



(In)equality
practices in
higher
education
institutions

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For today

- Inclusion: of whom exactly and in what exactly?
- Inequality practices: on how institutions become (un)equal
- Diversity policy paradoxes

Diversity and inclusion

- Diversity as "the visible and invisible differences on the basis of which someone can come to experience inequality (practices). (e.g., gender, ethnicity, disability, sexuality, gender identity, class."
- Inclusion as "the extent to which individuals feel part of an organisation and to which extent they can be their authentic selves" (Shore et al., 2011)

'Doing diversity and inclusion'

- What does it mean to include someone?
- What does it mean for higher education institutions (EDI's) to do inclusion?
- Whom are we including and in what exactly are we including them?
- Reflection on the institutional practices of in/exclusion.

Inequality practices

- "Inequality practices are interrelated practices within organizations, including decision-making practices, leadership practices, diversity management practices, and evaluation practices, that together create social order along lines of gender, race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, gender identity, and disability. (Janssens & Steyaert, 2019)"

Material & affective inequality

- Material inequality: difference in power and control over resources, organization and distribution of work, pay and job security.
- Affective inequality: power differences in respect, job satisfaction, interactions and working relationships (Acker, 2006).

Three levels of in/equality

Level 1: Numbers (numerical representation)



Level 2: Institutions (structures & culture)



Level 3: Knowledge (education & innovation)

Numbers

- **Inequality as a lack of representation:** lack of role models, shared experiences, tokenism, stereotypes
- **Inequality as a lack of support networks:** lack of mentors, sponsors, being excluded from informal networks/information, inaccessability.

Institutions: the institutional structure

Inequality in physical environment

- Representation in photos, buildings, & statues
- Inaccessability
- Future: does it look like I belong/have a future here?

Inequality by not facilitating difference

- Care tasks, documentation for disability, inability to register with different names/pronouns

Unequal distribution of service work

- Mentoring students, diversity work, being on committees;

Inequality in hiring and selection

- Vacancy texts, diversity statement, informal networking, cultural cloning, ideal types & lack of transparency

Institutions: the institutional culture

Bias & stereotypes in student evaluations

- People of colour, women & homosexual teachers as less 'capable'
- Same knowledge and abilities worth less in different bodies
- Often still a promotion criterion

Biases in promotion & evaluation

- Looking for an idealtype;
- Underestimating people of colour, women, people with disabilities.
- Changing criteria for promotion

Microaggressions, intimidation and harassment

- Racism
- Homophobia
- Intimidation/harassment

Lack of support for D&I

- Temporary trend/buzz word;
- Lack of resources/skills
- Attention and action for certain groups and not others.

Knowledge (education & innovation)

Lack of diversity in the curriculum

- Who is teaching? Who is speaking, about whom and in what ways?
- White Eurocentric knowledges & being made representatives of one's 'own group';
- Stereotypes around homosexuality.
- Silence regarding trans identities, knowledges & realities.

Lack of diversity in knowledge production

- Gendered innovations: white men as the point of reference.
- Lack of colour in development of technologies/health care.
- Gender stereotypes and gender binaries in technologies.

General take aways



One inequality practice can have different consequences depending on visibility of difference;

Lack of intersectionality in research and policy: we're more than (one of) our differences.

Cummulation of inequality: different practices are interconnected meaning we experience more inequality.

Three pathways becoming one

1

Improving numbers:

- Mosaic and Aspasia (NWO),
- Mentoring or trainee programs
- (support) Networks (e.g. ECHO)
- Outreach.

2

Improving the institutional structures:

- Standardize small, individual changes;
- Transparency in recruitment;
- 'Diverse' committees;
- Different networks;

3

Improving the institutional culture:

- Formalisation of anti-discrimination, anti-racism and social safety policies;
- Independent ombudspersons/confidential counsellor;
- Bystanders trainings, theater (e.g. The Learning Curve)

4

Improving the knowledge:

- Diversity as a criterion for teachers/team leads;
- Co-creation of the curriculum;
- Diversity as a criterion in education and research

Making inclusive policies



Policies must focus on the three levels: improving the numbers, the structural and cultural workings of an institution & the education as well as the research.



Current incidental, ad hoc solutions and programs must become standardized;



Doing diversity and becoming inclusive as an ongoing reflexive process

How to move on....?

- Questions...?