



Nidhi Singal, Paul Lynch, Shruti Taneja Johansson, eds. *Education and Disability in the Global South: New Perspectives from Africa and Asia*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018. Illustrations. xv + 322 pp. \$130.00, cloth, ISBN 978-1-4742-9120-0.

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This excellent edited collection consists of a foreword and introduction, followed by two parts, with sixteen chapters altogether. Each chapter has, in addition to a list of references, a helpful summary of key points and suggested questions for discussion. The book is well indexed.

Alfredo J. Artiles, the author of the foreword, praises the collection for filling a gap in the literature on disability and education and calling for “situated analyses of inclusion implementation in the neglected contexts of Southern regions” (p. xv). The first chapter, “Education of Children with Disabilities: Changing Landscapes of New Opportunities and Challenges,” coauthored by the three editors, serves as an introduction to the collection.

Part 1, “Framing the Debates,” consists of chapters 2, 3, and 4. Chapter 2, by Pauline Rose, looks at including children with disabilities in the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goal for education. Rose reports that new concerns focus more on the quality of education than on whether or not children with disabilities are attending school at all. Nidhi Singal, in chapter 3, “Researching Disability and Education: Rigour, Respect and Responsibility,” stresses that a fourth “R,” research, underlies an effective combination of disability and education in the Global South. This urgent need, she cautions, must be driven by “an in-depth

appreciation of the realities and concerns of Southern contexts” (p. 53). The coauthors of chapter 4, Islay Mactaggart and Hannah Kuper, continue to stress the value of research, especially quantitative research. They include eight boxes with helpful resources such as box 4.6, which contains links to disability survey question examples.

Part 2, “Situated Perspectives,” has three subsections. The first, “Applying Conceptual Approaches,” opens with chapter 5, Matthew J. Schuleka’s “Advancing a Comparative Case Study Approach towards Education and Disability Research: An Example from Bhutan.” Schuleka points out that neither a universalist model nor a micro-level approach to research in disability and education is the most useful; rather, he advocates for comparative case studies as particularly relevant in the Global South. Next, “Diversifying Theoretical Commitments for a Transnational Inclusive Education: Lessons from India” (chapter 6) by Srikala Narayan brings to bear what she calls the Third World feminist lens, which “suggests that the preparation for inclusive education requires supporting teachers’ movement through, within and between different ideological systems to generate many, unpredictable and creative forms of resistance” (p. 122). The last chapter of “Applying Conceptual Approaches” is chapter 7, Colleen Howell’s

“Participation of Students with Disabilities in South African Higher Education: Contesting the Uncontested.” South Africa’s post-apartheid program in higher education has always included the goal of equity for students with disabilities; still, a great deal of inequity remains. Howell argues that the capacity of South African universities must be built and that this must include training at the levels of teaching and learning.

The second part of “Situated Perspectives” is “Schooling and Teachers.” Chapter 8, “Reframing ‘Spaces’ for Educating Children with Autism: Perspectives from Urban India,” by Shruti Taneja Johansson, opens this subsection. Johansson encourages the consideration of local contexts and of the use of space, both physical and educational, as metaphor. “The educational space for children with autism,” she writes, “was not restricted to the school but extended to the parents as well” (p. 157). The ninth chapter is Richard Rose and Jayashree Rajanahally’s “The Application of Inclusive Principles and Practice in Schools in South India: Successes and Challenges.” The authors stress the importance of considering the local context, as well as the importance of teachers, principals, and tutors coordinating their efforts. They also point out the neglected area of professional development after the courses have been completed, when students often need support in application. The tenth chapter, “The Practice Architectures of Inclusive Education in Two African Contexts,” is authored by Anabanithi Muthukrishna, who explains “practice architectures.” Muthukrishna draws on Stephen Kemmis and Peter Grootenboer’s theory, which posits that practice architectures are composed of three spaces: semantic, physical, and social; each gives meaning to and allows examination of teaching.[1] The local context is key to gaining a deeper understanding of inclusive education in the Global South. Maria Kett, Marcella Deluca, and Mark T. Carew coauthored chapter 11, “How Prepared Are Teachers to Deliver Inclusive Education: Evidence from Kenya, Zimbabwe, and Sierra Leone.” This chapter summarizes a study of the effi-

acy of teachers in the three countries through six themes. Overall, while the teachers are willing to embrace inclusive education, training and resources are necessary.

“Situated Perspectives: Child, Family, and Community,” which consists of five chapters, is the third and final component of part 2. Chapter 12, by Paul Lynch and Melissa Gladstone, is “Exploring Ways to Support the Infrastructure for early Childhood Development: A Study of Children with Visual Impairment in Malawi.” The authors focus on the importance of involving family and the community in education and of paying attention to the wider community systems in which the child learns. Figure 12.1, on page 231, is a helpful diagram showing the concentric circles of systems, from the microsystem to the macrosystem. Garrett Dart, Yonah Matemba, and Jack Gunnell are the coauthors of the thirteenth chapter, “Inclusive Education for Learners with Albinism: Malawi, Zambia, and Botswana.” While the cultural meaning of albinism results in threats to the safety of students with albinism, policy, strategies, and intervention can lead to educational inclusion and mainstreaming. Contextual appropriateness is supremely important. “Listening to Children with Disabilities: Voices from Uganda and Malawi,” the fourteenth chapter, is authored by Mary Wickenden. The voices of children, especially children with disabilities, have been excluded but are now being sought, as they should be, Wickenden says, for effective research and policymaking. She cautions that although the voices of children are now being used, “noticeably absent from the consultations are children with the most stigmatized impairments: communication, severe cognitive, behavioural and multiple difficulties” (p. 284). The fifteenth chapter, by Tehminna Hammad, is “Mothers as Educational Enablers: Examining the Journeys of Young Women with Disabilities in Pakistan.” Hammad explores the potential effect of mothers on the educational path of their daughters. The context of patriarchy, whether strong or weak, is especially important to consider.

The final chapter is a brief conclusion, authored by the book’s three editors. The conclusion focuses on two issues, the first of which is “today’s challenges.” The authors point out disability as a

“significant constant factor” within rapidly changing global patterns of rural-urban migration along with conflict and environmental disasters (p. 310). Against this scenario, disability remains neglected in research. The second issue is “negotiating a balance in power between Northern and Southern institutions” (p. 311). Here, the authors acknowledge the imbalance of access to information, data, and communication—usually taken for granted by northern institutions—between the Global North and South and call for ongoing communication and debate, both between the North and South and also among southern entities.

The overall message of the essays is the importance of including community and context in comparative research investigations. In this way, the essays echo and amplify the important themes of Shaun Grech and Karen Soldatic’s edited compilation *Disability in the Global South* and are a useful companion to that collection. The summary of key points and discussion questions that follow each chapter make the book a great choice for the undergraduate classroom. Overall, this collection is an important contribution to disability studies in the Global South and to the literature on inclusive education.

Note

[1]. Stephen Kemmis and Peter Grootenboer, “Situating Practice in Praxis: Practice Architectures and the Cultural, Social, and Material Conditions for Practice,” in *Enabling Praxis: Challenges for Education*, ed. Stephen Kemmis and Tracey J. Smith (Rotterdam: Sense, 2008): 37-62.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at <https://networks.h-net.org/h-disability>

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