**Essay on**

**Drawing on Epistemic Injustice approaches (Fricker) and or Recognition approaches (Fraser, Bulter), critically discuss the approach(es) and with reference to a case from medicine, law or education,**

Submitted by:

Submitted to:

Dated:

**Inclusive Education**

In general, education plays a vital role in shaping the society and individuals in it. In fact, it is also responsible for promoting more collective development. Its role is quite prominent in how societies function and how individuals are developed. It is, however, critical to note that even the educational sector is not without its challenges and issues(Apple, 2012). It is prone to the issues of discrimination and inequity, which tend to limit its potential in society. In this essay, the focus is on the exploration of several theories proposed by Nancy Fraser, Judith Butler, and Miranda Fricker. In addition to it, this essay will also shed light on their relevance and role in addressing disparities in the educational sector.

Miranda Fricker, a rather recognized author, offered the concept of epistemic injustice. It is concerned with the idea that people can experience injustice as knowers in their capacity. In addition, there are two types of epistemic injustice as identified by Fricker including hermeneutical and testimonial injustice. Both of these types of injustice are quite different from each other(Fricker, Evolving concepts of epistemic injustice, 2017). Typically, testimonial injustice takes place when the credibility of a person is reduced due to prejudice. Meanwhile, hermeneutical injustice is the gap in different collective interpretative resources. It leaves certain identities or experiences ignored(Fricker, Epistemic injustice: Power and the ethics of knowing, 2007).

Actually, in the context of education, it is possible for testimonial injustice to occur when students and learners from marginalized and diverse backgrounds are doubted or dismissed by teachers based on their beliefs regarding the socioeconomic status, gender, or race of students. It should be noted that this dismissive attitude is capable of significantly influencing the self-esteem of a student and even limiting their progress(Beck, 2022). In a similar manner, it is possible for hermeneutical injustice to occur when the curriculum is not inclusive and does not really integrate diverse perspectives. As a result of the inconsideration of these diverse perspectives, a narrow curriculum can be created(DeBoer, 2020).

It is worth noting that both of these types of injustice in education can adversely influence students to a significant extent. When students are dismissed or treated unfairly due to their backgrounds and socioeconomic statuses, it affects more than just their academic progress. In fact, it also affects their self-esteem, their confidence, and their view of themselves. In some students, it is also capable of resulting in feelings of anger and resentment, which can in turn show in the form of aggressive actions and behaviors. Both of these types of injustice are even capable of influencing the adult lives of students(Sleeter, 2013).

Meanwhile, when it comes to Nancy Fraser and Judith Butler, they theorized the concept of recognition. It is important to note that the concept focuses on the validation and acknowledgment of groups and people within society. It would not be wrong to say that Fraser distinguishes between three different types of recognition including political, socio-economic, and cultural. In the case of cultural recognition, it involves the validation of the cultural heritage and identity of marginalized and affected groups(Willig, 2012). Meanwhile, socio-economic recognition involves offering equal access to opportunities and material resources. In contrast with it, political recognition tends to address fair participation and representation in all decision-making processes.

In the context of education and educational institutions, a lack of recognition of diverse cultures is evident in instructional materials and curricula do not represent the diversity and differences in perspectives and experiences. Actually, this omission is capable of leading to an incomplete and distorted understanding of different subjects including literature and history among others. At the same time, it can even reinforce the existing imbalance of power while perpetuating different pre-established stereotypes(Ikäheimo, 2017). On the other hand, socio-economic recognition becomes critical when focusing on and considering problems such as unequal access to educational resources and quality education. For instance, economically disadvantaged learners and students often tend to face problems in accessing the opportunities and resources they require for the achievement of academic success.

The existing literature indicates that the curriculum often lacks the diversity that is reflected by students in the classroom. In addition to it, even teachers and instructors do not acknowledge the cultural differences that exist among students. In fact, there is little to no recognition of the different perspectives that students have and the challenges they may face. Due to this lack of recognition within educational institutions, students are unable to get an effective understanding of different subjects. At the same time, when the unique challenges and needs of students are not recognized, it contributes significantly to their declining performance in academic settings(DeBoer, 2020).

In order to highlight the relevance and effectiveness of these theories, a case can be considered from the field of education. For instance, a study conducted in an urban school district reveals that teachers have false and inadequate perspectives and ideas about the backgrounds of students(Silverman, Hernandez, & Destin, 2023). Most of the teachers believe that students belonging to low socio-economic backgrounds are generally less capable. It is firmly believed that these students are unable to perform well, which causes these students to receive less support from teachers. In fact, they tend to receive less attention from instructors in comparison with students belonging to better socio-economic backgrounds. In addition, upon interviewing teachers, it was identified that a standard curriculum was used for all the students.

Similar findings are revealed by many other research studies and projects. It is reported widely that in most educational institutions, instructors do not pay attention to and recognize the cultural differences among students. Instead of realizing these differences and personalizing both the curriculum and learning approaches, teachers are often identified to pay less attention and offer insufficient support to students belonging to diverse backgrounds and low socio-economic backgrounds. This lack of recognition adversely influences students to a significant extent. Obviously, when they do not acquire the attention, recognition, and support they need, students are unable to learn properly or develop the skills they require for the achievement of success in their academic life and in their practice life(Ciftçi & Cin, 2017).

These findings undoubtedly indicate that testimonial injustice as exhibited by teachers and instructors and the lack of recognition of cultural differences are significant issues in the education sector. Testimonial injustice is exhibited because most teachers have ineffective and wrong beliefs about students that they have acquired unconsciously or consciously. These biases and the lack of recognition both are capable of influencing the quality of guidance, feedback, and support provided to students. It serves to reinforce the already existing social hierarchies that exist within educational institutions(McIntyre, Rosebery, & González, 2001).

Some researchers suggest that personalizing the curriculum to suit the cultural differences of students can be ineffective due to the costs and time it would require(Williams, 1996). It is better to use a standardized curriculum. However, most of the research studies clearly show that when the same curriculum is imposed on all students, it results in a low academic performance from students.In fact, a standard curriculum is ineffective in the sense that it does not incorporate diverse perspectives into it.

The case discussed above exhibits testimonial injustice as teachers held prejudiced ideas, unconsciously or consciously, about the potential and capabilities of the students on the basis of their socioeconomic status. These biases served to affect the quality of education, opportunities, guidance, feedback, and support offered to students. It served to adversely influence the progress of students and even helped reinforce the existing social hierarchies within the institute. In addition to it, in the case, a diverse curriculum was not used as it neglected the diverse backgrounds and cultural differences of different students.

Actually, educators can adopt the perspective of epistemic injustice to address the case. For instance, they need to acknowledge and recognize the presence of testimonial injustice in educational practices. It involves identifying and correcting underlying prejudices and assumptions regarding diverse students(Boghian, 2019). Educators must then work together to create an environment where all the diverse students are treated with respect and fairly. Meanwhile, when it comes to the recognition perspective, it requires educators to acknowledge the unique strengths and difficulties of students with diverse backgrounds. It can involve personalizing the curriculum and learning approaches to ensure that all the students are benefitted equally(McIntyre, Rosebery, & González, 2001).

Overall, it can be said that the theories of recognition and epistemic injustice offer rather critical frameworks to understand and address the identified challenges in educational institutions. The case used above sheds light on the pervasive and complex nature of both hermeneutical and testimonial injustice in education, affecting diverse students to a significant extent. It undoubtedly requires a reformation of the existing educational sector. Through the critical application of these theories and theoretical approaches, both policymakers and educators can work together to address the identified challenges. In fact, they can collaborate to ensure that a more equitable and inclusive educational sector is created in which all students have equal opportunities and fair treatment.

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