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Evolution and effects of cultural diversity perspectives in schools

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From equality and inclusion to cultural pluralism – Evolution and effects of cultural diversity perspectives in schools*

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ABSTRACT

Schools are a major context for academic and socio-emotional development, but also an important acculturative context. This is notably the case in adolescence, which is a critical period for the development of a social and ethnic identity, as well as moral reasoning and intergroup attitudes. How schools approach cultural diversity issues is therefore likely to affect these developmental and acculturative processes and adaptation outcomes. In the present article, the manifestation and effects of the most prominent approaches to cultural diversity, namely those guided by a perspective of *equality and inclusion,* and those guided by a perspective of *cultural pluralism*, are reviewed and compared in the context of multi-ethnic schools. The aim is to explore when and how the potential of cultural diversity can best flourish, enhancing the academic and socio-emotional development of culturally diverse students.

Since 2015, Europe has received a near-unprecedented number of migrants, mostly arriving as refugees from war-torn areas in the Middle East and Africa (OECD, 2015). With global issues like climate change, what we have seen over the past year is likely to be only the beginning of a new era of mass migration, which will further enhance the diversification of European societies. This diversification

of societies requires acculturative processes, both on the side of immigrants and non-immigrant nationals of the receiving society, in order to achieve positive interethnic relations and long-term adjustment amongst culturally diverse citizens. Nested in the broader societal context, schools are important contexts for such processes to take place, also from a developmental and social-psychological perspective (Motti-Stefanidi, Berry, Chryssochoou, Sam, & Phinney, 2012). The goal of the present article is to explore how the way schools approach and deal with issues of cultural diversity is associated with student outcomes, both for immigrant and non-immigrant students.

Schools as a context for development and acculturation

Developmental psychologists have highlighted the importance of the school as a context for academic and socio-emotional development (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). Drawing on ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), schools may interact with other more or less proximal developmental contexts. Effects of the school context may also be different in different developmental periods. They should be particularly strong in adolescence, when developmental contexts outside of the home gain importance (Eccles & Roeser, 2011). Adolescence is also a critical period for processes of social and ethnic identity development (Erikson, 1968; Phinney, 1989) as well as the development of intergroup attitudes and moral reasoning about issues of fairness, equality and social inclusion (Rutland & Killen, 2015). As cultural diversity approaches in schools are relevant for the development of both ethnic identity and intergroup attitudes, they may be particularly salient and therefore also show greater effects in adolescence. Finally, the school context reflects the 'Zeitgeist', i.e., societal norms and attitudes at a particular time (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This 'Zeitgeist' is also visible in approaches to cultural diversity. The present review focusses on two main perspectives on cultural diversity, which have evolved over the past decades, namely *equality and inclusion* and *cultural pluralism,* and their effects on various adaptation outcomes amongst immigrant and non-immigrant students.

Schools are not only important developmental but also acculturative contexts for children and youth of immigrant and non-immigrant background. For children and youth of immigrant background, schools can facilitate (mainstream) culture learning and psychological and sociocultural adjustment in the country of settlement (Horenczyk & Tatar, 2012). For non-immigrant children and youth, schools provide opportunities to adjust and prepare for life in an increasingly multicultural society and a globalized world (Schwarzenthal, Juang, Schachner, van de Vijver, & Handrick, 2016). Yet, school experiences and outcomes are not necessarily the same for immigrant and non-immigrant students. Students of immigrant background are facing additional challenges, such as language difficulties and perceived ethnic discrimination, which heighten the risk of victimization (Jugert & Titzmann, in press). Immigrant students also lag behind their non-immigrant

classmates in achievement in many countries (Dimitrova, Chasiotis, & van de Vijver, 2016). In the current review, I will consider effects on a broad range of adaptation outcomes. Adaptation is defined here in terms of the accomplishment of normative developmental and acculturative tasks (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012). Focussing on adolescents, this includes establishing an integrated sense of identity and positive interethnic relations, as well as socio-emotional and academic adjustment.

Against the background of basic social psychological research, the manifestation and effects of two perspectives on cultural diversity, characterized by *equality and inclusion* and *cultural pluralism*, shall be reviewed and compared in the context of multi-ethnic schools. It is expected that both perspectives can contribute to successful adaptation, but that they may elicit different processes and therefore differ in their specific effects on different adaptation outcomes. The argument is that best overall outcomes can be achieved if both perspectives (*equality and inclusion* and *cultural pluralism*) are integrated. Possible routes for interventions will be highlighted. I will close with implications for future research as well as policy and practice.

Social psychological perspectives on cultural diversity

Perspectives on cultural diversity have been an important focus in basic social psychological research for decades. Initial efforts to deal with cultural diversity can be seen as characterized by principles of *equality and inclusion*. They were mainly aiming at overcoming racial and ethnic divides by promoting equality and positive contact, thereby reducing or preventing prejudice and discrimination by members of the cultural majority. These principles are also specified in the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954), which is until today one of the most influential theories on intergroup relations (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). On a policy level, these principles were (and still are) reflected in efforts of ensuring access, inclusion and equal opportunities of minority group members in different societal contexts. In order to promote equality and overcome between-group boundaries, similarities between members of different groups were often emphasized, e.g., by promoting a common ingroup or downplaying group membership altogether (for a review, see Fiske, 1998).

More recently, a strong emphasis on equality and similarities between groups has been criticized as being 'colour-blind', i.e., neglecting cultural diversity. This neglect of cultural diversity was often accompanied by promoting assimilation of minority group members to a mainstream culture (Park & Judd, 2005; Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). It was therefore proposed that intergroup contact should be complemented by an appreciation of *cultural pluralism* (e.g., Park & Judd, 2005). A pluralistic (or multicultural) ideology implies that differences between groups are acknowledged, valued and seen as a resource. This approach may support group identities among members of the minority group and result in more acceptance of outgroups among majority group members

(Rattan & Ambady, 2013; Vorauer, Gagnon, & Sasaki, 2009). The perception of ethnic ingroup domains being valued by the cultural majority can also promote motivation and identification with the mainstream culture amongst ethnic minority members (Van Laar, Derks, & Ellemers, 2013). Finally, engaging with and endorsing multiple cultures in a multicultural context can enhance creativity (Saad, Damian, Benet-Martínez, Moons, & Robins, 2013).

Evolution of cultural diversity perspectives in education

Similar to changing perspectives on cultural diversity in social psychological research as outlined above, there has been an evolution of cultural diversity perspectives in education (see Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Faas, 2008, for case studies of the US and Germany). Educators have traditionally seen cultural diversity as a problem and students of immigrant background as having a deficit. This deficit needed to be overcome by supporting the development of specific skills (such as language skills). Initial efforts to 'integrate' immigrant and ethnic minority students therefore primarily focussed on their adoption of (and assimilation to) the mainstream culture. This was later accompanied by efforts to prevent prejudice and discrimination by students representing the cultural majority (Beelmann, Heinemann, & Saur, 2009; Green, Adams, & Turner, 1988). Teachers would encourage contact and collaboration amongst diverse students (e.g., through encouraging diverse work groups, cooperative learning, and mixed seating arrangements), and strive to treat all students equally. Such a perspective of *equality and inclusion* is not the same as colour-blindness. Yet, it may imply colour-blindness if cultural differences are neglected in order to treat everyone equally and promote the adoption of the mainstream culture amongst immigrant and ethnic minority students (Schachner, Noack, Van de Vijver, & Eckstein, 2016).

Starting in the 1970s and 1980s, there was a shift towards a more pluralistic approach. This approach recognizes the need to adapt school to the cultural diversity of its students, and acknowledges ethnic maintenance as an additional resource for ethnic minority students (Banks, 1993; Gay, 1975; Jordan, 1985). Originating from traditionally more multicultural countries, such as the US, Canada or the UK, this shift is only recently reaching other, traditionally more monocultural (and assimilationist), countries, such as Germany (Dietz, 2007). Schools endorsing *cultural pluralism* may provide a climate that welcomes and appreciates cultural diversity, and where students and teachers show an interest in the cultural background of ethnic minority students (Schachner et al., 2016). This may also be manifested in a more multicultural curriculum (e.g., teaching about customs and traditions in other cultures, migration history and different immigrant groups).

School diversity climate and student outcomes

A positive and supportive school climate is associated with a wide range of student outcomes, including socio-emotional adjustment and academic

achievement (Thapa, Cohen, Guffey, & Higgins-D'Alessandro, 2013). This link is particularly strong for ethnic minority students. Still, few studies have investigated the manifestation of diversity perspectives in school context and climate and their associations with student outcomes (Horenczyk & Tatar, 2012). Measures of the cultural diversity climate are usually based on students' self-reported perceptions of norms and practices dealing with cultural diversity (for exceptions of more objective measures, see Celeste, Baysu, Meeussen, Kende, & Phalet, 2016; Civitillo et al., 2017). Most studies also do not distinguish between individual perceptions and aggregate perceptions at classroom or school level. Yet, associations may differ between levels.

Besides the direct effects on adaptation, some researchers also assume and test indirect effects of (perceived) diversity climate on adaptation through identity-related mediators. Such mediators include acculturation orientations (also comprising ethnic identity) or sense of school belonging (including identification with the school). These identity-related constructs have been linked to positive adaptation outcomes (e.g., Motti-Stefanidi & Masten, 2013; Schachner, Van de Vijver, & Noack, in press). At the same time, they may be affected by schools' approaches to cultural diversity. For example, if there is an emphasis on *equality and inclusion*, this may make it easier for immigrant students to be oriented towards and identify with the mainstream culture. On the other hand, when there is an emphasis on *cultural pluralism*, this may facilitate the orientation towards and identification with the ethnic culture. Both approaches may also contribute to an overall positive school or classroom climate, making it easier to develop a sense of school belonging for all students.

In the following, I review (1) effects of (perceived) *equality and inclusion*, (2) effects of (perceived) *cultural pluralism*, and (3) studies that simultaneously investigate and distinguish effects of different approaches to cultural diversity. The third part is further split into studies focussing on school-related outcomes and studies focussing on interethnic relations as an outcome.

Effects of (perceived) equality and inclusion

The majority of studies specifically investigating effects of the cultural diversity climate focussed on aspects related to *equality and inclusion*. They usually studied effects on interethnic relations amongst students in late childhood and early adolescence. Perceived contact norms characterized by *equality and inclusion* were associated with a higher likelihood of interethnic friendships between immigrant and non-immigrant early-adolescent students (Jugert, Noack, & Rutland, 2011; Schachner, Brenick, Noack, van de Vijver, & Heizmann, 2015), and lower levels of prejudice amongst non-immigrant students (Molina & Wittig, 2006). Amongst immigrant or ethnic minority students, a perceived emphasis on *equality and inclusion* at school was associated with lower individually perceived peer discrimination (Bellmore, Nishina, You, & Ma, 2012). Perceived

equal treatment of all students at school was also found to buffer the negative effects of stereotype threat (Baysu, Celeste, Brown, Verschueren, & Phalet, 2016) and perceived ethnic discrimination (Heikamp, Van Laar, Verschueren, & Phalet, 2016) on school belonging and academic outcomes amongst mid-adolescent immigrant students.

Effects of (perceived) cultural pluralism

Some studies also focussed on the perceived appreciation and promotion of *cultural pluralism*. Students were asked to what extent they felt their school enables them to learn about cultural and linguistic diversity, migration and racism. A stronger perceived endorsement of a *cultural pluralism* perspective was linked with less individually perceived discrimination, a higher perceived appreciation of students' cultural identity, better psychosocial adaptation and higher motivation amongst early-adolescent immigrant students (Haenni Hoti, Heinzmann, Müller, & Buholzer, 2015; Vedder & van Geel, 2012). Multicultural norms in the classroom were also associated with better interethnic attitudes amongst non-immigrant students (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2013).

Simultanous study of different approaches to cultural diversity

Few studies have covered different dimensions of cultural diversity climate and policies. Brand, Felner, Shim, Seitsinger, and Dumas (2003) included elements of *equality and inclusion* and *cultural pluralism* in their measure of the perceived cultural diversity climate but have not investigated unique effects of the two. A better cultural diversity climate was associated with higher student self-expectations and academic aspirations, yet effects were stronger amongst minority students. Most of the studies that simultaneously investigated and explicitly distinguished between the two approaches focussed on their indirect effects on school-related outcomes (psychological adjustment, engagement and achievement) through identity-related mediators (Byrd, 2015; Celeste, Baysu, Meeussen et al., 2016; Schachner, Schwarzenthal, Van de Vijver, & Noack, 2017; Schachner et al., 2016). One study also looked at effects on interethnic relations (Schwarzenthal, Schachner, van de Vijver, & Juang, 2016).

Effects on school-related outcomes

Schachner et al. (2016) found a positive effect of individually perceived support for *equality and inclusion* and *cultural pluralism* at school on psychological school adjustment amongst early-adolescent immigrants in Germany. While the effect of perceived *equality and inclusion* was mediated by students' orientation towards the mainstream culture, perceived the effect of perceived *cultural pluralism* was mediated by students' orientation towards the ethnic culture. Yet,

at classroom level, *equality and inclusion* also had a negative effect on students' ethnic orientation, thereby promoting assimilation.

Byrd (2015) distinguished between perceived interpersonal interactions (characterized by *equality and inclusion*) and school racial socialization (reflecting a *cultural pluralism* perspective). Interactions characterized by *equality and inclusion* as well as the socialization of *cultural pluralism* were associated with a higher sense of school belonging and intrinsic motivation amongst ethnic minority students in the US. Schachner et al. (2017) found similar effects of students' perceptions of both diversity perspectives on psychological adjustment and achievement through a higher sense of school belonging amongst early adolescent immigrant and non-immigrant students in Germany. Celeste, Baysu, Meeussen et al. (2016) analysed actual diversity policies in Belgian schools, clustering them into multicultural (e.g., learning about different cultures as a value), assimilationist (e.g., prohibiting minority language use) and colour-blind (e.g., emphasizing individual talent, prohibiting religious symbols) policies. Multiculturalism had a direct positive effect on achievement for all students (whereas a negative effect was observed for colour-blindness). The latter two studies both found that a climate reflecting a *cultural pluralism* perspective was more important for immigrant compared to non-immigrant students in promoting achievement indirectly through a higher sense of school belonging (Celeste, Baysu, Meeussen et al., 2016; Schachner et al., 2017).

Effects on interethnic relations

Looking at intergroup outcomes, both approaches to diversity were mainly associated with better interethnic relations (Schwarzenthal, Schachner et al., 2016). Perceived *equality and inclusion* was associated with a higher outgroup orientation and lower perceived discrimination in both groups. Yet, the effect on outgroup orientation was stronger amongst non-immigrant students, and the effect on perceived discrimination was stronger amongst immigrant students. Perceived *cultural pluralism* was also associated with a higher outgroup orientation in both groups, yet at the same time eliciting higher perceived discrimination. For non-immigrant students, this may confirm previous findings indicating that members of the cultural majority do not feel included by pluralistic ideologies but rather perceive them as a threat (e.g., Jansen, Vos, Otten, Podsiadlowski, & van der Zee, 2015). For immigrant students, this increase in perceived discrimination may indicate a heightened sensitivity towards issues of discrimination (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2013a).

Depending on the conceptualization of *cultural pluralism*, it may also elicit and support cultural stereotypes, which may in turn increase actual experiences of discrimination (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010). Mixed-method research analysing diversity-related content on school websites and in school buildings from Germany suggests that *cultural pluralism* is indeed often implemented in a rather superficial way (Civitillo et al., 2017). Things like food and cultural celebrations are often

addressed, but rarely deeper aspects of culture such as norms, social roles or values. One way to avoid reinforcing cultural stereotypes is to adopt a polycultural perspective. Polyculturalism has been proposed as a new alternative to traditional concepts of multiculturalism or *cultural pluralism*. All three approaches acknowledge and value cultural diversity. Yet, whereas the traditional concepts often assume that cultures are separate and rather stable entities, in a polycultural perspective, every individual is influenced by multiple cultures and cultures themselves can change and influence each other (Morris, Chiu, & Liu, 2015). The effects of polyculturalism have not been studied in the school context yet.

Routes for intervention

Approaches to cultural diversity have guided a broad range of interventions in culturally diverse schools (Denson, 2009). Principles of *equality and inclusion* have mainly guided (1) contact-based programs, aiming at the reduction of prejudice and discrimination. *Cultural pluralism* has mainly guided (2) knowledge and learning-based programs, such as culturally responsive teaching and multicultural education, but also (3) the affirmation of a dual identity amongst immigrant and ethnic minority students, or (4) the promotion of multilingualism. Finally, (5) teachers as potential promoters of a positive diversity climate in schools are increasingly recognized.

Contact-based interventions

Cooperative learning techniques are amongst the most prominent examples of contact-based interventions, which are most frequently applied in primary and early secondary school (i.e., late childhood and early adolescence). They have been associated with better interethnic relations (Oortwijn, Boekaerts, Vedder, & Fortuin, 2008; Slavin & Cooper, 1999) and better academic achievement (Johnson, Johnson, & Stanne, 2000) amongst ethnic minority and majority students. Positive effects also emerged from extended contact interventions, such as reading stories of an ingroup member meeting with an outgroup member under conditions of ideal intergroup contact (Rutland & Killen, 2015). Extended contact interventions were particularly successful when a dual identity of the outgroup member was made salient, i.e., when both outgroup membership and membership in superordinate group that is shared by ingroup and outgroup members were made salient (as opposed to only emphasizing the superordinate group or no group at all; Cameron, Rutland, Brown, & Douch, 2006).

Knowledge and learning-based interventions

The concepts of culturally responsive teaching and multicultural (or intercultural) education are broad and can refer to a wide range of programs and activities.

Although they mainly reflect a *cultural pluralism* perspective (incorporating cultural differences and diversity in the learning environment and curriculum), they also include elements of *equality and inclusion* (learning about intercultural relations). Culturally responsive teaching aims to make learning experiences more relevant for culturally diverse students and has been linked to a range of positive outcomes (Gay, 2015). Specifically, it was connected to better academic achievement (as measured by test scores), as well as higher motivation, interest, and academic efficacy beliefs amongst ethnic minority students (for a review, see Aronson & Laughter, 2015). Multicultural education, i.e., explicitly teaching about cultural differences and intercultural relations, mainly aims at bias reduction and better interethnic relations. Verkuyten and Thijs (2013b) conducted several studies where they asked early adolescents in the Netherlands about their perceptions of multicultural education. Although they could not identify unique effects of an *equality and inclusion* or a *cultural pluralism* perspective, they found an overall positive effect on interethnic attitudes amongst immigrants and non-immigrants.

Identity affirmation interventions

Identity affirmation interventions also show promising effects. Experimentally inducing a school policy that affirms a bicultural identity was associated with better test performance amongst ethnic minority students than inducing a policy that promotes the traditional non-cultural self-affirmation or the affirmation of a common superordinate group identity (Celeste, Baysu, Phalet, & Brown, 2016). This effect was mediated by decreased stereotype threat. The evaluation of a large-scale mentoring program for ethnic minority university students in the US further suggests that coupling a minority identity with a scientific or subject-specific identity was associated with a higher academic motivation and a greater chance for taking up a career in science (Woodcock, Hernandez, & Schultz, 2016). Although students in the program reported similar levels of stereotype threat than students in the control group, program participation appeared to buffer the negative effect of stereotype threat on academic motivation and career choices.

Fostering multilingualism

A shift from assimilationist policies and practices towards *cultural pluralism* has further become visible with regards to language use and teaching in schools. The promotion of mainstream language skills has long been the primary goal. Yet, teachers enforcing a monolingual education policy were recently found to have less trust in the engagement of their students, which may increase stereotype threat and hamper minority student achievement (Pulinx, Van Avermaet, & Agirdag, 2015). There is now an increasing appreciation of multilingualism and

first-language skills as an additional resource, which can promote integration and socio-emotional adjustment of immigrant students (Makarova, 2014), but also facilitate second-language acquisition (Edele & Stanat, 2015). Early exposure to a multilingual environment (even when not speaking another language) has further been associated with better perspective taking and communication skills (Fan, Liberman, Keysar, & Kinzler, 2015). This highlights again that multi-ethnic and multilingual classrooms also provide a resource for learning for majority students.

Teachers as promoters of a positive diversity climate

Increasing attention has been paid to teachers' roles in shaping the cultural diversity context at school. Indeed, teachers' attitudes of valuing diversity and *cultural pluralism* have been linked to less perceived discrimination by minority students (Brown & Chu, 2012). Teachers endorsing *cultural pluralism* versus colour-blindness or assimilationism have also been found to be more enthusiastic about teaching immigrant students, to be more willing to adapt their teaching to culturally diverse students, and to perceive a higher level of efficacy when teaching such students (Hachfeld, Hahn, Schroeder, Anders, & Kunter, 2015; Pulinx et al., 2015). Similarly, perceived *cultural pluralism* norms at school and support for a multicultural curriculum were primarily associated with student-related efficacy (i.e., perceived ability to adequately support immigrant students) (Schachner, Civitillo, Sendzik, Noack, & van de Vijver, 2015). This was partly mediated by a higher tolerance for ethnic maintenance. Yet, *equality and inclusion* norms were associated only with self-related efficacy (i.e., perceived ability to cope with the challenges of a culturally diverse classroom). These findings suggest that teachers' diversity beliefs and diversity-related norms are a fruitful target for interventions, such as teacher training programs. Yet, according to a recent survey in six European countries, the majority of teachers reported having received no or insufficient training to prepare themselves for dealing with cultural diversity in the classroom (Fine-Davis & Faas, 2014). The lack of intercultural knowledge and experience in turn make it less likely that they include multicultural topics in their teaching (Göbel & Helmke, 2010). A culturally responsive school leadership appears to be critical for ensuring such training takes place, but also for promoting all aspects of a diversity-friendly school context (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016).

Conclusion and future directions

Both *equality and inclusion* and *cultural pluralism* can promote positive outcomes amongst diverse students in multi-ethnic schools. *Equality and inclusion* has emerged from research on intergroup contact and has guided contact-based interventions, with the main focus of reducing prejudice and preventing

discrimination by the cultural majority (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). These effects have been largely confirmed, as well as associations with less perceived discrimination by members of the cultural minority and a higher likelihood of interethnic friendships between members of minority and majority groups (Jugert et al., 2011; Molina & Wittig, 2006). Yet, there is also evidence that *equality and inclusion* may promote assimilation, similar to what has been found for the colour-blind perspective on diversity (Schachner et al., 2016).

Cultural pluralism, on the other hand, has emerged mainly out of concern for the needs of the cultural minority and awareness of their cultural resources (Gay, 1975). It has guided knowledge and learning-based interventions, with aims of supporting minority students' sense of belonging and ethnic identity (thereby promoting adjustment) as well as creating greater cultural awareness amongst majority students. As it emphasizes cultural diversity and difference, it can complement an *equality and inclusion* perspective, which may otherwise be perceived as colour-blind. To let cultural diversity flourish as a resource for academic and socio-emotional development of diverse students, it seems that the combination of *equality and inclusion* and *cultural pluralism* is indeed most fruitful. However, there are several paths, which should be followed up in future research.

First, there is still a need for more fine-grained measures that clearly capture and distinguish between all the different facets that are included in the broad perspectives of *equality and inclusion* and *cultural pluralism*. Such measures would help to better understand which mechanisms are at work, how they are related (e.g., is colour-blindness a side effect of *equality and inclusion* or the opposite of *cultural pluralism*, is assimilationism a variant of colour-blindness or a separate concept etc.) and how they are associated with each type of outcome. Such measures should also include the concept of polyculturalism, which highlights dynamic aspects of cultures and culture change and could prevent the manifestation of cultural stereotypes in a *cultural pluralism* perspective (Rosenthal & Levy, 2010).

Second, future research should investigate how these approaches can best be implemented in different age groups from childhood through adolescence. A perspective of *cultural pluralism* requires a deeper understanding of culture and ethnicity, which only develops in the course of adolescence (Quintana, Castañeda-English, & Ybarra, 1999). If such a deeper understanding is not yet developed, this may actually contribute to cultural stereotypes and induce perceived ethnic discrimination as it was observed amongst early adolescents (Schwarzenthal, Schachner et al., 2016). More research comparing different age groups and longitudinal research are necessary to better understand age-specific mechanisms and effects, but also developmental trajectories following educational transitions.

Third, the focus in this type of research is still mainly on effects amongst immigrant students. Only very few studies also study effects amongst non-immigrants.

As cultural diversity is a reality for all students it would be important to find out how a positive approach to cultural diversity can also be beneficial for non-immigrant children and youth. This may also mean studying additional outcomes, such as intercultural competence.

Finally, it should be investigated how effects of diversity approaches in schools may differ as a function of country-level policies, and aspects of other proximal and distal contexts, such as family and ethnic group. Some of the studies reviewed above also considered associations and interactions of cultural diversity approaches with the ethnic composition of schools. However, this should be done more systematically and also including other characteristics of the school context, such as school type (academic vs. vocational tracks). There has been a steep increase in research and understanding about cultural diversity approaches in schools in the last decade, but there are also many questions which remain to be answered in the coming years.

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