicultural classrooms. In the following extract, the teacher student initiated a discussion from own field experience on culturally diverse classrooms in terms of differences between typical student behaviours from various ethnic groups. The mentor contributed to the discussion by connecting the own professional experience to a cultural real life setting.

> Teacher student: ... I enjoy meeting many different cultures because it is never quiet in the classroom you can say. Something happens all the time./ . . ./I have been at schools with almost exclusively Swedish pupils and there it was very quiet in the classroom/ . . ./in the multicultural classroom it is never boring.

> Mentor: The exciting thing is that they like to talk. It is a part of their culture, they are often many together, and talk loud to be heard at home.

One other example related to multicultural diversity focused on teaching Swedish as a mother tongue and Swedish as a second language. In Sweden, the school regulations allow teachers to teach Swedish classes as a second language to a pupil whose mother tongue is other than Swedish (Government Bill 1994/95:174; Swedish Code of Statutes 2010: 800). The discussion was on differences between teaching Swedish as a second language and Swedish as a mother tongue and whether pupils whose mother tongue is other than Swedish but who are studying Swedish as a second language succeed. Another discussion on the same topic was about the teachers' role and responsibilities in relation to learning difficulties of those who have mother tongue other than Swedish and thus are not yet fluent in combination with other learning problems. As can be seen in the quotation below, the teacher student highlighted both the linguistic and the *social* problems and sought feedback from the mentor about the teacher's role in such cases.

Teacher student: There were only three pupils [in a Swedish as a second class],/ . . . /one was from Chile./ . . . /he was in eighth grade. Last week he tried a little harder and tried to write . . . and was going to write a book-review. And then he tried. I think it is harder to motivate (him)/ . . . /because it may well be something social as well that limited him, and then we shall surely be psychologists suddenly as teachers. That can't be possible actually?

Mentor: That's not our responsibility.

As a way to develop professionally in that matter, several teacher students highlighted the importance of having practical teaching experience from both monolingual and multilingual/cultural schools to be able to efficiently prepare them before starting as a full-time teacher. This can be linked to Parla (1994) who mentioned the significance of educating teachers for cultural and linguistic diverse classrooms. Similarly, Feimen-Nemser (2001) suggested, in contrast to traditional mentorship models, an *educative mentorship* model through which the mentors promote personal reflection and professional growth. She emphasised particularly the importance of giving specific feedback to the mentee rather than using a procedural and more neutral vocabulary.

Other common topics related to diversity in multicultural classrooms concerned religion and ethnicity and how to handle the pupils' opinions and questions about in the classroom. For instance, Satanist belief system and racism between different ethnic groups or countries resulted in discussions about how to deal with the important understanding of cultural differences. Bartolo and Smyth (2009) draw attention to teacher education programmes responding the need of teacher students for increasingly diverse schools with a big range of student diversity in ethnicity, religion and language.

4.1.2 Teaching for Special Needs

The general criticism about teacher education programmes in not giving teacher students pedagogical capacities for inclusive education (UNESCO 2009) seems not valid in this particular study context, as the model promoted the teacher students' reflection on special needs of learners. The participants focused and reflected upon alternative ways to work with pupils in need of special support with a point of departure in the Swedish policy statement, *one school for all*,[2] which means that all pupils have rights to learn and improve themselves at school.

The theme of teaching for special needs was discussed in different frames such as theoretical perspectives, national school policy and regulations, local school policies and learning difficulties, which were discussed by providing solutions and how

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[2]*One school for all* is a concept that was first introduced in the curriculum of 1980 in Sweden. It conceptually has evolved over time to cover cultural differences, class, gender, ethnicity and religion as well as special needs of pupils. The decision contains a political vision that the compulsory school in Sweden should provide education for all which addresses the individual needs and a high level of participation resting on inclusive understanding of schooling as it is formulated in Salamanca Statement in 1994 (Haug et al. 2006).

to organise schools and staff originating from the experience of the participants. Specific issues that are dealt with, for example, were the difference between the learning needs of talented and less talented pupils, different ways of teaching in relation to diverse language levels, disabled pupil needs for special education, the importance of and disadvantage with diagnosis and the reliability of the tests used for diagnoses of disabilities.

One of the questions was about whether low-performing pupils benefit more from group mates than high-performing ones do, which also led to questioning about the learning conditions for the talented ones by linking it to the discussion going on in Sweden[3] that it is often talented pupils might not be challenged enough (Westling Allodi and Rydelius 2008). The mentor clarified her ideas on talented ones' rights to learn and develop and the importance of exposing them to more demanding tasks, about which she exemplified her own way of approaching such pupils via Vygotsky's concept of the *zone of proximal development*. She elaborated on both how the talented could benefit from helping the less talented in classes, and also, she reminded "it is important that the talented do not always act as helpers".

A following issue was on different ways of teaching in relation to pupils with a variety of cultural backgrounds, diverse language capabilities and pertinent education policy. The question addressed was how to teach English as a foreign language in a class lacking Swedish language skills. The group compared what university teachers recommended for such cases with the real classroom settings and elaborated on how compatible they were. Furthermore, related to teaching Swedish as a second language, many teacher students raised the question about if all the pupils get the same national language test, if the assessment criteria can differ depending on which kind of Swedish lessons the pupil takes part in and whether a pupil studying Swedish as a second language can get more time to complete the national test.

Another focus was on diversity in terms of disabled pupils' diverse needs for special education and how to handle them as a teacher, which was discussed within the framework of national policy that such pupils are usually expected to be included in the regular classrooms. Mentoring discussions concentrated on the intention to engage all pupils in the education provided regardless of differences between their skills and levels of knowledge and the difficulty to meet all these needs at once. A further comment was on the teacher's task of establishing a special programme for a pupil with learning difficulties and implementing an action plan, called Individual Education Plan (IEP), when there is a risk that a pupil would not reach the learning goals for the approved grade level (Persson 2004). It was also concluded by the mentor that teachers could be the key people to improve the classroom situation to include every single pupil in the learning process, which is exemplified in the quote below.

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[3]Unlike in UK for instance, in Sweden, the law for *the students in need of special support* is not contextualised including gifted and/or talented pupils. It is recognised through the recent emerging political debates that the talented pupils should also be specially supported.

Mentor: I believe whatever kind of diagnosis a pupil has you can improve much in the classroom situation that fits them all. For example, you have got different rules in the classroom, it is easier perhaps when you work with primary and secondary/ . . . /I am thinking of a boy that I had [in my class]. I picked up some folding screens and then we made a cubicle and then we arranged a little bit of cosy atmosphere with drawings and so on. You have to think about how you furnish the classroom./ . . . /what kind of rules do you have/ . . . /the cubicle I made . . . so that this boy would not feel left out.

The reflections continued on the professional roles and the field of responsibility of a school nurse, a special educator and a subject teacher to help pupils who are physically and/or mentally disabled whose needs are, in nature, of more long-term support in their learning process (Hjörne 2004). A further topic was about in what context a pupil with learning difficulties could get the best support, in a regular class or at a *school for the intellectually disabled*.[4]

A final theme about diversity in relation to learning difficulties focused on the importance of and disadvantage with diagnosing disability in relation to the possibilities to get the support needed. The positive aspects of a medical diagnosis as a way to ease the pupil's learning and work with the school tasks were compared to negative effects of such a diagnosis for future careers (Hjörne 2004). Parents' hesitant reactions to these diagnoses and the school collaboration with parents were also highlighted and exemplified. The excerpt below shows how a mentor presents the knowledge from her professional experience as a response to teacher student's seeking confirmation about when and by whom diagnostic tests should be administered.

Teacher student: My teacher wanted to test me directly when I was in the first or second grade just because I didn't read as well as the others, but she did not recognize that I started school half a year later/ . . . /

Mentor: You don't do dyslexia tests when a child is very small/ . . . /. They have to be able to read first. What we do at our school then, or what the special education teacher does, she is not certificated to diagnose/ . . . /but she can refer to a speech therapist/ . . . /. It has to be done that way.

Teacher student: But it's not so with ADHD?

Mentor: No. A psychologist makes an investigation.

4.1.3 Gender as an Aspect of Diversity

The discussions on gender observed during the mentoring meetings focused on two themes: equal treatment and stereotyping and elaborated on how teacher's attitude and behaviours can support or inhibit gender equity. In terms of equal treatment, the discussions took the point of departure from a task that the teacher student was assigned that resulted in an awareness of the hidden curriculum with a focus on

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[4]According to the Swedish Education act (Ministry of Education and Science in Sweden 1985:1100) and the regulation for the school for intellectually disabled (Ministry of Education and Science in Sweden 1995:206), pupils that are considered unable to reach the expected learning goals in the compulsory school have the right to attend a *school for intellectually disabled*. This is a type of school for retarded pupils or other comparable disabilities according to the school act.

gender. How teachers' understanding of equal status for boys and girls can influence the classroom situation where, for example, the dominance of one gender in the classroom (Holm and Öhrn 2007) can disadvantage the other. The topic of teachers stereotyping at schools was exemplified, elaborated and evaluated in relation to the easiness of attributing discrete qualities to pupils such as "girls are one way and boys another" which is a clear reflection of the ways boys' and girls' behaviours are treated unequally by teachers (Öhrn 1990, 1998; Odenbring 2010). This was theoretically exemplified by referring to course content as in the following quotation:

> Teacher student 1: But if a girl is like a boy she will be seen as messy, it is not as easily accepted to the same extent when it comes to a girl, as if it had been a boy who had been standing screaming like a bear. It would have been "sit down and behave yourself" but if it had been a girl, she [the teacher] in principal have had to call the parents and "excuse me, but there is something wrong with your child or?"

> Teacher student 2: That's what I believe as well. That's what we are working with [in the university course] for the moment.

Teacher stereotyping was also highlighted in relation to preparedness to handle conflicts in relation to gender, as was illustrated in the excerpt below.

> Teacher student:/…/it is really the way it is you treat girls and boys different. If a girl is disorderly you think there is something wrong with her, because how can a girl be so unruly. It is easier to manage boys, to handle a conflict with the boys than/…/with the girls because often the teacher doesn't know how to handle the conflict with the girls.

Gray and Leith (2004) displayed "the role of teachers in unconsciously perpetuating stereotypes and the extent to which equality issues are directed more towards girls than boys" (p. 3). They made a differentiation between conscious teacher behaviour and unconscious implications with a reference to pupil treatment in terms of gender stereotyping at schools (Holm 2008; Odenbring 2010; Öhrn 1998).

4.2 Mentoring for Fostering Group Diversity

The data analysis showed that the teacher students have expressed the benefit of participating in the mentoring programme during their teacher education about personal improvement in developing deeper professional knowledge about diversity that is a frequent to-be-exposed-to issue as a teacher. Another benefit was in the area of personal learning to deal with such issues during interpersonal communication (McCann and Radford 1993). The importance of existing members with different cultural backgrounds and experiences in mentoring group was highlighted in feedback forms as it contributed to personal development in communication and professional improvement.

> The discussions have really been very fruitful because they have made me see things from different perspectives. In my future profession, I will meet pupils and parents with different cultural background, and that's why it has been so beneficial and interesting to discuss multicultural questions with group mates who weren't born in Sweden.

Cruickshank ([2004](#)) emphasises that mentorship can serve the socialisation of teachers with different backgrounds within the school system. He also underlines the priority over the latest years to prepare immigrant teachers as the society has become more multicultural, and he argues that teacher education programmes need ways to increase access for an "inclusive curriculum along with a range of support programmes for students" (p.125).

Several remarks are made on how mentorship meetings contribute to *reconsider*ing professional beliefs. Though discussions did not always change teacher students' ideas, the mentor's opinions were taken into account for a deeper analysis. As a result, it is understood that mentorship meetings activate a reflective process during professional learning which is demonstrated in the following conversation:

> Interviewer*:* When she [the mentor] says that she does not agree with you or says that she agrees with you, how does that affect you? Do you change your ideas or do you reconsider your ideas when you are . . . .
>
> Teacher student: Yeah, r*econsider* is a good thing because it's a new point of view, and I know that she has a reason, and she has a lot of experience/ . . . /if she doesn't agree, I might look at it [the idea about teaching/learning] one more time. Then, I might try it anyway. I might look at it a bit more carefully.

According to Harrison et al. ([2005](#)), it is important that the mentor's feedback leads to critical reflection over professional practice in a wider perspective. Though positively contributed, the diverse ideas and personalities of the group members also posed some difficulties. That teacher students were supposed to participate in discussions and elaborate on the ideas presented during the meetings served as a challenge but an access point for this process, improved teacher students' understanding and dealing with group dynamics. Some of the challenges because of the group dynamism, which were brought up by the teacher students, might also cause some further negotiations or need more time to deal with (Eriksson [2009](#)). The teacher students raised the difficulty of negotiating and reaching smooth relationship in such groups as shown in the quotation below, yet the challenge served as an opportunity for developing interpersonal communication skills. This process makes the mentorship model an asset in the teacher education programme for supporting group diversity and the reflections on the issue of diversity throughout education.

> Teacher student: The only "problem" is that so many personalities are put together and sometimes it can feel a bit fake. You have to get along (like each other) even if you don't./ . . . /We are a very open and talkative group, which got to know each other fairly quickly./ . . . /I learn to cooperate, to discuss with fellow colleagues, to listen to other's opinions./ . . . /but sometimes personal chemistry messes it up. However, I think that we have learned to involve everyone and like them for who they are.

Several teacher students pointed out the benefit from the communication dynamics of these meetings. They mentioned the opportunity of raising awareness about other participants' perspectives and try to develop an understanding, by which they highlighted the importance of such a skill in the teaching profession, as shown by several teacher students in their feedback forms.

> In my mentoring group, we have been several different individuals with different opinions around many questions but that has contributed to a broader insight in how different it is possible to think even if we all have chosen the same profession./ . . . /the group has helped me to think in other courses and to see things from other perspectives than my own. I think this has been extremely important. It is important to try to understand how other people think and behave, especially in teaching profession.

The versatility of the formation of mentoring groups has apparently contributed to teacher students broadening their perspectives about issues. This was also found in Eriksson's (2009) study. Not only for the limited topics they deal with in the meetings on a particular day but also an extension to others in the coursework, as expressed in the quotation above.

The obstacles due to the diversity of the mentoring groups act as a challenge for both teacher students and the mentor when leading the discussion. Therefore, it has become an issue of how mentors are prepared in relation to managing diverse roles to manage reflection and professional learning. The mentorship coordinator reflected on the strategies that mentors should use to ensure to maximise learning during meetings.

> Interviewer: What strategy do you suggest to the mentors to lead the conversation/ . . . /?
>
> Coordinator: Something that teacher students emphasize the mentor's responsiveness to their needs and ability to take different perspectives. To ensure that they have different ways of thinking about an issue and not imitating their mentor's way of thinking./ . . . /
>
> *Interviewer: You* said that the mentor is the conversation leader. What other roles do you think a mentor has in these meetings?
>
> Coordinator: To be a listener. Challenging them in their thinking, they show that there are many ways to see things. Different experience./ . . . /

The mentoring coordinator also highlighted the group diversity to be addressed and facilitated by the mentor. She mentioned many roles that a mentor adopts (Achinstein and Athaneses 2009) with which she/he both welcomes diversity and motivates mentors to use it as a learning opportunity throughout the meetings.

5   Conclusion

In this chapter, we aimed to make a broad description of a mentorship model implemented in a Swedish teacher education programme and to show how a variety of topics focusing on the concept of *diversity* were discussed and experienced during meetings. When data on the issue of diversity was analysed, findings displayed two interrelated dimensions: diversity in learning/teaching issues and diversity in the mentoring groups. According to the descriptions, mentorship conversations may be able to contribute to the teacher students' personal and professional learning at these two levels. At the first level, teacher students reported that they developed awareness in diversity issues such as gender, ethnicity and special learner needs through reflections on a variety of ideas, conceptualisations and field experience. During

the meetings, many questions were raised by teacher students around these topics as a strategy to seek paths to improve their practical, theoretical, pedagogical and didactical knowledge. At the second level, due to the diversity within the mentoring group, teacher students stated that they could improve their interpersonal skills such as discussing and negotiating, understanding and accepting other's perspectives, that is, learning from each other. Despite posing challenges, the group diversity also acted as a point of access for mentors to foster reflection and thus learning, by varying their roles in response to the group dynamics.

The mentorship model described in this study is somewhat different from others in how it conceptualises and responds to diversity issues in learning and teaching. For example, some of the conversations during the mentoring meetings were not dealing with issues exclusively related to diversity. This can presumably be related to the aim of the mentoring model, which is mainly to assist the teacher students in their professional development as a whole, rather than specifically on developing competence for managing diversity at schools. However, this study revealed that this mentorship model also fostered the professional learning about diversity and related issues. It is a distinction of the model from those which only intend to promote ways of dealing with diversity or multiculturalism or responding to such issues in schools (Gudwin and Salazar-Wallace 2010; Parla 1994; Parla et al. 1996).

One implication of the current study could be that mentorship can facilitate teacher students' reflections on professional ideas around diversity already during the teacher education programme by raising awareness about potential professional difficulties. This would enhance teacher students' constructions of professional knowledge, identity and roles, which in turn, would better prepare them for their future profession As a result, this model seems to be capable of contributing to a greater extent for realising UNESCO's (2009) guidelines to modify and improve teacher education programmes for inclusive education approaches.

Finally, a further reanalysis of each theme (i.e. ethnicity, special needs and gender) in separate publications would yield deeper analytic findings on how the teacher students implement what they supposedly gained from the programme in professional work settings to deal with such issues. Similarly, studies on the dimensions of the implementation of such a schema in other education programmes to enhance the transition from school to work would be insightful. Such questions as what requirements and/or results of the programme could be of interest for those who look for ways to raise the quality in teacher performance.

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Chapter 9
Embracing Diversity by Bridging the School-to-Work Transition of Students with Disabilities in Malaysia

Melissa Ng Lee Yen Abdullah

1 Overview of Special Education

Malaysia is a Southeast Asian country with a population of 28.9 million. It is dubbed as the Asia's cultural melting pot (Kassim et al. 2009). Apart from diversity in race and religion, the country also embraces special needs population by protecting their rights and well-being in education and employment. The World Health Organization (WHO) (2006) estimated that 10% of any population has some form of disability, one-third of which are children younger than 15 years old. The Malaysian government is committed to ensuring that these children are given their due rights in formal education. Malaysia has a comprehensive special educational system to provide academic and vocational training to students with disabilities so that they are equipped with the skills needed to obtain employment, earn an independent living, and ultimately serve as assets to the nation's development (Fig. 9.1).

The philosophy behind Malaysia's educational system was based on The Education Act of 1996 (Part 11, 3.2), which states that all children with special needs are educable if they are able to manage themselves without help and are confirmed by medical practitioners as capable of undergoing the national education program (Special Education Department 2006: 55). The Act emphasizes that all children with disabilities have access to education, including those who are not recommended by medical practitioners for placement in the government schools. The educational needs of these children are catered by the community-based rehabilitation (CBR) centers, under the Social Welfare Department. For this purposes, a total of 388

M.N.L.Y. Abdullah, Ph.D. (✉)
School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Gelugor, Penang, Malaysia
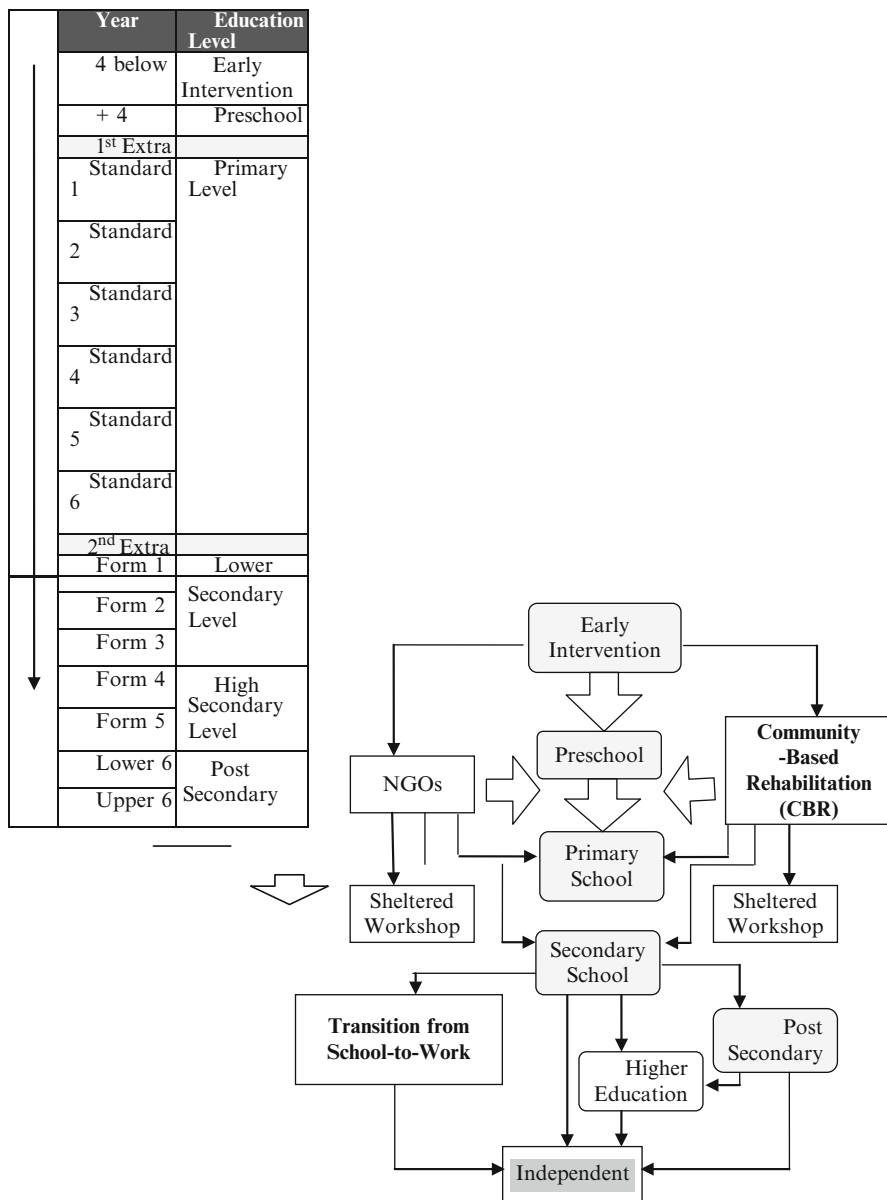e-mail: melissa@usm.my

Year	Education Level
4 below	Early Intervention
+ 4	Preschool
1st Extra	
Standard 1	Primary Level
Standard 2	
Standard 3	
Standard 4	
Standard 5	
Standard 6	
2nd Extra	
Form 1	Lower Secondary Level
Form 2	
Form 3	
Form 4	High Secondary Level
Form 5	
Lower 6	Post Secondary
Upper 6	

Early Intervention — Preschool — Community-Based Rehabilitation (CBR)

NGOs — Sheltered Workshop — Primary School — Sheltered Workshop

Secondary School — Transition from School-to-Work — Higher Education — Post Secondary — Independent

Fig. 9.1 Adapted from educational system for the special needs (Source: Special Education Department 2006: 57; Ministry of Education Malaysia 2009a, b: 2)

centers for *community-based rehabilitation* (CBR) have been established all over the country (Social Welfare Department 2009a). In addition, children with severe disability also have access to educational services provided by the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Table 9.1 Enrollment of students with disabilities at special education schools and mainstream schools (2004–2008)

Categories/years	2004		2005		2006		2007		2008	
Enrollment in special education schools										
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
Hearing impairment	1,589	532	1,574	438	1,437	436	1,564	457	1,454	461
Visual impairment	240	112	257	130	221	129	277	143	228	147
Learning difficulties	–	–	–	–	–	110	–	128	–	128
Total	1,829	644	1,831	568	1,658	675	1,841	728	1,682	736
Enrollment in integrated programs at mainstream schools										
Hearing impairment	416	1,008	636	1,046	389	1,072	711	887	587	973
Visual impairment	136	335	200	204	109	224	119	226	155	235
Learning difficulties	10,312	4,450	10,721	5,528	13,755	6,861	15,550	8,050	16,943	9,760
Total	10,864	5,793	11,557	6,778	14,253	8,157	16,380	9,163	17,684	10,968

Source: Ministry of Education Malaysia (2009a, b): 6
Note: P = primary schools; S = secondary school; Students with disabilities are classified into hearing-impaired, visual-impaired, and learning difficulty students
Mainstream schools refer to non-special education schools

Children with disabilities in Malaysia are eligible for intervention programs as young as 4 years old. After completing the early intervention and preschool education, they have opportunities to proceed to primary, secondary, postsecondary education, and ultimately tertiary education.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) has classified students with special needs into three main disabilities, namely, the hearing-impaired, the visual-impaired, and the learning difficulty students (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2009b). Students with Down's syndrome, autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), minimal retardation, and specific learning difficulties (e.g., dyslexia) are classified as students with learning difficulties (LD). As for students with physical disabilities, they are not considered as students with special education needs since they are cognitively able. Nevertheless, the ministry is in the process of revising the Education Act 1996 and 2002 to include the provision of special education for students with physical disabilities so that they will be eligible to receive all the necessary support and assistant needed (e.g., wheel chairs). In addition, when required, schools need to ensure easy access classroom, for example, having their classes in the lower ground and also providing ramps for easy access to the school compound.

The government of Malaysia has established 28 primary special education schools and four secondary special education schools. The enrollment of students with disabilities at these schools stands at 2,418 in 2008. This figure was made up of 1,682 primary school students and 736 secondary school students (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2009a, b). The detailed statistics are revealed in Table 9.1. Students with hearing impairment, visual impairment, and learning disabilities can also follow the special education integrated programs at mainstream or non-special education schools. However, majority of the students with learning difficulties have enrolled in integrated program at mainstream schools.

Table 9.2 Number of students with disabilities at mainstream vocational schools (2004–2008)

Schools	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Langkawi, Kedah	8	2	0	0	0
Alor Setar, Kedah	0	0	16	29	18
Kerian, Perak	4	6	13	21	20
Batu Pahat, Johor	18	18	12	17	27
Tanah Merah, Kelantan	19	11	13	22	18
Keningau, Sabah	9	8	19	35	25
Total	58	45	73	124	109

Source: Special Education Division, Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2009a, b: 16)

At the upper secondary level (Forms 4 and 5), students with disabilities are prepared for transition into work, whereby they are provided with vocational courses at secondary vocational schools. The development of total inclusive approach in education has giving more opportunity for these special needs students to go for vocational courses in the mainstream or non-special education schools around Malaysia (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2009a, b). At these schools, students with disabilities learn together with their nondisabled peers for vocational and technical subjects. There are six mainstream vocational secondary schools that take in students with disabilities (Table 9.2). Apart from that, the government has also established two vocational special education secondary schools to provide skill-based education for students with disabilities. Students are introduced to industrial skills curricula. Two more vocational special education secondary schools will be built under the 9th Malaysian Plan (Ministry of Education 2008).

The NGOs in Malaysia are also playing pertinent roles in providing academic and vocational education for students with disabilities, particularly those who could not gain entry into government-run schools, such as students with severe mental retardation or physical disabilities. Over the past 20 years, vocational training centers run by the nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have mushroomed. There is, however, no available statistics on the number of students with disabilities who have enrolled in NGOs-run vocational schools or training centers. These individuals are likely to be given vocational training and will later work at sheltered workshops, depending on their ability to comprehend and execute the required tasks. The sheltered workshops are designed to give students with severe disabilities opportunities to work which lead to dignity, self-worth, and socialization among their peers given that it is competitive for them to secure jobs in the open employment. These workshops often offer a variety of subcontracting work such as packaging, mailing, and sorting services for companies and also producing food and crafts (Bakti-Mind 2008).

In short, the flowchart in Fig. 9.1 demonstrates that students with disabilities have access to education from preschool up to tertiary level. However, when they exit the formal education system, whether at secondary, post secondary, or higher education levels, they are bound to face with the challenges of moving

into employment, engage independent and community living, and contribute to the society and country, just like other citizens. For this reason, the issue of school-to-work transition is relevant to every student with disability. Nevertheless, the transition issue is more pertinent and immediate for upper secondary students since only a small number of students with disabilities make it to postsecondary and tertiary educations. At upper secondary level, students with disabilities have the opportunity to pursue vocational courses at the mainstream vocational schools, vocational special education secondary schools, rehabilitation centers, or NGOs training centers. Generally, the vocational courses for visually impaired students focus on woodwork, massage, telephony, piano tuning, agriculture, arts, and craft, as well as information communication (Malaysian Association for the Blind 2007; Salleh 2002). On the other hand, those with hearing impairments are given training in general mechanics, refrigeration, air-conditioning mechanics, electrical repair, dressmaking, furniture making, plumbing, welding, catering, and graphic design (Malaysian Federation of the Deaf 2007). Majority of students with learning disabilities are working in sheltered workshop, and they have the opportunities to obtain prevocational training, which places emphasis on handicrafts, carpentry, sewing, and cooking skills (Social Welfare Department 2008). Those with physical disabilities, but who are able to manage themselves without assistance, may receive training at the Bangi Industrial and Rehabilitation Center, which provides courses on computers, information systems, electrical repair, dressmaking, electronics, and prosthetics and orthotics (Social Welfare Department 2008). The government hopes that the vocational and academic training provided to students with disabilities will enable them to enter the workforce.

Unfortunately, despite having a comprehensive special education and vocational training system, the unemployment rate among persons with disabilities in Malaysia is still persistently higher than the estimation for developing countries, which is around 80–90% (Zarocostas 2005). According to the Labor Department of Peninsular Malaysia, only 7, 467 persons with disabilities were employed in the private sector, and less than 1% of the disabled workforce were hired in the public sector (Ministry of Women, Family, and Community Development 2009; United Nations Development Program 2007). The unemployment rate for persons with disabilities in Malaysia is also significantly higher than that of their nondisabled counterparts (Faridah 2003). Statistics have revealed that the unemployment rate of persons without disability in Malaysia is only 3.10% (Department of Statistics Malaysia 2010), which is substantially lower than the unemployment rate for those with disabilities. Securing jobs in Malaysia seems to be more challenging for persons with disabilities. In fact, this phenomenon suggests that there is a school-to-work transitional gap among persons with disabilities. Many have failed to move into employment after leaving schools. Even if persons with disabilities are employed, they are holding low-wage jobs, on average between RM 500 and RM 700 per month (Japan International Cooperation Agency 2009). Such income range is considered low as the minimum salary between RM 1,000 and RM 1,500 per month is needed in order to live adequately in the country (Goh 2005; Ling and Wong 2010).
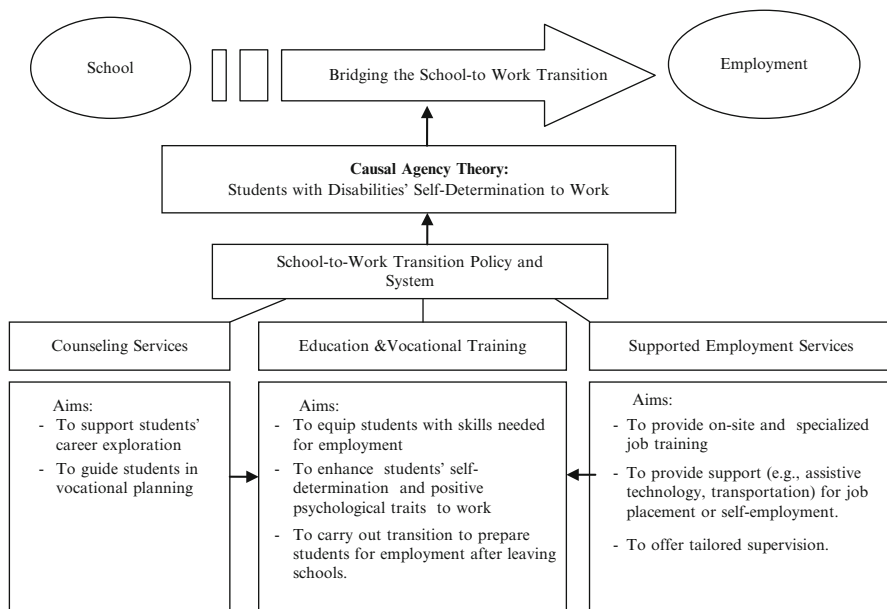
School | | | → Bridging the School-to Work Transition → Employment

Causal Agency Theory:
Students with Disabilities' Self-Determination to Work

School-to-Work Transition Policy and System

Counseling Services	Education &Vocational Training	Supported Employment Services
Aims: - To support students' career exploration - To guide students in vocational planning	Aims: - To equip students with skills needed for employment - To enhance students' self-determination and positive psychological traits to work - To carry out transition to prepare students for employment after leaving schools.	Aims: - To provide on-site and specialized job training - To provide support (e.g., assistive technology, transportation) for job placement or self-employment. - To offer tailored supervision.

Fig. 9.2 Conceptual framework

Literature reviews show that effective school-to-work transition programs can alleviate the problem of persons with disabilities being excluded from equal employment opportunities (Blackmon 2007; National Center on Secondary Education and Transition 2002). Transition program is "a coordinated set of activities for a child with disability that is designed to facilitate movement from school to post-school activities" (Laird 2004: 7). Most educators working in the area of transition concur that strengthening self-determination to work is an important part of transition program (Wehman 2001; Agran et al. 1999). Self-determination describes one's attitudes, abilities, and skills in setting and attaining individual's goals, which is reflected by autonomous act, self-regulated behavior, positive psychological traits, and self-realization behavior (Ward 1988; Wehmeyer 1997; Wehmeyer et al. 1996; Wehman 2001). Self-determination is evident when students with disabilities are aware of own career interest and strength and can make decisions about their career goals. They are capable of regulating own behavior when managing daily chores, working, and engaging in community activities. Students with disabilities who are self-determined also have positive psychological traits (e.g., positive self-concept, high self-efficacy) and proper skills to realize their employment goals. Causal agency is the underlying theoretical framework that supports self-determination behaviors (Wehman 2001). This concept places pertinent role on persons with disabilities as the agent of change in getting jobs for themselves (Fig. 9.2). Nevertheless, persons with disabilities still require support during the transition

from school-to-work. Hence, the establishment of policy and support system on transition program for students with disabilities is important to ensure that they are equipped with proper skills and have high level of self-determination and adequate support to work.

However, due to a lack of policy in Malaysia on school-to-work transition, it is unclear to what extent transition planning is currently being implemented for students with disabilities and how well these students are prepared for employment. This chapter approaches the issue of school-to-work transitional gap from an educational and psychological framework. It looks into the extent to which the current educational system and vocational training, support systems, and services prepare students for transition. The views of key stakeholders such as school administrators, teachers, and students with disabilities on this issue were gathered. This chapter also discusses the critical skills needed for employment as well as proposes strategies to bridge to the school-to-work transitional gap of students with disabilities.

2 Research Objectives

(a) To understand the stakeholders' (school administrators, teachers, and students) views regarding the extent to which the current educational system and vocational training prepare students for transition into work
(b) To identify the critical skills needed for employment by comparing the academic skills, job-related skills, and psychological traits of employed and unemployed persons with disabilities
(c) To propose strategies to bridge the school-to-work transitional gap of students with disabilities

3 Methodological Framework

A mixed method research design, which utilizes both qualitative and quantitative approaches, was used to achieve the objectives of this study. Qualitatively, semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain the stakeholders' views about the current educational system and vocational training in preparing students with disabilities for school-to-work transitions. Quantitatively, a questionnaire survey technique was employed to collect the data on profiles of employed and unemployed persons with disabilities. Findings from both approaches and the literature reviews were used to formulate strategies to bridge the school-to-work transitional gap of students with disabilities in Malaysia.

3.1 Qualitative Study

Participants for the qualitative study were stakeholders involved directly in the education and vocational training of students with disabilities in Malaysia. A total of 82 participants made up of 23 school administrators, 21 special education teachers, and 38 students with disabilities were interviewed to determine the extent to which the current educational system and vocational training prepare students with disabilities for transition into work. The administrators interviewed in this study have the capacity to comment on the policy and the state of transition services in Malaysia as they are the key personnels involved directly in the educational and training of persons with disabilities at government schools and NGOs training centers. To further understand the extent to which vocational trainings prepare students with disabilities toward employment, students and teachers from mainstream vocational schools, vocational special education schools, rehabilitation centers, and NGOs training centers were interviewed. The student participants (mean age = 17.8 years old) were current students at the respective schools. They are enrolling in vocational courses such as wielding, tailoring, radio and television repair, motor vehicle repair, catering, building and furniture construction, farming, machinery, and hair dressing. Data collections with these students were carried out in focus groups and assisted by their teachers. The teacher participants (mean teaching experiences = 6 years), on the other hand, were special education teachers. Semi-structured interview technique was used to interview all the participants in this study, and the obtained data were analyzed through thematic analysis.

3.2 Quantitative Study

3.2.1 Samples

To identify the critical skills needed for employment, the profiles of persons with disabilities who are employed and unemployed were identified and compared. The respondents consisted of 941 persons with disabilities. Out of this total, 506 respondents were employed and the remaining 435 were unemployed. This sample covers 272 persons with hearing impairment, 184 persons with visual impairment, 300 with learning difficulties, and 185 with physical disability (Table 9.3).

Purposive and snowball techniques were used to sample the 941 respondents. Purposive sampling is appropriate as it specifically targeted at persons with disabilities. As for the snowballing technique, this study recognizes that there might be potential limitation in adopting such technique (e.g., risks of dissimilarity from the target population). However, the advantages of snowballing technique outweighed its potential risks as this technique provides access to persons with disabilities who are otherwise difficult to be located, particularly those who did not register with the Welfare Department of Malaysia and those who are unemployed. As a whole, the data collection processes were not only challenging but also time consuming, which took nearly 2 years to be completed (2008–2010).

Table 9.3 Breakdown of samples by types of disabilities

Types of disability	Employed ($n = 506$)	Unemployed ($n = 435$)	Total ($n = 941$)
Learning disability	164	136	300
Hearing impairment	152	120	272
Visual impairment	99	85	184
Physical disability	91	94	185

Note: The hearing impairment category encompasses both respondents with hearing impairment and deaf; the visual impairment category encompasses both respondents with visual impairment and blind

3.2.2 Instrument

The instrument used to profile the critical employment skills of persons with disabilities was the Employability Self-Assessment Scale (ESAS), which is divided into three dimensions: (a) academic skills, (b) job-related skills, and (c) psychological traits. Data collected through this instrument were used to profile and compare the academic and job-related skills of persons with disabilities as well as their psychological profiles by employment status.

Academic skills encompass literacy, verbal, and numeracy skills. Specifically, it is divided into reading, writing, speaking, and mathematical skills. Respondents were required to self-assess these skills on a five-point Likert scale, which ranged from (1) very weak to (5) very good. In view that the respondents are persons with disabilities, ESAS was customized to accommodate their special needs. Alternative items were developed for respondents with sensory impairment. For respondents who are legally blind, reading and writing skills refer to competency in Braille reading and writing skills. In the case of those who are partially sighted, the items concern their abilities to read and write large print materials. The speaking skills of respondents with hearing impairment, on the other hand, were gauged through sign language skills. As for respondents with learning difficulties, they were also encouraged to self-assess their skills and psychological traits. However, when they needed assistance in completing the questionnaire, teachers, instructors, and guardians who are familiar with the respondent's profile were invited to assist them and indicate the responses on the questionnaire. Persons with severe mental retardation, however, were not sampled in this study.

Job-related skills were measured by a 10-item scale which comprised three domains: (a) work environment skills, (b) task skills, and (c) personal work habits. It is a five-point Likert scale with possible responses ranged from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Work environment skills look into one's abilities to adapt and socialize at workplace. Task skills refer to the skills needed by the individuals to perform the assign task at work and their perceived job contributions, while personal work habits describe one's ability to follow instructions, adhere to punctuality, and uphold responsibility. The instrument was content validated by a team of experts in the field of special education and psychology. In addition, it was found to be highly reliable, with a total Cronbach's alpha value of .91.

Psychological traits were measured by a 16-item scale, which gauged the respondents' psychological traits in (a) autonomy, (b) self-regulation, (3) psychological empowerment, and (d) self-realization. Autonomy refers to respondents' ability to choose a job based on self-interest and freedom to make decision about the job and chart own career development. As for self-regulation, it covers self-planning, self-improvement, time management, as well as mobility skills. In terms of psychological empowerment, the respondents' primary motivation to work, whether it is due to interest in the job or due to external reasons, such as to demonstrate capability to the society is assessed, apart from their control beliefs and self-confidence. Finally, self-actualization which encompasses one's effort to realize own dreams and life goals was gauged through self-awareness about self-interest, abilities, acceptance toward criticism, ambitions set, and efforts put forth to realize own ambitions. The validity of the 16-item instrument was established through expert validation, and its reliability was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha analysis ($\alpha = .93$).

4 Findings and Discussion

The major findings from this study emerged from the interviews with stakeholders and also by comparing the profiles of persons with disabilities who are employed and unemployed so as to identify the critical skills needed to secure employment.

4.1 The Views of Administrators

The school administrators' views on school-to-work transition of students with disabilities are summarized in Fig. 9.3. Eight out of twenty-three school administrators were optimistic about the transition services in the country as measures have already been taken by the Ministry of Education and the Social Welfare Department to consolidate the transition program for students with disabilities. The development of formal transition curriculum, however, is still at the initial stage. In many schools, the teaching of critical transition skills such as academic and job-related skills is up to the teachers' or instructors' initiatives.

According to the school administrators, the NGOs are more comprehensive in providing transition services for students with disabilities. This is because some of these organizations have collaborations with international organizations such as the Phoenix Society from Australia and the Systematic Instruction Organization from the United Kingdom, in providing transition programs and supported employment services (Australian Disability Enterprise 2009; Warner and Adnand 2009). Such collaborations help students with disabilities to obtain jobs in the open employment, especially at hypermarkets, restaurants, factories, and companies in cleaning, food preparation, and packing, as emphasized by the school administrators interviewed in this study.
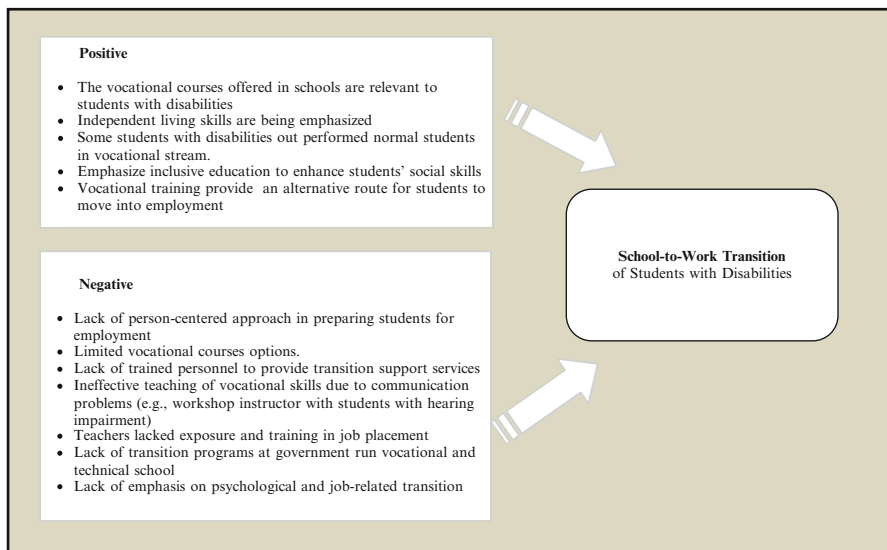
Positive

- School-to-work transitions programs have been implemented by a small numbers of government schools and NGOs, through collaboration with international organizations.
- There are initiatives from the government to develop school-to-work transition curriculum

Negative

- There is no written national policy on School-to-Work Services
- The availability and extend of transition services in Malaysia differ according to centers and schools
- Lack of transition services (e.g., supported employed) for job placement
- Lack of written module or formal curriculum to teach critical transition skills particularly for the NGOs
- Some of the vocational trainings are not in line with the current market needs
- Shortage in trained human resources (e.g., career counselors, job placement officers)

School-to-Work Transition
of Students with Disabilities

Fig. 9.3 School administrators' views on transition policy and services

However, the overall state of transition services provided by NGOs in Malaysia is still unclear as only a handful of NGOs have collaborated with international organizations. The school administrators have also brought into attention some issues on transition services, which were attributed to a lack of transition policy and supporting system to help student with disabilities move into employment more successfully. Without a national policy on school-to-work transition, there is no mandatory requirement for schools to provide students with transition services. In other words, the availability and extent of transition program offered to students with disabilities are depending on the practices of the schools. Generally, school-to-work transition programs are still at initial stage in Malaysia. Accordingly, nearly all the schools do not have formal curriculum or written module to teach critical transition skills, what more to conduct person-centered planning to explore and realize the career interest of the students. Hence, the transition planning, even if available, is very seldom customized to the individual needs of each student. Other issues highlighted by the school administrators include outdated vocational trainings which may no longer be in line with the market demands and also limitations in job placement and career planning services. These problems were largely attributed to shortages of trained personnel such as professional vocational trainers, job coaches, and career counselors, particularly at the NGOs training centers. For instance, most schools do not have job coaches to prepare students with disabilities for competitive employment and community living. As a result, many students with disabilities in Malaysia are not prepared enough to move into open employment and independent living after leaving schools even though they are provided with academic and vocational training (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2010). In fact, about 95% of persons with disabilities are unemployed (Mustapha and Abdullah

Fig. 9.4 School teachers' views on vocational preparation and transition services

2004) even though Malaysia has a comprehensive special education and vocational training system. This implies that without proper transition planning and support services, majority of students with disabilities may fail to play a more significant and effective role in getting jobs for themselves, as indicated by causal agency theory (Wehman 2001). Overall, the negative views expressed by the administrators outweigh the positive ones, which imply that the current educational training and services provided may not be adequate in preparing students with disabilities for employment.

4.2 The Views of Special Education Teachers

Special education teachers' views regarding school-to-work transitions of students with disabilities are showed in Fig. 9.4. Generally, the teachers believe that the vocational courses are relevant to students with disabilities and contribute toward their transition into work. These trainings provide an alternative route for students with disabilities to further education and to be equipped with the skills needed for employment.

The teachers stressed that even though students with disabilities tend to have lower academic achievement, particularly those with hearing impairment and learning disabilities, many actually outperformed their normal counterparts in mainstream vocational courses. More than half of the teachers also agreed that students with disabilities are talented and have genuine interest in vocational training despite

their disabilities. Interview findings also revealed that trainings at mainstream vocational schools were conducted in inclusive settings in which students with disabilities have the opportunities to learn together with their nondisabled peers. The teachers further emphasize that inclusive education is important to enhance students with disabilities' social skills, to prepare them for community living when they leave school and move into adulthood.

The interview sessions, however, also unveiled the shortcomings in vocational preparation of students with disabilities. The teachers interviewed in this study felt that students' vocational options are confined to the limited courses offered at the mainstream or special education vocational schools. As such, they may not have the opportunity to enroll in courses that are parallel with their career interest and individual strength. There seems to be no person-centered planning approach in charting the vocational path of students with disabilities. There is also a lack of transition program to prepare them for employment. For instance, there is no formal emphasis on critical transition skills such as self-determination skills, independent living skills, and job-related skills neither through Individualized Education Plan (IEP) nor classroom instruction. According to most of the teachers, students with disabilities are not well prepared in career planning before and after they have enrolled in the vocational trainings. It is, thus, not surprising that some of the former students remained jobless or work in a completely different field from their vocational background. In addition, special education teachers, particularly those from the government schools, felt that teachers are not equipped with the skills, experience, and networking to carry out job placement for students. Apart from these issues, the teachers also concurred that they do not have adequate vocational background and it is challenging for them to mediate the teaching and learning processes for the hearing-impaired students. Due to a lack of knowledge in vocational subjects among the special education teachers, terminology limitation in sign language and vocational instructors' lack of training in special education; communication breakdown often occur during the teaching and learning processes. Overall, the transition program is weak, and there are not enough trained personnel to provide quality vocational and transition education (Japan International Cooperation Agency 2009).

4.3 The Views of Students with Disabilities

The students' views regarding their preparation toward employment are showed in Fig. 9.5. Based on the interview findings, students with disabilities generally are not prepared enough to move into employment.

Majority of the students seem to treat vocational courses like any other schools subjects and did not perceive it as a possible career path. The findings indicate that students with disabilities still lack awareness and transition skill in career planning. Nevertheless, most students interviewed in this study expressed interest in vocational courses and have confidence to acquire the skills. There seems to be

Positive

- Have interest in vocational and technical courses
- Students have confidence toacquire the vocational skills
- Adequate social support from parents and teachers to pursue vocational training

Negative

- Do not see the value of vocational and technical training
- Students may not get to pursue their career interest as options in vocational training are depending on the courses available at vocational and technical schools
- Students are uncertain about career prospect and employment opportunities
- Students lack transition skills to chart their career path
- Mismatch between students' vocational training and their ambition
- Students still face communication and socialization problems in inclusive setting

School-to-Work Transition
of Students with Disabilities

Fig. 9.5 Students' views on vocational preparation and transition services

adequate social support from both parents and teachers for the students to pursue the vocational trainings. However, about one-third of the students did not get to enroll in their desired courses because there were limited options available at the vocational schools. One of the students mentioned that his parents were very protective and did not allow him to travel to another state to pursue his dream course. There are still limitations in vocational training options for students with disabilities. When asked about their career prospect in relation to the training that they received, nearly all the students were uncertain about their future careers and employment opportunities. There are also a number of mismatch cases between students' vocational training and their aspiration. For instance, one hearing-impaired student who is trained in tailoring is aspired to become a police officer and did not foresee his future in any field related to his vocational background. Hence, there are needs to provide career guidance to students so that vocational planning can be carried out as early as possible to help them plan and realize their dreams, ultimately earn a qualify living in future. In addition, the interviews also revealed that some of the students face communication and socialization problems at schools. For these reasons, student with disabilities must be equipped with socialization, communication, problem solving, and help-seeking skills so that they not only are able to engage in inclusive settings at schools but have the skills to engage in community living when they leave school.

4.4   Critical Skills for Employment

Table 9.4 shows the self-assess critical skills by types of disabilities and employment status. In terms of academic skills, there were no mark differences according to employment status for persons with learning difficulties and physical disability.

Table 9.4 Academic skills, job-related skills, and psychological traits of persons with disabilities by types of disabilities and employment status

Types of disability	Learning disability		Hearing deaf/ impairment		Visual blind/ impairment		Physical disability	
	E	UnE	E	UnE	E	UnE	E	UnE
Employment status	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M
Academic skills								
Reading skills in Malay	1.32	1.33	3.08	2.88	–	–	3.27	3.63
Reading skills in English	1.02	1.23	2.53	2.28	–	–	2.27	2.41
Braille reading skills/large print in Malay	–	–	–	–	3.60	3.34	–	–
Braille reading skills/large print in English	–	–	–	–	2.99	2.60	–	–
Writing skills in Malay	1.31	1.34	2.93	2.80	–	–	3.27	3.80
Writing skills in English	1.02	1.22	2.41	2.14	–	–	2.19	2.48
Braille writing skills in Malay	–	–	–	–	3.56	3.29	–	–
Braille writing skills in English	–	–	–	–	2.98	2.59	–	–
Speaking skills in Malay	2.94	2.53	–	–	4.05	3.79	3.98	3.96
Speaking skills in English	1.33	1.32	–	–	3.17	2.64	2.27	2.63
Sign language in KTBM	–	–	2.07	2.38	–	–	–	–
Sign language in BIM	–	–	3.47	2.83	–	–	–	–
Sign language in ASL	–	–	2.51	2.22	–	–	–	–
Mathematical skills	1.05	1.31	2.84	2.65	3.03	2.93	2.73	2.62
Job-related skills								
Work environment skills	11.40	10.58	10.73	9.97	12.12	11.80	11.79	11.44
Task skills	15.23	12.25	13.67	13.13	15.77	14.99	16.31	14.30
Personal work habit	11.44	10.62	11.82	11.00	12.64	12.16	12.19	11.68
Total job-related skills	38.07	33.45	36.22	34.10	40.53	38.94	40.29	37.42
Psychological traits								
Autonomy	10.31	8.20	11.42	10.37	11.87	11.69	11.55	11.08
Self-regulation	13.76	11.30	14.89	13.78	15.97	15.34	15.78	13.94
Psychological empowerment	15.66	14.03	15.99	15.99	16.87	16.32	16.16	16.87
Self-realization	17.39	16.24	18.07	16.79	20.65	20.16	20.16	20.53
Total psychological traits	57.67	49.77	60.38	55.57	65.36	63.51	63.66	62.42

Note: M = mean; E = employed; UnE = unemployed
KTBM = Kod Tangan Bahasa Malaysia (Manually Coded Malay) is the only form of sign language recognized by the Malaysian government as the language of communication for the hearing-impaired community; *BIM* = Bahasa Isyarat Malaysia (Malaysian Sign Language) is the sign language in everyday use in many parts of Malaysia. It has many dialects, differing from state to state; *ASL* = American Sign Language

However, persons with learning difficulties tend to have lower academic skills, while persons with physical disabilities have higher academic skills regardless of whether they are employed or unemployed. There were, however, some variations for persons with sensory impairments. Persons with hearing impairments who

Table 9.5 Comparison of academic skills, job-related skills, and psychological traits by employment status

	Employed (n = 506)		Unemployed (n = 435)		Mean differences	t	Sig.
Job-related skills							
Work environment skills	11.41	1.52	10.84	2.09	0.57	4.84	0.00**
Task skills	15.06	2.34	13.47	2.75	1.59	9.56	0.00**
Personal work habit	11.92	1.57	11.25	2.02	0.67	5.72	0.00**
Total job-related skills	38.39	4.39	35.56	5.84	2.83	8.47	0.00**
Psychological traits							
Autonomy	11.17	2.11	10.10	2.66	1.06	6.84	0.00**
Self-regulation	14.90	2.34	13.35	3.21	1.55	8.52	0.00**
Psychological empowerment	16.09	1.75	15.26	2.89	0.83	5.41	0.00**
Self-realization	18.91	2.83	18.08	3.60	0.82	3.93	0.00**
Total psychological traits	61.07	7.44	56.79	10.59	4.27	7.23	0.00**

Note: ** $p < 0.01$

are employed seem to have higher reading and writing skills, sign language skills, and mathematical skills compared to their unemployed counterparts. Persons with visual impairment who are employed were found to have higher Braille reading and writing skills as well as speaking and mathematical skills than their unemployed counterparts. The differences in academic profiles of persons with disabilities by employment suggest that academic skills are important for persons with sensory impairment (e.g., hearing impairment and visual impairment) to secure employment. It is also important to note that the total mean scores for job-related skills and psychological traits were higher for the employed respondents across all the four categories of disability.

Table 9.5 reveals the results of *t*-test analysis on job-related skills and psychological traits by employment status. The findings confirmed that there are significant differences in job-related skills and psychological traits between employed and unemployed persons with disabilities at an alpha level of 0.05. The differences between the two groups of respondents were also graphically demonstrated in Fig. 9.6.

The findings suggest that job-related skills and positive psychological traits may make a difference in the employment outcome of persons with disabilities. Individuals with higher work environment skills, task skill, more positive work habits, ability to make decision, and ability to self-regulate are psychological empowered, have the skills to realize own dreams, and are more likely to be employed.
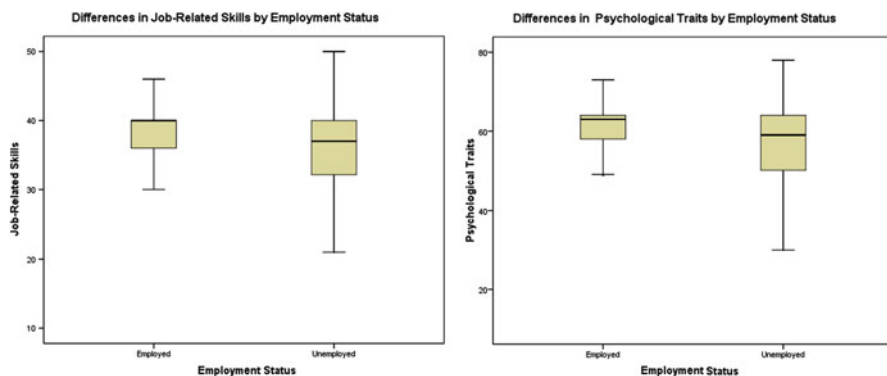
Fig. 9.6 Differences in job-related skills and psychological traits by employment

5 Recommendations to Bridge School-to-Work Transition

This chapter discusses the findings on school-to-work transitional gap of students with disabilities in Malaysia. It looks into the extent to which the current educational system and vocational training prepare students for transition into work from the stakeholders' viewpoints. The findings suggest that school-to-work transition is not a smooth path for students with disabilities. Strategies, thus, were proposed to make school-to-work transition a more successful process for persons with disabilities in the country.

First and foremost, the interview findings with school administrators reveal that there are needs to establish legislation on transition planning for students with disabilities. To ensure that students with disabilities receive timely intervention and systematic transition services, the age to begin the transition program has to be clearly stated by the law (Blackmon 2007; National Center on Secondary Education and Transition 2002; Wehman 2001). There must also be greater awareness that students with disabilities should be given the opportunities to chart their own career path and plan for vocational training and employment. As emphasized by Mithaug et al. (1992: 7), "...student preferences drive service delivery." For these reasons, the approach to deliver the transition services has to be more person-centered in nature via IEP or person-centered transition planning. A small number of government-run schools in Malaysia have already established transition programs to introduce employment and independent living skills to students with disabilities. These initiatives are still at the initial stage (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2010). Even students with severe disability who are referred to the *community-based rehabilitation* (CBR) center, under the Social Welfare Department, were also provided with vocational and job-related training. Most of these students have opportunities to gain working experiences at the sheltered workshops, under the purview of Social Welfare Department. Various low manual skill jobs such as packaging chili sauces and serviette work for fast-food outlets are carried out at the workshops (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2010).

However, to manage the challenges of obtaining and maintaining competitive employment in an integrated setting, students with disabilities require supported employment services (Wehman 2001), and it is crucial that the provision of supported employment services for persons with disabilities is required by law (Blackmon 2007; Henderson 2007). The supported employment services such as job coaches need to be made available at both government and NGO schools. Career guidance and counseling services for students with disabilities are also essential so that vocational planning can be carried out as early as possible to help the students plan and realize their dreams, ultimately earn a qualify living in future. A strong partnership between the stakeholders can help establish an effective transition planning within the special and vocational education. These steps may strengthen the school-to-work transition of students with disabilities in Malaysia and turn them into assets that meet the labor market demands.

Based on the comparison of profiles between employed and unemployed persons with disabilities, job-related skills, and positive psychological traits were identified as critical skills that could make a difference in the employment outcome. Individuals with higher job-related skill, more positive work habits, and ability to make decision and self-regulate are psychological empowered, have the skills to realize own dreams, and are more likely to be employed (Wehmeyer 1996, 1997; Wehman 2001; Worth 2003; Alderman 1999; Rogers and Saklofske 1985; Mamlin et al. 2001; Durrant 1993). For this reason, to prepare students with disabilities for employment, transition program and planning must take into account these critical skills. In addition, student with disabilities must also be equipped with socialization, communication, problem solving, and help-seeking skills so that they are able to engage in inclusive settings both at schools and in community living when they leave school. The differences in academic profiles suggest that academic skills are important for persons with sensory impairment (e.g., hearing impairment and visual impairment) to secure employment. Hence, the transition program should place emphasis on these skills particularly for hearing-impaired and visual-impaired students. This is supported by past studies that employability of persons with disabilities is related to academic skills, particularly writing, reading, and mathematical skills (Doren and Benz 1998).

Overall, the issues highlighted by the special education teachers and students were supported by literature reviews. Majority of the vocational trainings in Malaysia are lacking resources and professionalism (Japan International Cooperation Agency 2009). There are not enough vocational schools and training centers for students with disabilities. Realizing this issue, the Malaysian government plans to build more secondary vocational schools for students with disabilities (10th Malaysia Plan 2010). In terms of human resources training, the Department of Social Welfare Malaysia and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have started to commence a project for capacity building on social welfare services for the persons with disabilities. The project aims to promote independent living movement, supported employment (e.g., job coach system), and self-advocacy of persons with learning disabilities (Kuno 2009, 2010; Yeo 2010). These ongoing efforts contribute positively toward strengthening the transition services in the country. At present, a

large majority of students with disabilities in Malaysia may not be prepared enough to move into open employment and independent living, though they are provided with academic and vocational training (Ministry of Education Malaysia 2010). Nevertheless, effective school-to-work transition program can make a difference by providing the education, supports, and training needed by these students to attain employment and achieve a reasonable quality adult life (Horn et al. 1998; Murray and Heron 1999; Wehman 2001; Warger 2003). In other words, by strengthening the educational program and services in Malaysia, students with disabilities can serve as assets to the nation's development.

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Chapter 10
Walking in Multiple Worlds: Successful School-to-Work Transitions for Aboriginal and Cultural Minority Youth

E. Anne Marshall, Suzanne L. Stewart, Natalee E. Popadiuk, and Breanna C. Lawrence

1 Introduction

Work plays a central role in the lives of people and communities – it contributes to the overall social and economic welfare of a population. Work is the way we establish meaning and identity in our lives (Amundson 2006; Blustein 2006; Juntunen 2006). Experiences of work can either promote well-being or lead to distress; work satisfaction or dissatisfaction has been shown to be a significant predictor of overall mental health (Anderson and Winefeld 2011; Kirmayer et al. 2000). In more recent years, there has been an increasing emphasis on the role of culture (broadly defined) as it relates to work, education, and other significant life decisions (Arthur and Popadiuk 2010; Savickas 1999; Young et al. 2007). As Bruner (1990) and Pedersen (1991) maintain, cultural factors play a significant role in all aspects of life and development, including work. Ethnic identity, family, and gender are also cultural locations affecting life and work decisions (Andres et al. 2007; Shepard and Marshall 2000; Young et al. 2003). For adolescents and young adults getting ready to enter the workforce, these factors are particularly salient and can have far-reaching effects on their future work and life pathways.

E.A. Marshall (✉) • N.E. Popadiuk • B.C. Lawrence
Educational Psychology and Leadership Studies, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada
e-mail: amarshal@uvic.ca; popadiuk@uvic.ca; breanna@uvic.ca

S.L. Stewart
Applied Psychology and Human Development, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Canada
e-mail: suzanne.stewart@utoronto.ca

In Canada, just under one quarter of the population are of Aboriginal or cultural minority heritage (see http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/91-003-x/2007001/4129904-eng.htm). According to the 2006 census, visible minority persons accounted for almost 20% of the Canadian population. Moreover, between 1996 and 2006, the population reporting Aboriginal identity grew by 45% to reach almost 1.2 million, accounting for about 4% of the total population of Canada (Statistics Canada 2008). The term *Aboriginal* refers to the original indigenous peoples in Canada, which include three distinct groups: First Nations (North American Indian), Metis, and Inuit (see http://www4.hrsdc.gc.ca/.3ndic.1t.4r@-eng.jsp?iid=36).

Although overall unemployment rate in Canada is generally between 6 and 8%, the rates for Aboriginal and other cultural minorities are significantly higher, and higher still for young people in those populations (Statistics Canada 2006). Communities, individuals, and governments agree that employment is a major challenge for Aboriginal and other cultural minority youth and that school-to-work transitions are particularly important (Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991; Marshall 2002; Stewart 2008). According to Canadian 2006 census figures, unemployment rates for Aboriginal and other cultural minority youth aged 15–24 can be two to three times higher than those for cultural majority young people (Statistics Canada 2006). In order to address this gap, successful school-to-work transition policies, programmes, and resources must include culturally diverse content and delivery methods. There is considerable survey data available related to youth unemployment but very little research that includes the voices of the youth themselves. Thus, our overall research question is *what are the perceived factors contributing to successful school-to-work transitions for Aboriginal and cultural minority students in Canada?* More specifically, we ask what experiences, practices, and actions are seen to be successful by the youth themselves.

1.1 Theoretical Frameworks

Our work is influenced by cultural and indigenous formulations and social constructionist theoretical frameworks that emphasize the meaning of work and career actions as embedded in social and cultural contexts (Amundson 2006; Young et al. 1996). In particular, the work of David Blustein (2006) and colleagues (Blustein et al. 2004; Worthington and Juntunen 1997) includes less advantaged youth and young adults, including Aboriginal groups and cultural minorities. For these populations, the notion of "work" is often in sharp contrast to the majority of career development research participants. Cultural minority and Aboriginal young people face multiple obstacles, both in the job search process and in the workplace itself.

Blustein (2006) calls for an expanded and more inclusive framework that takes cultural contexts into account. Aboriginal and other cultural minority peoples are underrepresented in vocational psychology research and literature – little is understood about the issues that may be related to their successful career development and school-to-work transitions (Juntunen et al. 2001). In particular, the

emphasis on individual choice and fulfilment may be at odds with the community-focused identity and goals evident in native and other community-oriented cultures (McCormick and Amundson 1997). Additional cultural factors to consider include community priorities, sense of place or ties to the land, family and kinship systems, spiritual values, and the role of cultural knowledge. These differences would suggest that many western-based career theories, programmes, and resources are not appropriate for use with Aboriginal and other cultural minority groups.

Given that much current research focuses on the deficits and problems of cultural minority students, we strongly believe that it is important to shift our focus to a more positive orientation: What strengths do students already possess that they can build on? How can students use current coping strategies effectively in different contexts? How can we view diversity as an asset that becomes additive to our current worldviews and perspectives? In this section, we highlight four culturally relevant approaches – positive psychology, relational-cultural theory, cultural formulation, and Aboriginal-centred learning – for exploring work-related issues with students.

In his groundbreaking work, Seligman's (2005) positive psychology approach expanded the focus of psychology beyond the realm of treating disease, distress, and dysfunction to examining positive experiences and personal characteristics. A Canadian study based on these principles focused on positive aspects of student transitions by examining facilitative factors, growth, and personal strengths (Moores and Popadiuk 2011). Through emphasizing capabilities and strengths, a positive psychology approach could also be helpful for cultural minority youth by acknowledging and honouring their social and cultural context.

Relational approaches have also been shown to be highly effective for culturally relevant work with students (Walker 2004). Blustein et al. (2004) have applied relational approaches to career development and counselling. Popadiuk (2010) found that international students' fluctuations associated with transition and adjustment issues were often linked to connections and disconnections in their relationships. This suggests that many career-type issues could be conceptualized primarily as relational issues – for example, students who have poor relationships with their families may not return home, and students who develop romantic relationships while studying away from home may decide to pursue work where their partner lives.

A third culturally appropriate perspective related to life and work decision-making is the cultural formulation approach (Arthur and Popadiuk 2010). This perspective can be used to address psychological distress (e.g. anxiety or depression), contextual issues (e.g. changing friendships, fear of disappointing parents), and the particular strengths and resources of the person (e.g. strong family support, determination to succeed). Also, this perspective has been used to examine culturally diverse career issues (Leong et al. 2010). Given that many cultural minority youth experience a high degree of family expectation and involvement in career decision-making, we need to carefully consider how we assist them in school and work placement programmes. Work and career exploration must extend beyond the bounds of autonomous decision-making, to include a thorough analysis of family and community expectations, personal duty, as well as the intersection of all relevant aspects of the youth's cultural self.

For Aboriginal students, educational challenges have been linked to differences between Aboriginal and western worldviews and pedagogies (Battiste et al. 2002; Castellano et al. 2000). Aboriginal or *indigenous-centred learning* is a decolonized and holistic approach to learning that embodies spirituality, traditional knowledge, interrelatedness, and connection to community (Guenette and Marshall 2008; Marshall et al. under review). Its guiding principle of cultural relevance is also applicable to other cultural and minority groups (Blustein 2006). When applied to career development contexts, this approach to learning affirms student identity and utilizes familiar ways of knowing in order to facilitate the successful realization of work or educational goals.

2 Review of Selected Literature

2.1 *Life and Work Transitions*

Patterns of young peoples' work-life transitions have changed over the last few decades, becoming more protracted and complex (Blatterer 2007). Unlike that for generations before, the work-life transition has transformed from a relatively linear pathway to an often meandering, gradual, and individualized process. Work-life transitions are multifaceted processes that are significantly influenced by changing socio-economic conditions. This, in turn, has resulted in less defined and predictable career pathways, greater competition and pressure for productivity, greater work-life complexity, more need for dual career planning, and pressure on families (Amundson 2005).

Young adults. Identity formation is a crucial developmental task for young adults (Arnett 2004; Young et al. 2007). In the twenty-first century, increased freedoms and more diverse social opportunities impact young people's development and growth. Jeffrey Arnett (2004) calls this particular period of development "emerging adulthood", characterized by instability, identity exploration, and multiple transitions. Rather than a universal period of development, emerging adulthood is described as a period that exists under certain conditions and in some cultures – mostly in the developed countries of North America and Europe, along with Asian countries such as Japan and South Korea (Arnett 2004). It is a significant period of identity exploration in which young people explore work and personal selves and become more independent from their parents but do not generally have the stable commitments of typical western adult life (long-term job, marriage, parenthood). During this period, work choices are often based on underlying identity questions such as: "What kind of work am I good at? What kind of work would I find satisfying for the long term? What are my chances of getting a job in the field that seems to suit me best?" Through different work and life experiences, young people expand their repertoire of "possible selves" (Markus and Nurius 1986; Marshall et al. 2008) by examining their abilities, interests, strengths, and weaknesses.

Transition pathways. Recent writers such as Amundson et al. (2004), Blustein et al. (2004), and Feller (2003) categorize the school-to-work transition as a developmental task, strongly influenced by cultural, social, economic, and historical circumstances. Goodwin and O'Connor (2007) observe that the movement from "full-time education to employment has always been fraught with risk, uncertainty, insecurity, and individualization" (p. 570). Horowitz and Brominick (2007) draw attention to the increasing consensus that radical social change has transformed the transition to adulthood from a relatively definite and logical pathway to a more complex and perhaps fragmented process dependent on young peoples' abilities to manage various landmark events and transitions (Dwyer et al. 2003; Furlong and Cartmel 1997). Young adults are increasingly required to "individualize" (Schwartz et al. 2005, p. 203) their work-life pathways in order to form working and personal relationships, to gain educational credentials and employment experiences, and to plan for the future. Career development theories highlight that individuals have the potential to exercise some agency during school-to-work transitions, assuming that certain psychological and social factors are in place (Krumboltz and Worthington 1999; Lent et al. 1999; Savickas 1999).

Changing work context. The work-life experiences of young people have changed significantly over the last two decades. Globalization, advances in technology and information, and significant demographic shifts are sweeping changes that affect the national and local labour markets. As a result, once well-established local industries and companies are disappearing from the industrial landscape; jobs and trades, once thought to be secure, have vanished alongside these transformations (Goodwin and O'Connor 2007). For example, in rural and coastal British Columbia, Canada, restructuring in fishing and logging industries has resulted in widespread cutbacks and substantial job losses (Lawrence 2010; Marshall 2002). Increasing demands for highly qualified and well-educated workers, flexible specialization in the workplace, and changes in social policies have far-reaching impacts on the work experiences of young people, especially at entry levels (Furlong and Cartmel 1997). Rising qualification levels have been observed in most developed countries, and the age when young people enter employment has been effectively delayed. Given these transformations, Furlong and Cartmel assert that it is no longer appropriate to apply "grand theories" to the study of career and work life as patterns because behaviour and individual life pathways have lost their predictability. The current social and economic climate has created a challenging context for teachers, career counsellors, and advisors supporting young people through work-life transitions (Lawrence 2010).

2.2 Aboriginal Youth

Employment is a major challenge for Aboriginal young people; figures from Statistics Canada (2006) demonstrate a near crisis of unemployment for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit young adults. These Aboriginal youth face multiple

employment barriers related to poverty, access, literacy weaknesses, discrimination, colonization, and the daunting legacy of residential school abuse. However, there has been little research relating to culturally appropriate methods of teaching and training with Aboriginal youth in the context of work-life outcomes. Evidence exists to substantiate that Aboriginal conceptualizations of both education and work life differ from those of the majority Canadian society (Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991; Smith 1999; Stewart 2009). The extent of these differences indicates that education, career exploration, and employment training should be reconsidered in order to incorporate Aboriginal cultural conceptions of pedagogy and work (Stewart 2009, 2010). There is a need for more systemic exploration of Aboriginal experiences of employment that are seen to be successful because most existing research focuses on individual and community problems and barriers, not on educational and employment solutions (Mendelson 2006; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 2004). More focus on relevant and successful educational and work approaches, strategies, programmes, and research is clearly needed (Stewart 2010).

Post-secondary education, an important precursor to career success, is under-accessed by the Aboriginal population as a whole, and research suggests that this is because most institutions are based on non-Aboriginal conceptions of education, community, work, and success (Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991; Battiste et al. 2002). Instructors and institutions are not educated about minority and Aboriginal pedagogies and worldviews; instructors typically use western-based teaching approaches that do not value Aboriginal students' ways of knowing or learning (Castellano et al. 2000; McCormick and Amundson 1997; McCormick et al. 2002). In response, a range of programmatic interventions within higher education have been developed, falling along a spectrum from minimal Aboriginal content in the curriculum to rethinking course delivery and institutional structures to better reflect Aboriginal understandings of education (Guenette and Marshall 2008; Marshall et al. 2009; Oberg et al. 2007).

A study by Stewart (2009) looked at the success of urban post-secondary Aboriginal students. Common themes in the students' narratives included self-awareness, integrating two worlds, trailblazing, and mentorship. Most had overcome issues related to historical struggles generally and isolation within the academy specifically. From their experiences, Stewart concluded that Aboriginal students require strong role models and support systems within the institution if they are to complete their degree and carry on to successful employment outcomes.

2.3   Cultural Minority and International Youth

Culture is inextricably bound to work-life issues. Factors such as ethnic identity, family, and gender play a significant role in all aspects of life and development affecting life and work decisions (Andres et al. 2007; Shepard and Marshall 2000; Young et al. 2003). There has been little investigation, however, of those who need to work for survival or whose work environments are determined by community

needs and cultural values (Diemer and Blustein 2007; Kenny et al. 2007). Blustein (2006) calls for an expanded and more inclusive framework that takes cultural and human developmental contexts into account. The emphasis on individual choice and fulfilment of many career exploration and guidance frameworks is clearly at odds with the collective identity and community needs orientation held by many non-majority populations. These differences would suggest that many western-based education and work theories, programmes, and resources are not appropriate for use with cultural minority and international students.

International students. The decision to study abroad is a significant career choice for international students and their families. Arthur (2008) observes that the work-life plans of international students may not transpire in light of the actual experiences of studying abroad, or alternatively, through exposure to new curriculum and lifestyles, they may wish to change their plans. Often, this desire to change educational and career goals is in conflict with family wishes, and students then find themselves in a stressful situation that squarely places them between family obligation and individual desire (Arthur and Popadiuk 2010). They need guidance to develop skills for managing current and future career options in light of complex sociocultural contexts (Shen and Herr 2004; Shih and Brown 2000). Yet, there has been surprisingly little discussion in the literature about how the work and career development of these students is linked to their cultural identity and experiences of cross-cultural transitions. Most research on international students explores issues related to studying at university, which leaves many unanswered questions about experiences of transition from school to work or to post-secondary education for these adolescents. This chapter addresses these issues.

3   Our Research Studies

In this section, we describe several findings from our research investigating Aboriginal and cultural minority youth transitions to work and post-secondary education.

3.1   Aboriginal Work-Life Study

The focus of this study (Stewart and Marshall 2011) is Aboriginal young people's experiences of the successes and challenges in making transition from school to work or from secondary to post-secondary education. We have adopted a narrative methodology, grounded in social constructionist career development theory (Blustein et al. 2005; Savickas 1999; Stewart 2008) that is consistent with Aboriginal oral traditions and storytelling and situated our investigation in a community partnership model. A total of 97 Aboriginal young people aged 16–20 participated in group and individual interviews conducted in two urban sites: Victoria, British Columbia (population 220,000), and Toronto, Ontario (population 2.5 million).

Approximately 40% had not yet completed secondary school. All interviews were transcribed and analysed for common themes following an inductive method adapted from Bogdan and Biklen (2006). The results showed that employment issues for these youth centre on four metathemes: Aboriginal culture, community connection, current and historical oppression, and family/support systems. These are described below.

Aboriginal culture is a central and important theme within many facets of the youth's work life. For example, several of the participants chose to work within the Aboriginal sector because they found a sense of place within a familiar cultural environment. Many participants indicated that they enjoyed and felt culturally and emotionally safe being in a place of work that shared their values and ways of being. Participants noted feelings of acceptance in terms of cultural identity within Aboriginal organizations and a sense of united purpose in working to improve conditions for Aboriginal peoples in various facts of society such as education, social services, politics, and health. In this sense, many participants felt a like-mindedness between their place of work and their own personal and cultural identity. Participants showed resourcefulness and used their cultural uniqueness to gain employment, through various traditional art forms and customs.

Community connection is defined by participants as the type of relationship an individual has to an Aboriginal community, whether it be an urban or reserve community or a joined urban or rural/reserve community. Community connection described as either strong or tenuous was seen as a major factor in terms of employment success or failure, respectively. For example, participants revealed barriers associated with attaining work in Aboriginal run organizations; participants spoke of the importance of having the status of a "community insider" in order to gain employment in this sector. "Outsiders" faced barriers such as nepotism and hiring within circles of friends. Participants explained that if one is outside of such circles, there can often be challenges to gaining entry into these types of work opportunities. Finally, some participants noted that many jobs in the Aboriginal health and social service sector are taken by non-Aboriginal people who often have competitively high levels of post-secondary education yet do not possess the cultural knowledge or sensitivity required to be successful.

Current and historical themes of oppression were also salient across participant narratives. Many participants described having faced instances of discrimination and racism when working outside of Aboriginal organizations. Several participants noted that they would often hide their true ancestry as Aboriginal in order to protect themselves from discriminatory treatment and to gain a sense of emotional and physical safety in their place of work. Other participants felt they were treated unfairly (e.g. working beyond their job description, working for unfair wages) due to their Aboriginal identity. In terms of securing employment, some participants had experienced an abundance of work opportunities specifically geared to Aboriginal young people, as well as training and assistance such as resume preparation and job search strategies. However, other participants observed that these opportunities remain unknown to many people and are thus inaccessible, particularly if one is not a post-secondary student and lacks information and other resources through school.

Some participants also felt that community colonial experiences such as residential schools, forced land relocation, and the giving and taking of Aboriginal status had a direct effect on their personal employment outcomes.

A fourth major theme raised related to the importance of *family and/or relational support systems* in their stories of work-life development. Participants described the tangible and emotional support that parents, elders, and extended family provided regarding secondary school completion, post-secondary studies, and work ethics. This included childhood experiences and family history (both positive and negative) related to confidence, determination, and self-efficacy with regard to finding and keeping work.

3.2 International Student Transitions to Working and Living in Canada

In this study, Popadiuk and Arthur (submitted) focused on international students making the transition from school to work in order to learn more about the key influences in decision-making processes about whether to stay in Canada, return home to their family, or to move somewhere else in the world. The feminist biographical method (Denzin 1989; Popadiuk 2004), a form of critical narrative methodology, was used to explore how social worlds and individual psychologies are embedded in participants' personal and collective histories. Our research question was *What are the factors contributing to successful school-to-work transitions for international students in Canada?* In-depth interviews were conducted in Vancouver, British Columbia, with 18 current or former international students (7 males and 11 females). Participants were asked to reflect on their decision-making processes in their last year of schooling and 3-year post-degree. We used Josselson's (2004) hermeneutic interpretive analysis method, in which there is a constant interplay between text, data coding, and interpretations, to identify three major themes related to international students' career decision-making processes.

One central theme across the interviews was *finding our way in the local market: mentoring and networking.* Most participants discussed the importance of being able to apply their new knowledge learned in Canada to workplaces in Canada. They agreed that this step would assist them to consolidate their knowledge base within the culturally relevant framework of the local economy. They thought that obtaining local work experience post-graduation would assist them in making further career-related decisions, depending on the outcome of their job search and experiences. In order to successfully manage the transition from school to work, participants spoke about the need for mentoring and networking opportunities. For example, many who transitioned into the local Canadian work environment stated that networking (brief contacts with key people in the field), ongoing casual connections (getting to know people), and mentoring (support from teachers or others in their circle) helped them to find their first jobs. Depending on the field, some participants felt that

mentoring and networking were well developed in their academic realm, although little structural support existed to specifically target international students and some of their unique career needs. Some spoke about the need for mentorship from former international students who could serve as role models regarding successful school-to-work transitions.

The second theme across interviews was *goals and serendipity: options and back-up plans*. Participants spoke of early and ongoing discussions with family, particularly about how things might unfold once they graduated. Most participants held multiple goals, each with accompanying plans, depending on the best case scenario, but also taking into account unforeseen circumstances (e.g. unemployment in the area of work, failing required courses, illness in the family). Many participants also discussed the tension experienced between the desire or obligation to return home to be with family and to support their country's economy with skilled, professional workers and the desire to continue living and working in the Canadian context, applying their new knowledge in the local context and continuing to develop and maintain new friendships and relationships in the new culture.

A third important theme centred on *relational influences: family, friends, romantic partners, and university personnel*. Many participants shared how various relational connections and disconnections both in the home country with family and friends, as well as in Canada with new friends and partners, significantly impacted their decision-making. Some spoke of significant and chronic family problems that they did not want to return to, while others had spent so much time in Canada that they did not want to leave the strong circle of people in their lives. Perhaps not surprisingly, many participants suggested that one of the key reasons for deciding to continue living and working in Canada was due to a romantic relationship with a Canadian that had developed during their stay with a Canadian. Even in this situation, participants spoke of multiple options, depending on whether they decided to get married or to break up in the future. Overall, relational connections and disconnections – family, friends, and romantic partners – in both the home and host cultures were a significant factor in decisions about work and career. Additionally, participants spoke of at least one central figure from the university, often a professor, a supervisor, or an advisor from their department, who not only supported them during their time at the university but were also the people who provided them with a job, either directly or indirectly.

4   Discussion and Implications

Although the participant samples in the above research studies are from a wide variety of cultures, backgrounds, and locations, there are, nevertheless, a number of common themes in the data relating to school-to-work transitions. These include the central importance of cultural identity, relational connectedness, the need for respecting diversity, the roles of family and community, the roles of employers

and co-workers (or instructors and fellow students), and overcoming/the impact of discrimination. These six common themes will be discussed below, with reference to other research in the literature. The less common themes identified in the data are usually related to particular cultural perspectives, community values, or local work conditions that are important contextual components for individuals or small groups of participants. A few illustrative examples will be presented to describe some of these particular perspectives.

4.1 Cultural Identity

Not surprisingly, cultural identity was highly significant for all participants, across our multiple research studies, although the impact and expression of cultural identity did, of course, differ. For Aboriginal and cultural minority youth who were born in or had immigrated to Canada, a major task for them was finding a way to blend or integrate aspects of two or more cultures (Castellano et al. 2000; Stewart 2009), sometimes in the face of resistance from their families and home communities (Duran 2006; McCormick and Amundson 1997). Reconciling cultural differences was also salient for international students who often had to make significant adjustments in a relatively short time in order to be successful in the host culture (Popadiuk 2009, 2010). This bicultural identity or "walking in two worlds", however, was sometimes a double-edged sword. For example, for some East Asian students, working in a culturally diverse, cosmopolitan city like Vancouver after graduation provided many with an opportunity to successfully negotiate the coming together of both identities. However, this very integration of the new identity often created internal struggles about whether to stay or go back home, as well as relational struggles with family who may not be pleased with the increasing emphasis on individualism, autonomy, and pursuing a career that is outside culturally valued trajectories.

4.2 Relational Connectedness

Our participants have consistently emphasized the importance of relationships when navigating transitions, as Blustein et al. (2004) and Walker (2004) have described in relational-cultural theory. Narratives of connection and of disconnection were seen to be instrumental in situations that were either successful and fulfilling or unsuccessful and distressing. Cultural minority and Aboriginal students who established ongoing supportive relationships with older family members, mentors, or community champions often reported that these connections were significant factors in helping them to make cross-cultural adjustments, learn new institutional systems and procedures, overcome challenges, acquire new skills, find suitable work, and develop new relationships.

4.3 Respecting Diversity

Time and again, participants spoke of respect and acceptance of themselves, their values, and their cultural ways as being critically important to the success of their transitions. Even small gestures were seen to be acknowledgement that could have a significant impact; lack of respect was consistently cited as very problematic with regard to self-esteem, identity development, adjustment to new settings, achievement, and work performance. Respect has been well established as a necessary component of cultural acceptance – Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) write of the "four Rs" needed in Aboriginal contexts: respect, reciprocity, relevance, and responsibility. Cultural minority scholars are also in agreement about the importance of demonstrating respect (Leong et al. 2010; Pedersen 1991). Yet, the narratives of many of our participants who had experienced racism and discrimination indicate that acceptance continues to be a challenging issue within the dominant Canadian culture. Awareness and education were often mentioned as ways to increase respect for non-dominant worldviews and cultural practices that are part of everyday school and work lives.

4.4 Roles of Family and Community

Family and community were often seen as what might be termed "mixed blessings". All participants described support they had received from their family members and communities when pursuing educational or work and career goals; however, many also described the conflicting values and expectations that resulted in additional stress and anxiety during the transition process and even throughout their academic experiences. These perceived pressures from loved ones and community members, who may have made substantial financial sacrifices in order to support the young person in a new environment, sometimes engendered feelings of disloyalty, shame, and isolation (Kuo and Roysircar 2004; Popadiuk 2010).

4.5 Roles of Employers and Co-workers (or Instructors and Fellow Students)

Whether these young people were making transitions to work settings or to further education, they related instances of support (or lack of it) from colleagues and employers, supervisors, or instructors. These people were part of daily interactions that tended to have a cumulative effect over time. With so much new learning necessary, an understanding boss or a fellow student could make a significant difference with regard to successful transitions (Amundson 2005; Battiste et al. 2002). Frequently, our participants narrated stories of particular individuals who really had

a major impact on their adjustment process, usually for better though sometimes not. A friendly greeting, an invitation for coffee or an outing, an explanation of a new procedure, or acknowledgement of a cultural value, though perhaps a seemingly small gesture, could serve as a turning point for how participants viewed their transition progress.

4.6 Overcoming Discrimination

Not all participants shared stories of racism and discrimination, and it was sometimes difficult to assess the extent of discrimination that participants experienced due to differing degrees of comfort in sharing specific instances (Battiste et al. 2002; Stewart 2008). Among our participants, Aboriginal students reported more instances of discrimination or racism than the international students did. Although the topic is a sensitive one, it deserves more extensive and in-depth investigation as well as discussion of actions and interventions that have been found to be successful in addressing this problem.

4.7 Limitations

There are boundaries and limitations associated with our studies. All employed qualitative methodologies, thus, generalizations to larger populations must be done cautiously. The research was conducted in medium- to large-size urban centres, although several participants were originally from rural areas and small towns. Many of the participants were college or university students; their experiences will likely differ to at least some degree from those of secondary school students. Quantitative investigations of the major data themes identified in the present studies, with broad and diverse population samples, are recommended.

4.8 Implications

Several implications emerge from our research. Most importantly, more inclusive and culturally sensitive theories and models are needed that take into account the diverse contextual forces in people's lives, explain how cultural factors are influential in decision-making, and suggest appropriate support and intervention strategies. Most school-to-work or secondary to post-secondary transition theories and models are based on western dominant cultural assumptions about individuation, freedom of choice, affluence, work roles, and notions of work or career success (Popadiuk and Arthur 2004; Stewart 2010; Young et al. 2007).

Professionals and employers who are working with cultural minority and Aboriginal youth should be knowledgeable about and sensitized to transition processes and issues that affect these young people when they enter the workplace and learning institutions. This includes secondary and post-secondary educators, counsellors, guidance workers, work placement staff, administrators, student support service workers, and staff in community agencies.

Much has been written about *mentoring* as a facilitating factor for transitions (Battiste et al. 2002; Savickas 1999), and the participants in the present studies shared a number of examples of how mentoring relationships had helped them with decisions and actions related to school and work. However, our participants' experiences would indicate that more than one mentor is needed because different perspectives are useful and people have different areas of strength and interest. For example, some people excel at social support and networking, whereas others are more comfortable providing information or explaining procedures.

5   Concluding Thoughts

When speaking of cultural diversity, we would do well to be reminded that there is as much, if not more, diversity *within* a culture as there is *between* cultures (Pedersen 1991). Rather than problematizing how Aboriginal and cultural minority youth are different, we can acknowledge that all people are different to varying degrees and look instead for our points of relation and connection. If we are to assist these students with their transitions from school to work, we need to help them to walk successfully in their multiple cultural worlds. All young people, regardless of their cultural affiliations, will benefit from an emphasis on respect, acceptance, and valuing diversity.

Cultural diversity brings the strengths of multiple knowledges and perspectives to schools, to workplaces, and to society as a whole. We have the opportunity to acknowledge and embrace the "wondrous variety" that Aboriginal and cultural minority adolescents and emerging adults bring with them and to use these assets to build success for everyone. Significant and positive steps are in evidence in many countries that can be shared with and adapted by other countries, services, and individuals. The growing body of knowledge and research focusing on transition theory and promising practices will yield even more effective methods and resources to be used in the educational and work settings of the future.

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Chapter 11
Cultural Diversity in a School-to-Work Transition Programme for Undergraduate Students

Liton Weili Xu

1 Introduction

The research outlined in this chapter is based on a school-to-work transition programme (STP) in a Canadian university. The purpose of the project is to facilitate the transition of undergraduate students moving from school into employment. The project also serves to create a common connection among schools, parents, societies, governments and institutions while offering a chance for cooperation among these separate entities. The project is intended to enhance the students' understanding of how cultures, religions, ethnicities, interculturalism and multiculturalism can impact school education, as well as to provide further understanding for universities and institutions when adopting their programmes. In addition, the outcomes derived from this project can be used as evidence, which can then be applied to recommendations that can be directed towards school boards while also informing the government.

1.1 Problem Statement

Unemployment is a common problem, making it one of the predicaments that countries all over the world need to address. Many factors impact the unemployment among youth; on the one hand, there exists a gap between schooling and employment qualification requirements in school education and training found in the school-to-work transition programme; on the other hand, society has been shifting to an atmosphere of social, cultural and humanistic diversity.

L.W. Xu (✉)
Department of Education, University of Victoria, Victoria, BC, Canada
e-mail: litonx@uvic.ca; leto2008vin@hotmail.com

Table 11.1 The overview of
data of youth unemployment
rate in year 2008 and 2010

	2008-Q2	2010-Q2
Spain	23.9	41.1
Slovak Republic	19.1	33.7
Greece	23.4	30.9
Sweden	24.6	29.7
Italy	21.2	28.9
Ireland	12.5	28.2
Finland	22.2	27.6
Hungary	18.8	23.6
Turkey	18.6	23.2
Poland	17.1	22.7
Belgium	14.3	22.3
France	17.8	21.4
Iceland	10.8	21.3
Portugal	14.3	20.8
United Kingdom	13.3	19.5
United States	12.7	19.0
OECD	13.7	18.9
Chile	20.7	18.6
Czech Republic	8.6	18.3
New Zealand	11.6	17.2
Canada	12.4	15.7
Luxembourg	13.8	13.4
Slovenia	9.3	12.5
Denmark	7.2	12.3
Australia	8.9	11.4
Japan	7.4	9.9
Korea	9.4	9.8
Mexico	7.0	9.5
Austria	6.8	9.0
Germany	10.1	9.0
Norway	6.5	8.8
Switzerland	7.1	8.2
Netherlands	5.6	8.1

Source: OECD

1.1.1   Macroscopical Factor: Youth Unemployment

Youth unemployment rates are higher than the average unemployment rates in the
countries of Europe and the Americas, which has been noticed as early as the late
1970s to the early 1980s (Gregg 2001). For example, Table 11.1 provides 2008–
2010 data of youth unemployment rate for OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-
operation and Development) countries.

   In order to retain employability and competitiveness, youth continue in the
pursuit of a higher education. Youth also will decide to return to university if

employment in the labour market is difficult and slow. Students who follow this approach hope that through enhanced education they will improve their knowledge and skills. Therefore, this puts schools in a very important position through their role in education of youth and in turn the future employment of young people.

The current view of the school system in the province of British Columbia, Canada, is that the general educational employment programme of assistance for youth needs to be improved. It provides career guidance/career planning, and technical and vocational education to teach students specific job skills, with the aim that students will be able to immediately join the job market after graduation (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada 1998). However, the reality is that youth simply embark out of school into the workplace and, due to lack of work experience, face inevitable setbacks in the job search process. This is coupled with the gap of schooling. In order to reduce this current unemployment situation, not only is the enhancement of the employability in relation to school education required but also the convergence of the STP with schools, parents, society, government and institutions playing a key role in ensuring the smooth transfer of youth from school to work, allowing them to obtain stable employment.

1.1.2   The Gaps of Youth Transition

Cultural diversity and school-to-work transition programmes in Canadian schools are topics under crisis. The situation of youth transition from school to workplace is already a valued consideration by many European and American countries and of importance to international organizations. The World Youth Report (2003) pointed out that for the developed countries, it is important to improve the quality of youth education to employment. Especially in Canada, since the year 2000, approximately 80% of Canada's immigrants are people of colour, creating a growing visible minority, the largest in Canada's postcolonial history (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009). It is necessary to understand the issues in order to assess the problems and establish a plan to work towards parity for all Canadians. The first issue that must be recognized is that the population has been changing, so that schooling should provide a framework for *a diversity stance* that it needs to have a school-to-work curriculum with cultural diversity as an important requirement. The second issue relates to the gap in the cultural network linking school and society, which means that if youth lack an understanding of cultural diversity, this may make it difficult to them to find a job and to meet the requirements of the working life. In the province of British Colombia (BC), policymakers only considered a conceptual merging of academic and vocational traditions in the higher education, but an unwritten assumption is that Canadians should have the skills to operate in a multilingual and intercultural environment with the added dimension of many different world religions being practiced.

1.2 Research Question

To integrate school-based and work-based learning has become one of the important issues in curriculum and teaching strategies among universities. However, there are problems concerning the use of an adaptive programme design and substantial teaching planning. There is also a gap between school-to-work programmes and teachers, as well as some misunderstanding of cultural relativism and intercultural education. Overall, there is a lack of transformable knowledge and an active social bridge. Therefore, in order to deal with these problems, the research questions are as follows:

1. Do the universities of the province of BC take into account the cultural diversity in the school-to-work transition programme for undergraduate students?
2. Do the universities of the province of BC have adapted school-to-work transition programmes with cultural diversity?
3. Do the universities of the province of BC have partnerships between schools, businesses, labour, government and other educational institutions and communities?
4. Do the universities of the province of BC have support from their government?

This research seeks to answer these questions while studying the contents and connotations in intercultural education for STP and teaching strategies throughout the entire project.

1.3 Objectives and Aims of the Proposed Research

The proposition of this study is (1) to study infusing the dynamics and stakes of cultural diversity into the STP to facilitate the progression from school into employment for undergraduate students; (2) to develop a conceptual framework which adequately represents variations in the nature of the school-to-work transition process; (3) to offer suggestions and recommendations for government, schools boards and relevant institutions involved in the field.

This study aims to provide wide-ranging information about the impact of STP and teaching strategies, as well as provide a critical synthesis of the empirical evidence. This information could be used to adjust educational systems and teaching strategies to the circumstances and conditions at higher education levels. The primary aim of this study is to examine the school-to-work planning and design in addition to the impact of school-to-work transition reforms.

This study is an observation suggesting the indispensability of cultural context and knowledge in intercultural teaching. Its implementation requires the restructuring of intercultural education and extensive involvement of principles for school-to-work curriculum design and teaching strategies in the workforce preparation within higher education.

2 Context

2.1 The Background of This Study

BC postsecondary education: The province of BC has a comprehensive system of 28 postsecondary institutions, including 4 traditional universities, 2 specialized universities, 5 university colleges, 11 community colleges, 3 provincial institutes and 2 Aboriginal education institutes. There are still a number of new universities and colleges opening in the system.

University of Victoria (UVic): Established in 1963, UVic is rated the top comprehensive university according to Canada's national news magazine—*Maclean's* in Canada. As one of Canada's leading universities, UVic is a rich and supportive learning community for students and faculty alike. UVic has over 40 programmes with diverse athletic, social and cultural opportunities; it has to be mentioned that a cooperative education programme encourages students to increase work and social experience to complement students' academic learning. The university arranges approximately 2,700 co-op placements each year, and the programme is available in more than 40 academic areas on campus. UVic is home to more than 19,905 students, 57% female; 77% of undergraduates come from outside Greater Victoria according to the student enrolment in year 2010–2011. There are about 1,600 international students from 100 different countries who choose UVic each year and the benefits of the Canadian education system.

Initiative plan for youth: In Canada, the majority of provinces have established school-based apprenticeship programmes or cooperative educational programmes. The programmes provide students with the ability to earn a certificate or a diploma at the same time as gaining valuable work and social experience. According to the Canadian Education Statistics Council (2006), "registered apprentices under age 20 represented only 6% of all registered apprentices in 2002" (p. 60).

In the year 1996, the government of Canada proclaimed a document regarding the youth unemployment or underemployment, and this initiative plan intended to support the youth aged 15–24 to transition smoothly from secondary or postsecondary education to work. Also, this design aimed to ensure that postsecondary education is affordable and accessible across the provinces, in order to improve opportunities for students to study postsecondary programming. The key initiatives of manuscript from Canadian Policy Research Networks (CPRN) project (1998) are:

- A $26 million increase in funding to cover enrolment growth and for new programmes
- Creation of 2,950 additional spaces in the postsecondary sector—500 of these spaces are specifically targeted for high technology courses
- Extending the tuition freeze for a third consecutive year, for college, institute and university students until March 31, 1999, under the Tuition Fee Freeze Act—the freeze applies to fees for graduate, undergraduate, career, technical, vocational

and developmental programmes; it also freezes mandatory ancillary fees such as library, registration and laboratory fees; the freeze does not apply to fees charged to international students for a contract service or a continuing education programme

- A 14% increase in the 1998–1999 provincial budget in funding available for student grants and loans (this will provide an additional $13.4 million to ensure that student assistance keeps up with increasing student enrolment and inflation)

The Multifaith Services Centre is a culturally diverse, multifaith community. The Chaplains and representatives are appointed by local faith communities. The team includes Bahà'í, Buddhist, Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Wiccan appointees.

UVic recognized the worth to have this service centre upon the students' requests. The Chaplaincy was established with a Memorandum of Understanding between the University and the three original faith communities in 1977. The memorandum had amendment on February in year 2000 (Table 11.2).

The Multifaith Chaplains Services represent students and teachers who can learn diverse cultures from different people. It is important to have religious support and spiritual care for the students and staff at the University of Victoria; also, it serves as a model for developing oneself on personal intellectual, social, physical and spiritual levels (Fitchett 2002). The centre offers pastoral counselling, prayer and meditation groups, learning circles, religious education, retreats and workshops on a variety of topics in order to support the faith development of the campus community.

Furthermore, the centre serves as an association between the campus and religious groups in the greater Victoria area. It connects students and communities and supports others who wish to share religious traditions or spiritual interests. There are opportunities for students and staff to learn about different world religions and enhance their own spiritual practices.

The volunteers facilitate the workshops with a wide variety of theological, ethical and justice-related concerns and issues. Nevertheless, one of the coordinators revealed that there are many activities and workshops which cannot be offered to students and staff due to a lack of funding.

The youth employment network: The United Nations, the *World Bank* and the *International Labour Organization* (ILO) founded an organization called the *Youth Employment Network* (YEN) for a global alliance of young people to improve the employment of youth. YEN takes the initiative on the issue of youth employment as their mission and acts as vehicle presenting young people as future assets, suggesting that given the knowledge of school-to-work transition before young people enter the labour market will be the best education for future economic and social development.

Table 11.3 illustrates the population by selected ethnic origins by province of British Columbia in 2006. The province of British Columbia receives the third-largest distribution of immigrants, and it has approximately 40,000 new immigrants each year in Canada. Besides, it includes around 120,000 temporary foreign workers

Table 11.2 Memorandum of understanding

Memorandum of understanding
This is a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Victoria (the "University") and the religious communities currently participating in the Multifaith Chaplaincy at the University of Victoria, to wit: the Multifaith Chaplaincy and their supporting communities, for the provision of a Multifaith Ministry on the campus of the University of Victoria:

1. The University and the Multifaith Chaplaincy agree that their respective obligations and responsibilities shall be as follows:
   (a) The University and the Chaplaincy shall consult on matters of mutual interest and concern through the Executive Director of Student and Ancillary Services and the Multifaith Chaplains Services Advisory Committee (Amendment Feb 22, 2000).
   (b) The University shall provide an office to accommodate the Campus Ministry. Other facilities may be booked in accordance with University policy.
   (c) The University services available to faculty and staff shall also be available to the ministry team members as appropriate.
2. There shall be provision for an "advisory committee" to advise the religious communities and the University on the needs and function of the ministry.
3. This Memorandum of Understanding may be reviewed or renegotiated at the request of the University or of the participating religious communities.
4. The purpose and objectives of the ministry are:
   (a) To offer care particular to the spiritual needs of the whole University (Amendment of Feb 22, 2000) community: students, faculty, staff and their families.
   (b) To work as a team:
       (i) To provide a model of multifaith cooperation and respect
       (ii) To give more efficient service than is possible individually
   (c) To act as a theological resource and to encourage thoughtful reflection and dialogue about the basis of individual faith and community life through an openness to all truth and through dialogue with others in the university community
   (d) To assist both individuals and groups in the process of growth by sharing
   (e) To work cooperatively and supportively with other counselling and service facilities of the University
   (f) To foster and maintain relationships with religious clubs, organizations, denominations and faith communities
   (g) To assist the University in relations with the community in respect to religious matters

and international students as temporary residents in British Columbia at any given time. According to newer report from Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (2010), their research data encapsulates that the top three source countries for immigrants to British Columbia come from China, India and the Philippines.

Ethnic, linguistic and religious diversity in British Columbia: The province of BC exemplifies a diverse collection of ethnicities, languages, cultures and religions (Fig. 11.1) (Tables 11.4 and 11.5).

Table 11.3 Population in the province of British Columbia by origin (Statistics Canada 2009 Census)

BC	Total responses	Single responses	Multiple responses
	Number		
Total population	*4,074,385*	*2,131,295*	*1,943,095*
Ethnic origin			
British Isles origins	1,860,675	400,620	1,460,055
European origins	1,591,085	461,245	1,129,840
English	1,207,245	242,610	964,635
Scottish	828,145	87,025	741,120
Western European origins	783,100	185,050	598,050
Other North American origins	766,305	271,160	495,145
Canadian	720,200	264,515	455,685
East and Southeast Asian origins	650,110	556,050	94,055
Irish	618,120	46,105	572,015
German	561,570	114,130	447,440
Eastern European origins	493,365	116,945	376,425
Chinese	432,435	377,550	54,890
French origins	363,205	35,230	327,975
French	361,215	34,830	326,390
Northern European origins	321,970	45,200	276,770
Scandinavian origins	298,150	38,360	259,785
Southern European origins	291,330	101,720	189,615
South Asian origins	265,595	231,915	33,675
Aboriginal origins	250,900	90,970	159,930
East Indian	232,370	202,465	29,905
Ukrainian	197,265	37,450	159,815
Dutch (Netherlands)	196,420	56,660	139,760
North American Indian	193,060	80,975	112,085
Italian	143,155	45,680	97,475
Norwegian	129,420	14,510	114,910
Polish	128,360	24,640	103,720
Russian	114,105	21,740	92,365
Welsh	104,275	6,210	98,065
Swedish	104,025	9,600	94,420

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 census of population. Last modified: 2009-07-28

3   Concepts

Canadian legislation and policies in place shape a multicultural Canada while providing a framework for an egalitarian society where equal opportunity for all is a reality. However, reports of racism, discrimination, homophobia, cyber-bullying, hate propaganda, anti-Semitism, islamophobia and anti-Black and gender-based violence occur and are unsettling (Waiser and de Brou 1992). This research is guided

Religion in British Columbia
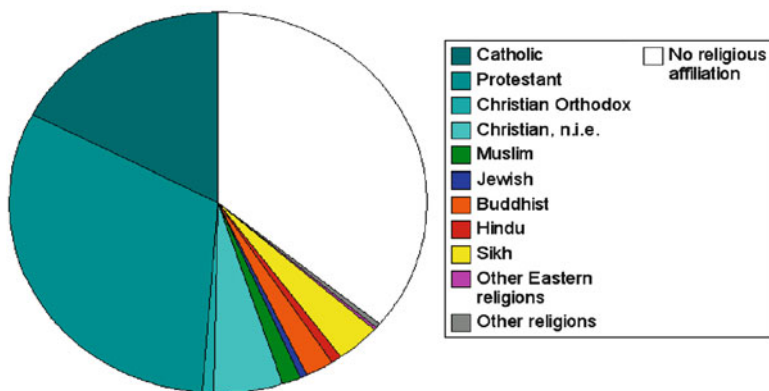
Fig. 11.1 The pie chart shows overview data of population by religion, in Canada and in BC (Statistics Canada 2001a, b, c Census)

Table 11.4 Overview data of population by religion, in Canada and in BC (Statistics Canada 2001b Census)

Population by religion, Canada and BC(Statistics Canada 2001b Census)	Canada		BC	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total population	29,639,035		3,868,875	
No religious affiliation	4,900,090	17	1,388,300	36
Protestant	8,654,850	29	1,213,295	31
Catholic	12,936,905	44	675,320	17
Christian not included elsewhere	780,450	3	200,345	5
Sikh	278,410	1	135,310	3
Buddhist	300,345	1	85,540	2
Muslim	579,640	2	56,220	1
Christian Orthodox	479,620	2	35,655	1
Hindu	297,200	1	31,500	1
Jewish	329,995	1	21,230	1
Eastern religions	37,550	0	9,970	0
Other religions	63,975	0	16,205	0

Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Census http://www40.statcan.ca/l01/cst01/demo30c.htm

by the concept of *diversity stance* which means that as Canada's population grows and its demographics change becoming more diverse with cultures, religions, racial groups, languages and sexual orientations, fair treatment is a necessity. To embark on the exploration of the *diversity stance*, culture, diversity, multicultural realization and intercultural interaction need to be re-examined.

Table 11.5 Overview data of the distribution of languages in BC (Statistics Canada 2001a, b, c Census)

Language(s) first learned and still understood	Total	%	Male	Female
English only	2,825,780	73.03	1,403,230	1,422,545
French only	54,405	10.41	27,340	27,060
Both English and French	6,784	00.18	3,360	3,452
Other languages	981,910	25.38	470,145	511,765

Source: Statistics Canada 2001 Census

4 Literature Review

In this study, literature review is divided into three parts. First are the relationships between the education system and youth employment. The second part deals with the concept of *diversity stance*. Within the concept of a diversity stance four reconsiderations of essential factors must be defined, which are c*ulture, diversity, multicultural realization* and *intercultural interaction*. Finally, the third part will be devoted to discuss ideas from a selection of the most noteworthy Canadian scholars who have studied the topic of cultural diversity.

4.1 Educational System and Youth Employment

A number of research projects have provided results and evidence that education can increase employment opportunities (Bowers et al. 2003; Chisholm 2004; Eurostat 2003a, b; Furlong 2004; Hammer 1988). Especially, candidates with higher qualifications can have a greater possibility of being hired (Furlong 2004; Eurostat 2003a, b; Hammer 1988; OECD 1997). A person's knowledge gained through education is a large contributing factor to being hired in addition to the ability to transcend that knowledge through various occupations, which is also a major factor (Bock and Timmermann 1998).

4.2 The Diversity Stance

4.2.1 Culture

Culture when defined as "the act of developing the intellectual and moral faculties especially by education" provides reference also to what one knows as organizational culture. Culture is a word commonly used to describe the distinct activities of a particular group of people in their daily life. It has its roots in Latin and is derived from the Latin word *colere* meaning to till, to farm or to worship (Williams 1976).

The subject of culture is integral to people understanding and accepting others who are different from themselves as Williams (1976) aptly states. Canadian culture today is greatly influenced by many cultures because of the immediacy created by the migration of people, backgrounds and capital (Kalman 2010). In Canadian culture, schools are the epicentre of life for families (Beairsto and Carrigan 2004), and education imparts values to the younger generations and guides them towards common goals, a process over which government exercises control (VanBalkom 2010). Educational policies and practices go hand in hand, ensuring the education of teachers to respect different cultures. The new Canadian reality can support Canada in developing an exemplary multicultural mosaic, a model for other countries around the world.

4.2.2 Diversity

The origins of the word diversity dates back to the twelfth century (Alhadeff-Jones 2007). According to Chism et al. (1989), it was in the early 1990s that diversity came into common use with a focus on ethnicities and gender. Canada's multicultural policy came to be in 1971 and in the year 1988, Bill C-93 (the Canadian Multiculturalism Act) was passed (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002). Therefore, it is understandable that diversity is predominantly a reference to a multiethnic population.

The Ministry of Advanced Education and Labour Market Development (2010) stresses that the population of immigrants influences the economic recovery and growth in the province of BC and that this enlargement of the net population within the next two decades is a sign of crisis. Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that a newer report foresees closely 950,000 job openings between now and 2020 and that immigrants will capture over one-third of these jobs in British Columbia.

4.2.3 Multicultural Realization

Multiculturalism is the word commonly used today to mean the valuing of all ethnicities equally. The terms in use today, multicultural and multiculturalism, were used first in Canada, in the early 1940s and came into common usage in the 1980s in Canada and in the United States in the following decade (Wayland 1997).

The aforementioned Canadian Multiculturalism Act, which in 1988 became law, further affirms the value of cultural pluralism to the well-being of Canadians with the intention to honour and value the richness of the cultural diversity that makes up the nation (Ajzenstat 1992). The discourse around the topic of multiculturalism is multifaceted and revolves around discussions of ethnicities, diversity, the politics of identity, nationalism and citizenship, religion and culture, and language. The subject of multiculturalism can best be understood when immigration patterns and multicultural policies are examined.

Over the years, an imperative aspect is the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 that consolidated existing laws, incorporating the notion of all communities preserving and celebrating their own culture while adopting the mainstream Canadian culture as their own and upholding the bilingual bicultural nature of the country (Waiser and de Brou 1992). This was a departure from the *melting pot* philosophy where assimilation is encouraged and preservation of one's own culture discouraged. Instead, a *Canadian mosaic* that forms the basis of contemporary multicultural policy and practice in Canada through valuing and acknowledging the cultures of all Canadians by writing them into law.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization designated that "the term multicultural describes the culturally diverse nature of human society (UNESCO 2006). It not only refers to elements of ethnic or national culture, but also includes linguistic, religious and socio-economic diversity" (p. 17).

The complexity of the aforementioned historical context and the representation of data can be encapsulated in the phrase *multicultural realization*. It is not only teachers, students, parents, administrators and policymakers who have to assume a *multicultural realization,* but all Canadians should also take this into consideration. Eldridge (2010) felicitously noticed, Canada will continue to be a land populated by immigrants of all ages with many new Canadians "of colour" arriving annually. Meanwhile, "the most recent wave of immigration has been so rapid that in many urban schools the staff no longer resemble, culturally and ethnically, the students they support" (Beairsto and Carrigan 2004, p. 2).

4.2.4   Intercultural Interaction

To examine the term *intercultural interaction*, the definition of *interculturalism* must be mentioned. A guideline by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA 2005) declares that both the terms intercultural and multicultural "describe a situation where there is more than one culture in a country" (p. 3).

In this research, interculturalism is one of the essential elements contained in the term *intercultural interaction*. The spirit of this idea is to underline the prosperous and enriching aspects of a diverse society that could be neglected by multiculturalists. The guidelines (NCCA 2005) note, "It is education which promotes equality and human rights, challenges unfair discrimination, and promotes the values upon which equality is built" (p.3). Interculturalism "is concerned with ethnicity and culture and not simply skin colour" (NCCA, p.4). Thus, the term *intercultural interaction* tends towards conscious and purposeful reaffirmation adopting interaction between cultures while also having a strong conviction of the benefit in regards to learning from each other, sharing culture and mutual respect. The term *intercultural interaction* is a dynamic notion of understanding diversity where this concept relates to the evolving associations between cultural clusters on the level of local integration.

There is an aspiration to infuse interculturalism in schooling; nonetheless, teachers and students still miss the chance to engage in deep discussions regarding

interculturalism as Mc Gorman and Sugrue (2007) has argued: "many practitioners did not attach adequate attention or priority to intercultural concerns in a very crowded, if not overlooked, professional renewal, school improvement agenda" (p.16). It can be clearly affirmed that teachers should be aware of interculturalism while maintaining this aspiration and interaction with their approach towards students (Gillborn 1995). Kincheloe and Steinberg (1997) forcefully assert that "Schools often work in complicity with cultural reproduction, as teachers innocently operate as cultural gatekeepers who transmit dominant values and protect the common culture" (p. 26).

To sum up, it is difficult to define categorically the four terms: *culture, diversity, multicultural realization* and *intercultural interaction.* The relationship between these concepts is integral to *a diversity stance,* which is a persuasive stance.

4.3   Canadian Scholars Study Cultural Diversity

Within the topic of cultural diversity, there are a number of noteworthy Canadian scholars, one of which is George Dei. George Dei carries out his research in the area of ethnicity, anti-racism and difference, which has led to the publication alongside colleagues Sonia James-Wilson and Jasmin Zine of *Inclusive Schooling: A Teacher's Companion to Removing the Margins* (Dei et al. 2002). Another publication within the area of cultural diversity was presented by Ghosh and Abdi, which led to the distribution of *Education and the Politics of Difference: Canadian Perspectives* (Ghosh and Abdi 2004). In addition, these scholars have also written a variety of publications on the topic of social class with ethnicity and gender. A practical handbook *Teaching in a Multicultural Setting: A Canadian Perspective*, written by Fentey Scott (2001), is a blend of theory and practice, written in textbook style with questions, offering opportunities for personal and professional reflection.

An important research study published by the Canadian Race Relations Foundation examined teachers' practice and response to issues of ethnicities and cultures across three Prairie provinces (Blades et al. 2001). In this research, interviews were conducted with teachers in a variety of disciplines among secondary schools providing valuable and often candid insight into the classroom reality and thinking processes of teachers. Studies like this are invaluable, yet follow-up is critical in allowing them to actually result in having an impact on practice. It is important to note that a large gap exists in the body of research on multiculturalism, diversity and interculturalism in areas such as the arts and interdisciplinary education and other curricular areas that span the social context.

Teachers seeking to create an intercultural classroom will find handbooks such as Here Comes Everybody from The Alberta Teacher's Association (ATA 2010). This monograph is a handbook to support teachers, school staff members and administrators. Its intended purpose is to aid them in the discovery of educational practices, reflect intercultural perspectives and afford practical advice, as well as offer suggestions for them. In addition, it includes a list of community resources

to supplement such efforts. *Teaching Fairly in an Unfair World* (Lundy 2008) and *Student Diversity: Classroom Strategies to Meet the Learning Needs of all Students* (Brownlie et al. 2006) go a long way to aid with ideas and solutions for a diverse classroom, but it seems this is likely only of minimal adequacy in comparison to the amount of resources that are actually required.

Research studies on cultural diversity through the University of Alberta denote that many of those surveyed do not have experience in a multicultural setting and do not feel confident with their skill in this area (Dunn 2011; Dunn et al. 2009a, b; Ogilvie and Dunn 2009). The fact remains that many teachers are predominantly Canadian-born, of European origin and do not have experience either in an interracial school setting or in an interracial neighbourhood (Dunn et al. 2009a, p. 538).

When the University of British Columbia inculcated social justice across the curriculum in Education courses over a period of 5 years, a follow-up study where 20 members of a cohort group were interviewed with respect to their understandings of their anti-oppression education practice was undertaken (Kelly and Minnes Brandes 2010). Some teachers reported difficulty teaching the new approach when there was little administrative support for these efforts, which were revealed by Kelly and Minnes Brandes (p. 395). Others explicated having limited time to delve into important issues because of curricular and testing constraints (p. 395). This study is *one* that attempts to fill the void in this area. Owing to the dearth of research, many questions go unanswered, leaving a great deal to speculation as to what teaching practices are and what many differing classroom realities and experiences are across the country.

5   Theoretical Framework

The concept of *a diversity stance* can further advance educators to consider what schools of different cultures and different ethnic groups are concerned about and how equal treatment of students who have different cultural backgrounds can be encouraged. Providing dynamics and stakes of cultural diversity to schooling is necessary for students in the transition from education to work. Applying *a diversity stance* to the school-to-work transition programme and teaching strategies is designed to engage students in an ample range of current issues such as intercultural relations, social justice and cross-cultural communication. This theoretical concept is eliminating and discriminating cultural biases with cultural content, so that students are not only learning in school an understanding of cultural differences but also acquiring an appreciation of the importance of cultural diversity in future work pre-training. In addition, students can integrate into the international community of learning and working. Efforts to change include:

1. Amplified intercultural literacy by critical reflection and extended cultural diversity dialogue.
2. Transforming field study into the matter-of-fact knowledge of practical experiences.

```
                                            1. Establishing a STP

                          A. schooling:      2. Opening a diverse study work program

    Internal causes:                         3. Teacher training and teaching strategy for STP

                                             1. Strengthen management for STP

                          B. job requirement:  2. Set up consulting centers or offices

                                             3. Co-operate with communities

                  A. internationally:  building the relationship with other countries and

                                       joining in global organizations

    External causes:    B. locally:          Associating with societies and communities

                        C. government:  1. Offering scholarships for internship programs

                                        2. Developing sustainable plans for youth employment
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Fig. 11.2   The conceptual framework

3. Incorporated community resources in order to enlarge opportunities for connecting school-to-work programmes.
4. Promoted a school-to-work transition model to learn intercultural content knowledge.
5. The educator demonstrated as a role model and social activist in the field of cultural-diversity-based transition to work. Figure 11.2 synthesizes the conceptual framework.

6   Method

Investigation was conducted at two different organizations at the university level. One organization is the Division of Continuing Studies and another is the Multifaith Services Centre at the University of Victoria, in the province of British Columbia, Canada. Preparation for this study required the following major actions based on the existing approaches: (1) review of documents and information about the organizations, (2) interview protocol development, (3) observing the programme of orientations and visiting the classroom, (4) being involved in staff training and (5) joining in the multifaith dialogue activities. Structured and open-ended interview protocols as well as observation method guides were developed.

In this study, youth is mainly aged 16–24; they are undergraduate students studying at University of Victoria. These students attend the classes in the Division of Continuing Studies and participate in the Multifaith Services Centre.

Table 11.6 The programme outline of the Intercultural Education and Training programme

A summary of the programme outline
Objective
The primary objective of this 18.0-unit interdisciplinary credit diploma programme is to prepare participants to play a productive and socially responsible role in a world that is becoming increasingly multicultural and diverse.
If space is available, degree students may register in IET core and elective courses without having to be registered in the programme. In some courses, non-credit participation may be available. To receive credit for these courses, students must also be admitted to the University of Victoria.
Programme participation
Teachers and instructors in public and private educational institutions
Community workers, i.e. social workers, police officers, health care providers, counsellors and family therapists
Administrators and managers in government and the private sector working with a diverse employee or client group
Employee equity and diversity officers
People working in the court system
Current degree students (with a minimum third year standing)
Partner studies
If you are completing an undergraduate degree in the Faculties of Fine Arts, Humanities, Human and Social Development, Business, Social Science or Education, you may explore the possibility of partnering IET Diploma studies with your undergraduate course work and applying course credit towards both programmes.
Format
The diploma programme is a credit programme made up of regular University of Victoria credit courses. Upon graduation, students will receive a University of Victoria Diploma in Intercultural Education and Training.

The Division of Continuing Studies has different programmes and transitionary courses to facilitate the move from school into employment for undergraduate students. The Multifaith Services Centre is present to support students in understanding the diverse cultures in the world.

The research inspected the Intercultural Education and Training (IET) programme; this is a programme in which students can earn credits. This interdisciplinary diploma programme is for students to prepare a productive and socially responsible role in a world that is becoming increasingly multicultural and diverse. Table 11.6 shows a summary of the programme outline. The researcher interviewed three people who are involved in this programme: the programme coordinator, a course teacher and an enrolled student.

As addressed in Table 11.6, the programme is an interdisciplinary diploma programme, and it is designed for learners to engage in a broad range of current issues including intercultural relations, social justice and cross-cultural communication.

7   Results, Findings and Suggestions

Interviewee A, the programme coordinator, emphasizes that the programme aims to develop social responsibility and a clearer understanding and awareness of the complex issues at play in our increasingly multicultural society. Throughout the IET programme and courses, you will explore topics and develop skills that will facilitate intercultural relationships and assist in reducing conflict and inequality based on racism and ethnocentrism.

Regarding the course, interviewee B explained that students can expect to acquire these following aspects:

- A clearer understanding of the challenges connected with intercultural relations, social justice and cross-cultural communication, and the various approaches to their resolution
- An awareness of the complex issues concerning cultural conflicts, racism, power and equity
- Skills that will facilitate intercultural relations and cross-cultural communication in the workplace, in the local community and in international settings
- Skills that will assist in reducing conflict and inequality based on racism and ethnocentrism

The participant student, interviewee C, was an international student who came from another province before studying at UVic. Interviewee C attended a course on campus entitled Facilitating Intercultural Relationships. In this course, participants and instructors engaged critically, deeply and honestly together, aiming to facilitate and create a respectful community of learners using a dialogical model and an action-reflection process throughout classes and assignments, as the interviewee stated. The topics for this course are somewhat diverse; teachers and students had to perform critical analysis of many aspects such as equality, equity, knowledge, leadership, privilege, social justice and injustice. Interviewee C quoted the teacher's note: "We will work toward developing strategies and action plans for social change and transformation in our respective spheres of influence." Interviewee C indicated that he cherished this opportunity.

It can be concluded that the STP provided affirmation of the concept within campus. Weak aspects could be observed, however, which need improvement. The formation of projects and the cooperation among government and school departments is still insufficient. For example, steps have been taken to revise the instructional programmes in order to better meet society's demands. But there are still lacks of connection between government, school management, teachers and employers in this matter. There is also a lack of effectiveness in the procedures for curriculum review in light of student and employer needs. There is a lack of data about students learning and employment ability. Also, gaps could be observed between the programme content and the domestic industry's demand. In particular, practical training and employment counselling are insufficient.

Suggestions for the development of such STP programmes are to extend participation in the programme to students with varied backgrounds—including professional and volunteer—from different countries. Cooperation with different institutions, communities, society and government should be encouraged. Strong links and transitions between schooling and work should be looked for.

8   Conclusion

Since this research focuses on Canadian schools, only those studies that related to Canada were considered relevant to mention. Others have contributed to the thought process, notably those involving American, Australian and British schools; they are enlightening and assist to understand the subject as a whole albeit in different contexts.

Universities should take the initiative to associate with other universities, communities, institutions, organizations and society at large to share information and communicate with each other on the matter of integrating the diversity stance in school-to-work transition programmes. Such a platform as YEN could help in this respect.

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Part IV
Conclusion

Chapter 12
Some Research Directions Ahead

Guy Tchibozo

Multiculturalism at school is an asset. It gives the school-to-work transition system a basis which to build on for credibly addressing organisations' demand for diversity. Organisations have to take into account their clients' and partners' social and cultural diversity and need appropriate and trained personnel to deal with this. Multicultural schools provide authentic situations for building intercultural competence in the future workforce. In addition, multicultural schooling gives to socially and culturally diverse pupils and students a chance to benefit from the same education, reach comparable competences and finally fairly compete for the same professional and social positions.

The road ahead is bumpy however. Problems are many. In most countries, the representativeness of diversity decreases from primary to tertiary education. Numbers of educational and counselling staff lack multicultural awareness and preparation to cope with the social and cultural diversity of their public. Also, adapted settings to appropriately receive, prepare and empower diverse students for employment placement are often lacking too.

Paving the way for reforms and further progress requires prior mapping and evaluation of the experiences conducted so far worldwide. The policies for equal opportunities in education and access to tertiary education, first, deserve a global inventory and international evaluation. Multicultural and intercultural education, next, have proved promising, though more systematic international review and large-scale experimental and quantitative research would certainly further assist providing educators with an extended set of effective approaches, methods and toolboxes. Systematically reviewing and evaluating these policy areas should help identify which types of settings work best to reduce educational inequality and open

G. Tchibozo (✉)
Université de Limoges, Département des sciences de l'éducation, Limoges, France
e-mail: guy.tchibozo@unilim.fr

access to tertiary education. The findings obtained should then allow focus on the impact of these best approaches on the access of diverse students to professional inclusion and integration.

The field of information, advice, guidance and employment services in higher education institutions also needs a global comparative picture and evaluation of how these services are institutionally and functionally structured, their activities, and their progress in supporting the students – with respect to diversity – and helping them achieve successful transition.

Further research along these lines is certainly needed.

Glossary

ADD	Attention deficit disorder
ARC	Australian Research Council
ATA	The Alberta Teacher's Association
BC	British Columbia
CPRN	Canadian Policy Research Networks
CSER	Corporate social and environmental responsibility
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
DET	Department of Education and Training
ERG	Employee resource group
Eurostat	Statistical Office of the European Communities
HEI	Higher education institutions
HOD	Head of department
IAG	Information, advice and guidance
IET	Intercultural education and training
ILO	International Labour Organization
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
MSVIP	Visually impaired persons in multiple sclerosis
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NGOs	Non-governmental organisations
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PWDs	Persons with disabilities
Q2	Second quarter
RTO	Registered training organisation
STP	School-to-work transition programme
STW	Schools to work
TAFE	Technical and further education

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
Uvic	University of Victoria
VET	Vocational education and training
VETiS	Vocational education and training in schools
YEN	Youth Employment Network

Index