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Reconceptualising Violence in International and Comparative Education: Revisiting Galtung's Framework

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Julia Paulson
and Leon Tikly

School of Education
University of Bristol
35 Berkeley Square
Bristol BS8 1JA

bristol.ac.uk/education/research/publications

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By Julia Paulson and Leon Tikly

University of Bristol

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Contact: julia.paulson@bristol.ac.uk
leon.tikly@bristol.ac.uk

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Abstract

Outside of a specialist literature, the study of violence occupies a marginal position within comparative and international education (CIE) scholarship. A key contributing factor is the absence of an holistic conceptual framework that can capture the nature, extent and causes of violence in education. The article proposes such a framework, by updating Johan Galtung's model of direct, structural and cultural violence by putting them into dialogue with theoretical work from the social sciences and humanities. This dialogue affirms the importance of each form of violence and the interconnections between them but proposes a deeper appreciation of the depth ontology of violence and a reappraisal of Galtung's ideas about the visibility and invisibilisation of violence. The article explores the utility of the framework by using it to explore the so called 'learning crisis,' which it argued may be more accurately considered a crisis of violence.

Introduction

Violence in all its forms is pervasive and ubiquitous in our education systems. This includes the directly observable effects of violent conflict on education as well as of corporal punishment and of racialised, sexualized, homophobic and ableist bullying. It also includes the impact of different forms of structural inequality including those based on class, race and gender on educational opportunities and outcomes and forms of cultural violence that privilege some languages, identities and versions of social reality whilst marginalising and erasing others. Taken together, these forms of violence have the effect of severely constraining the opportunities in and through education available to millions of learners in education systems around the world. Yet the full extent of violence in education is rarely acknowledged or given the prominence it deserves. The limited discussion of violence within mainstream comparative and international education (CIE) scholarship contributes to a wider phenomenon of the 'invisibilisation' of violence in policy and research. Where violence is considered in the field, this is often in the context of a specialised literature dealing with education and conflict and other forms of direct violence such as gender-based violence (below). Perhaps a contributing factor to the marginalisation of violence as a focus for inquiry is the lack of an holistic conceptual framework that can account for the nature, extent, causes and effects of different forms of violence.

The first aim of this article is to provide such a framework. Here we draw on and update Johan Galtung's influential model of violence first developed in 1964. We argue that the continuing relevance of Galtung's model lies in its identification of the three dimensions of direct, structural and cultural violence, which provide between them a suitably holistic framework for considering forms of violence and the relationships between them. We also argue, however, that Galtung's framing of the three dimensions and particularly of structural and cultural violence needs updating, which we seek to do in exploratory ways in this paper. In relation to structural violence, this involves considering Galtung's ideas in relation to recent developments in systems theory and through taking account of the effects of different kinds of structural inequalities in education and how they interact to produce complex, intersecting regimes of inequality. In the case of the cultural dimension, this involves consideration of the relevance of recent developments in poststructuralist, postcolonial, decolonial, feminist, and queer scholarship and work on epistemic injustice that can assist in providing a more nuanced and contemporary understanding of cultural violence than that provided by Galtung. Bringing Galtung's ideas into critical conversation with this more contemporary scholarship also allows

for a reconsideration of the relationship between each form of violence and of the nature of causality. In seeking to understand causality we move beyond Galtung's original framework to consider the effects of different kinds of power – coercive in the case of direct violence, material in the case of structural violence, and discursive in the case of cultural violence – and the processes through violence can be invisibilised as well as made visible. Finally, in considering the harms caused by violence, we update Galtung's concern with the effects of violence on the fulfilment of basic human needs to consider the effects of violence on limiting the capabilities and flourishing of human beings as well as of other species and of natural systems.

The article will commence with a critical summary of Galtung's original framework for understanding violence, which we then update in according to our concerns with causality, power, agency and capabilities drawing on ideas from systems theory. These updates enable us to propose a definition of violence and a first conceptual model that presents our understanding of the ontology of violence. We then consider and update each of Galtung's three dimensions of violence in turn. We use this discussion to show the violence inherent in the so called 'learning crisis', which is often the focus for policy discourses of the World Bank and many other donors and governments, but which rarely alludes to the effects of violence as a major contributing factor to poor learning outcomes. From this discussion, we propose a second model, an update on Galtung's iceberg imagery, that takes into account the social processes that can render violence invisible.

It should be stated at the outset that the ideas presented in this article come about through ongoing debates, dialogue and discussions between the authors over several months. Although both of us locate our scholarship within comparative and international education, we have different theoretical interests and backgrounds. Leon Tikly has a background of writing in the area of global education policy drawing on postcolonial/decolonial theoretical frames. More recently, he has sought to bring these perspectives into conversation with work on sustainable futures and complexity theory (Tikly, 2020). Leon's work has also been informed by critical realism at a metatheoretical level (Tikly, 2020; Tikly, 2015). Julia Paulson has focused primarily on issues related to education and conflict (e.g. Shields and Paulson, 2015), transitional justice (e.g. Bellino et al., 2017), teaching contested histories (Paulson, 2015), and memory (Paulson et al., 2020) where she has worked predominantly with feminist and critical political economy theoretical frames. She is increasingly inspired by relational ontological framings. This collaboration and the nature of the paper mean we are drawing on scholarship from different traditions and with different understandings of and ways of generating knowledge and apprehending reality. While this approach does raise tensions, it also generates creativity and, we hope, highlights the ontological depth of violence as a concept and the importance of attending to this depth in our analyses of education.

Galtung's conceptualisations of violence

Johan Galtung is a Norwegian sociologist who, in 1959, was a founding member of the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and, in 1964, of the *Journal of Peace Research*, in which he published many of the conceptualisations of violence and peace that continue to influence research in the social sciences. Galtung defines violence as

any avoidable insult to basic human needs, and, more generally, to sentient life of any kind, defined as that which is capable of suffering pain and enjoying well-being. Violence lowers the

real level of needs satisfaction below what is potentially possible. Violence to human beings hurts and harms body, mind and spirit. Hurting/harming one of them usually affects the other two through psycho-somatic transfers; an example of one of the most solid theorems in social science: violence breeds violence within and among actors, in space and over time (Galtung and Fischer, 2013: 1).

In developing this definition, Galtung adopts an expansive view of violence as encompassing three dimensions – direct, structural and cultural violence. In a 1969 article that explores these, Galtung wrote about the concept of ‘structural or indirect violence’ distinguishing it from ‘personal or direct violence.’ For Galtung, direct violence involves an actor who performs a violent act, whereas structural violence is not committed by one person directly harming another but instead “the violence is built into the structure and shows up as unequal power and consequently as unequal life chances” (Galtung, 1969: 170-1). Galtung defined structural violence as both the uneven distribution of resources and the uneven distribution of the power to decide the distribution of resources. In this discussion, he identifies the uneven distribution of education and literacy as forms of structural violence (ibid.).

The distinction between direct and structural violence is important, because, as Galtung argued, conceptualisations of violence, and therefore strategies to address it, are often limited to direct forms of violence. He writes:

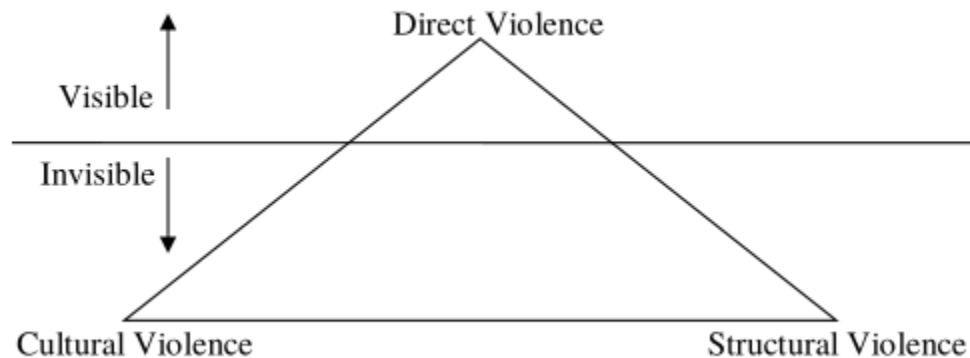
Personal violence shows. The object of personal violence perceives the violence, usually, and may complain – the object of structural violence may be persuaded not to perceive this at all. Personal violence represents change and dynamism – not only ripples on waves, but waves on otherwise tranquil waters. Structural violence is silent, it does not show – it is essentially static, it is the tranquil waters (Galtung, 1969, 173).

As Galtung outlines, Western legal and ethical systems, with their focus on intent and on punishment are primarily oriented around identifying, punishing and deterring direct forms of violence, while they often fail to identify, understand and rectify structural forms of violence. In part of an effort to explain how structural violence is maintained unchallenged, Galtung expanded his conceptualisation of violence with the addition of ‘cultural / symbolic violence.’ Here he describes “those aspects of culture, the symbolic sphere of our existence... that can be used to justify or legitimise direct or structural violence” (Galtung, 1990: 291). In other words, “cultural violence makes direct and structural violence look, even feel, right, at least not wrong” (1990, 291). In expanding on the idea of cultural violence, Galtung is careful to indicate that he is referring to specific aspects present within all cultures which may be understood as violent and is not declaring any particular culture to be inherently violent. He then develops a discussion of religion, ideology, language, art, empirical science, formal science and cosmology as elements of culture that may “empirically or potentially be used to legitimize direct or structural violence” (1990, 296).

Galtung describes the relationship between direct, structural and cultural forms of violence via the metaphor of a violence triangle or iceberg, in which the relationships, or in Galtung’s words, “linkages and causal flows,” exist between all points. Cycles connecting all three forms of violence may start at any point. Galtung develops a temporal distinction between the three forms of violence, describing direct violence as event; structural violence as process, with ups and downs; and cultural violence as a ‘permanence,’ “remaining essentially the same for long

periods of time” (1990, 294). He also uses the geological metaphor of strata, where cultural violence forms a substratum that gives nutrients to the structural and direct violence which sit atop one another. The top strata, direct violence, is that which is “visible to the unguided eye and to barefoot empiricism” (294-5). Galtung did not illustrate the triangle/iceberg in the 1990 paper that describes it, but it has since been illustrated as a teaching tool for peace and conflict studies as reproduced here.

Diagram one: Iceberg or triangle model violence based on Galtung’s work



[Towards a reconceptualization of violence in education: building on Galtung’s model](#)

A complex ontology of violence

A strength of Galtung’s model is that along with other more recent scholars (e.g. Scheper-Hughes and Bourgois, 2004; Vorobej, 2016; Žižek, 2009; Walby, 2009; Cacho, 2012) it can shed light on what is a notoriously difficult to define term and process, which at under certain definitions can seem so broad as to encompass everything. However, although Galtung describes each form of violence in broad terms, key concepts that underpin his model, such as ‘cycles of direct violence’, ‘culture’ and ‘structure’ are insufficiently explained, limiting their analytical purchase and, by extension, understanding of the nature of the causal relationships between them.

Here complexity theorist Sylvia Walby’s (2009) more recent work on violence provides an important update on Galtung’s understanding. In her work on globalisation and inequality, Walby describes violence as a distinct societal domain. This is to acknowledge, with Galtung and other scholars, multiple forms of violence but also, and in the context of globalisation, the multiple scales at which violence may occur. In the case of direct violence, this includes, for example, the effects of global and regional conflicts to the role of the military, the police and armed groups operating at a national level to the interpersonal nature of much sexualised, gendered and racialised violence and indeed the intra-personal nature of some forms of violence such as self-harm.

Underlying Walby’s understanding of violence as a distinctive societal domain is a view of the natural and social worlds as comprising intersecting complex systems. A full account of our uptake of systems theory that provides the basis for our analysis is provided elsewhere (see Tikly, 2020). For our purposes, each form of violence can be understood in terms of complex,

self-organising, adaptive systems. That is, they consist of elements where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Change within complex systems is non-linear. Change is unpredictable and characterised by the presence of positive and negative feedback loops that can serve to exacerbate or constrain the effects of violence. Forms of violence can also demonstrate relatively stable periods of equilibrium or 'path dependency' punctuated by crises or 'tipping points' that can lead to the emergence of new forms of violence, may cause systems to lapse into chaos (where, in contrast to complex systems there is no discernible path dependency or pattern to violence), or may create new feedback loops that support moves away from violence. Understood as complex systems, one form of violence will emerge in relation to a wider landscape in which it will co-evolve, give shape to and be shaped in turn by other forms of violence.

We now turn to discussing the implications of this ontological understanding for each form of violence – direct, structural and systemic. Starting with direct violence, the phenomenon of 'cycles of violence,' which is often used to explain how acts of direct violence escalate in specific contexts, cannot be reduced simplistically to the sum of individual acts of violence. Rather, they need to be understood as having their own dynamics, causes and effects that include but transcend the sum of acts of personalised violence. Direct violence may be fuelled by the existence of inequalities linked to structural violence or by the effects of ideologies associated with cultural violence or by some combination of both. Cycles of violence may escalate through positive feedback loops in which acts of violence beget further acts of violence or they may be constrained by negative feedback loops such as the application of institutional arrangements, rules and regulations that can serve to contain the effects of violence. Cycles of violence may be relatively enduring in specific contexts, (i.e. demonstrate a path dependency). They may also reach a tipping point such as through the impact of crisis that leads to chaotic systems, the generation of new cycles of violence or, potentially, interventions that may lead to new path dependencies characterised by peace.

Structural violence can also be understood in terms of the interaction of other societal domains including those of the economy, the polity and of civil society with the domain of violence. For Walby, these societal domains can also be understood as complex, overlapping and co-evolving systems. Each domain operates at a number of scales from the global to national to the local. The economic domain is concerned with the production, consumption, distribution and circulation of goods and services; the polity exercises authority over the population occupying a specific territory (which may be a locality, a nation, a region or indeed an empire); and, civil society encompasses a range of organisations and individuals that represent different economic, political, religious and cultural interests. Each of these domains and the relationship between them needs to be understood in relation to the historical period in which they have emerged. They are comprised of conflicting interests and social relations that give rise in the context of contemporary neo-liberal globalisation to complex, intersecting regimes of inequality including those based on class, race and gender. Violence, understood as a distinctive societal domain straddles the other domains. It is comprised of the institutions, organisations, groups and individuals that are implicated in the perpetuation of violence including the military and non-state armed actors, but also institutions such as the family and, importantly for our purposes, education. As such the domain of violence is deeply implicated in the perpetuation of regimes of inequality and vice versa. Given the emphasis on complex systems as generating regimes of inequality, it is perhaps more accurate to rename 'structural violence' as 'systemic violence,' which we do in the framework that follows.

Finally, cultural violence can also be understood in terms of complex systems although in this case, the focus is on complex discursive systems of signification and meaning that operate across societal domains. These might include, for example, the way that disciplinary knowledge is organised in the curriculum or the way that competing versions of social reality are relayed through the popular media, as well as through organisations within the polity and civil society. Importantly, in keeping with Galtung's original conception, discursive systems can play an ideological role in legitimising acts of violence perpetrated by different interests in society.

Galtung also began in his later writing (Galtung and Fischer, 2013; Galtung, 1990) to allude to the idea of environmental violence - by which he meant the effects of humans' destruction of the natural world manifested in biosphere collapse, damage to ecosystems, climate change and increased environmental risk, particularly for the poor and vulnerable. However, environmental violence was never properly theorised or integrated into Galtung's three-dimensional heuristic of direct, structural and cultural violence. Extending Walby's schema somewhat, 'the environmental' can be perceived as a complex societal domain in its own right comprising the activities, institutions and laws that mediate human beings' relationships to the natural world. It intersects with other societal domains in complex ways. The large-scale extraction of natural resources, the pollution of land, oceans and rivers along with the human causes of climate change and biodiversity collapse arising from the economic domain can be perceived as acts of violence against the natural world whilst the unequal distribution of environmental risks linked to climate change and pollution reinforce in complex ways existing regimes of social inequality (Perry, 2020b; Perry, 2020a). In this respect, it is disadvantaged populations in the global South and North that are at the sharp end of flooding, drought and other natural disasters precipitated by climate change. Education as an institution is deeply implicated in the environmental domain. The perpetuation of environmentally damaging practices and policies linked to education such as unsustainable food consumption, heating and travel along with education's role in legitimising the existing status quo with regards to the environmental domain ensures that education systems are often complicit in reproducing environmental regimes of inequality (Shields, 2019).

Violence and power

A further limitation of Galtung's model is that he does not adequately theorise the nature of power and therefore the causes of violence. Where power is alluded to, it is the material power associated with control over the production and distribution of resources and physical power to cause harm through direct violence. Power plays a central role in the wider scholarship on violence. For example, for Hannah Arendt (1969), violence is distinguishable from and antithetical to, political power, which she argues is achieved through communication and consensus. In contrast, Antonio Gramsci (1992) argues that coercion can be seen along with consensus as the basis for hegemony, i.e. that violence can also serve to reinforce economic and political power in struggles over hegemony. For Walby (2009), violence needs to be understood as a distinctive form of coercive power in its own right. In keeping with Gramsci's understanding, coercive power can be used to shore up or to seek to challenge existing economic and political power relationships based on control over material resources and control over the polity respectively. Here coercive power is often physical in nature and may be weaponised.

Importantly, however, and in relation to cultural violence, coercion does not have to include physicality. Many social theorists - including some highlighted below who were writing at the same time as Galtung but with whom he does not enter into dialogue - discuss power as discursive and disciplinary, exercised through the making of subjects and impacting upon the psyche. For Michel Foucault, education is a key site for the exercise of disciplinary power which in modern societies is used to render individual bodies politically docile and economically useful (Foucault, 1975; Ball, 2012). Disciplinary power is also performative in nature. That is to say that educational institutions are also sites for the reproduction of discourses around social class, race, ethnicity, gender, and ability/ disability that are constitutive of individual and group identities and serve to legitimise wider inequalities in society as well as the relationship between human beings and the natural world. Frantz Fanon's work is important for appreciating the psychological impact of colonialism, the construction of enduring systems of racialisation, racism, and dehumanisation and their violent impacts on the psyches of racialised people (1986; 1961). Bourdieu's classic text *Distinction* (1979) considers how social class is produced and reproduced partly through a valorisation of bourgeois cultural forms and a concomitant disdain for working class culture. He describes this as a form of symbolic violence and sees the production and exchange of cultural capital as a key facet of class domination within capitalist societies. Butler's *Gender Trouble* (1990) highlights the oppressive (and violent) nature of gender and other categories (class, ethnicity, sexuality) and explores how these are constructed socially via an exploration of power and the universality of patriarchy in culture.

These scholars, and the rich scholarship influenced by their ideas, produce much more detailed and deeper explanations of the discursive and disciplinary workings of power and therefore of the processes and harms of cultural violence. In bringing their understandings of power into our model, we are able to attend to the processes through which individuals are made into subjects through the violence of categorization.

To summarise and based on the discussion above, we therefore distinguish three forms of power as fundamental for understanding the nature and causes of violence, namely, coercive power in relation to direct violence; material (economic and political) power in relation to systemic violence; and, discursive power in relation to the operation of cultural violence. These forms of power are reflected in diagram two below.

Violence and human agency

Here, and in relation to the earlier discussion of the causes of violence, it is important to acknowledge the dialectical nature of the relationship between the agency of individuals and groups implicated in direct violence on the one hand, and, the operation of structural/ systemic and cultural violence, on the other. That is to say that, rather than seeing the actions of violent individuals and groups as being 'determined' by other forms of violence in a unidirectional way, it is important to recognise the potential for actors to resist and modify violence and its effects, for example through forms of collective action or through initiatives aimed at securing peace¹.

¹ Our view of human agency as emergent and potentially transformative in relation to the effects of social systems (rather than being simply determined by them) is based on a complex realist perspective on human agency that brings together Bhaskar's critical realism and complexity theory. Space does not allow for a full

A major shortcoming of Galtung's model is that whilst he clearly opposes violence and has been an important advocate for peace, he does not in fact offer an ethics of violence. Here, it is useful to bring the ideas introduced so far into dialogue with the capability approach of Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum both as an ethical basis for assessing the harm caused by violence and actions aimed at preventing violence. Often understood as 'an evaluative space,' the capability approach considers the possibilities for human well-being and flourishing in terms of the capabilities (opportunity freedoms) available to individuals and groups to realise valued functionings (beings and doings). It is the provision or denial of opportunity freedoms to realise valued functionings rather than the provision of basic needs (which in Sen's view may or may not be converted into functionings) that provides the basis for evaluating wellbeing and flourishing. The idea of capabilities has been extended to consider the capabilities available to other species and indeed natural systems to flourish in a way that is symbiotic with human life (Schlosberg, 2007; Schlosberg, 2004; Schlosberg, 2001). What counts as valued capabilities and functions ought to, for Sen, arise through processes of informed public dialogue. It is precisely the possibility for realising capabilities and converting resources into valued functionings and indeed the possibilities for determining these through democratic debate that violence in all its forms constrains or completely destroys.

In some instances, however, such as the fight against colonial injustice, an evaluation of the ethical dimensions of violence might lead to a valorisation of counter-violence. This is seen for example in the work of Frantz Fanon (1961) and realised in the actions of many armed national liberation movements. Conversely it might lead, as in the case of Gandhianism for example and the early efforts of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress, to a commitment to non-violence.

It is the above representation of human agency as being, on the one hand emergent and potentially transformative (rather than simply pre-determined) by the effects of economic and political systems as well as having an ethical dimension (along with the agency of other species and of natural systems) that is implicit in our definition of violence and that is reflected diagram 2 (both below).

Defining violence

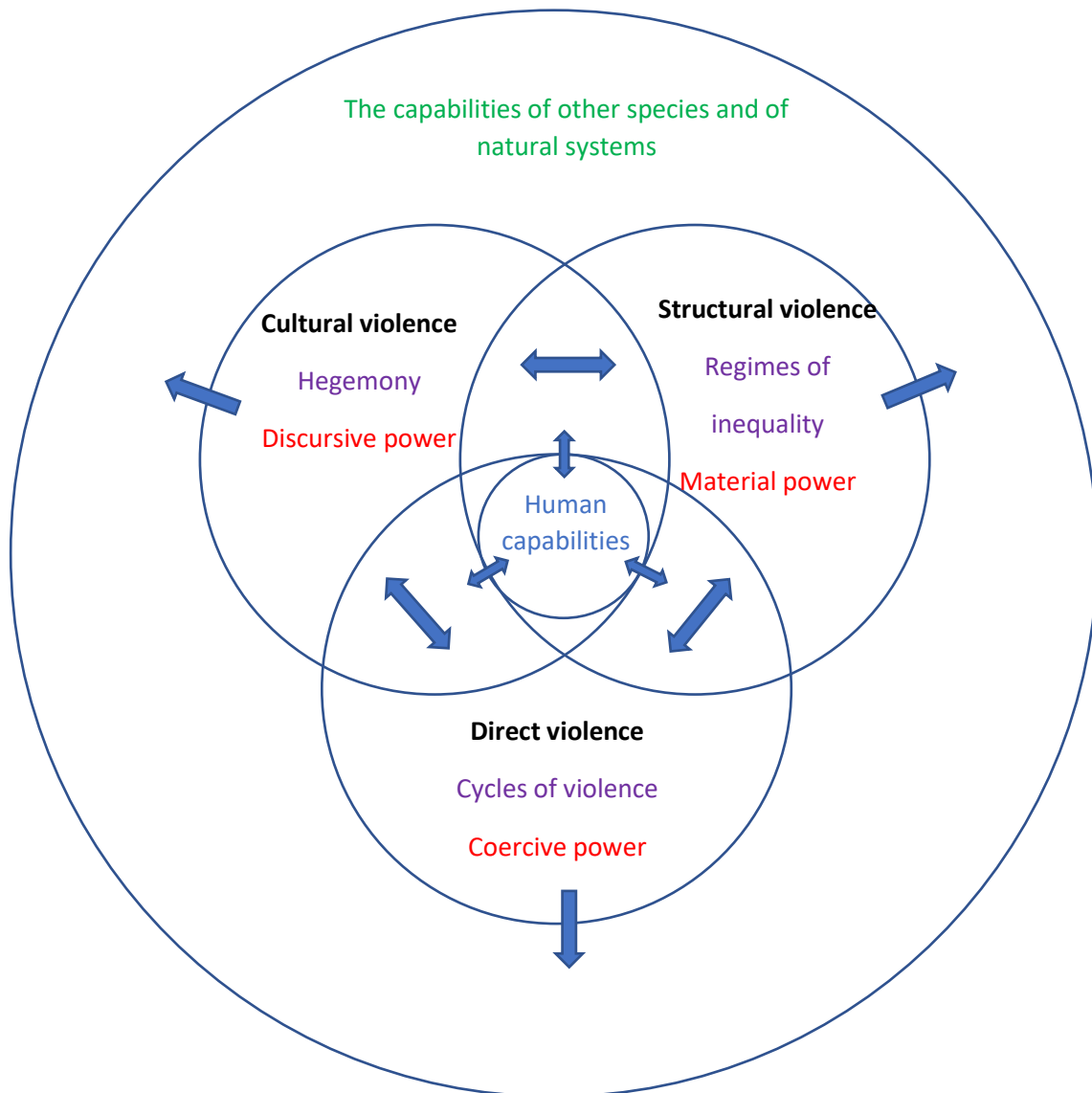
Having developed our understandings of violence, power and human agency, we are now in a position to offer our own definition of violence. As we discuss below, much existing scholarship on violence and education focuses on forms of direct physical and psychological violence. For example, in their recent analyses of violence in education UNESCO (2019) in keeping with UNICEF (2015), define school violence in terms of instances of physical violence, psychological and sexual violence. Following Galtung as well as other recent scholars of violence (e.g. Scheper-Hughes and Bourgoise, 2004; Tripp, 2021) we adopt a more expansive understanding that attends to the multiple forms of harm inflicted by violence and includes systemic and cultural as well as direct violence. Our definition also foregrounds the role of power both as a cause of violence but also, as we argue below, as a means to render some forms and effects of violence invisible. In building on Galtung's definition we have replaced

consideration of our uptake of complex realism in the context of the present article but readers are referred to Byrne D and Callaghan G (2014) *Complexity Theory and the Social Sciences: The state of the art*. London: Routledge. See also chapter two of Tikly L (2020) *Education for Sustainable Development in the Postcolonial World: Towards a transformative agenda for Africa*. Abingdon: Routledge.

the concept of 'needs' with that of capabilities to reflect a concern with the ethical basis by which needs can be defined and that takes account of the opportunities available to different individuals and groups to convert resources into valued functionings. Based on the discussion of previous sections, we offer a broad definition of violence as: *any act of power, whether directly or via systemic and cultural forms, that results in physical, psychological, emotional, environmental or spiritual harm and that has the effect of limiting the capabilities (opportunity freedoms) available to individuals, groups, other species and natural systems.*

Our understanding of violence based on the above discussion is summarised in the diagram below. The three overlapping circles represent the forms of violence along with their ontology (in purple) and the forms of power with which they are associated (in red). The inner most circle represent the effects of violence on the capabilities of human beings whilst the outermost circle represents the effects on other species and on natural systems. The blue arrows indicate the direction of causal influence. In keeping with the discussion of complexity above, the precise nature, direction and extent of causality between the three forms of violence cannot be read off in a simple way and needs to be understood in relation to an analysis of how violence operates in different historical, geographical and institutional contexts. The double-sided arrows between human capabilities and the forms of violence represents the dialectic nature of the relationship whilst the uni-directional arrows between the forms of violence and the capabilities of natural systems reflects the harm that human made forms of violence do to the natural world.

Diagram two: An ontology of violence



Violence in and through education – exploring the so called ‘global learning crisis’

The exploration of the ontology of violence presented in the above discussion and in diagram two is a first theoretical contribution from our ongoing conversation with Galtung’s work. Appreciating the ontological depth and complex nature of violence as a concept and social process that affects our lives comes with an insistence that violence enter into our analyses of social processes, including education. In the discussion that follows we deepen and extend our understandings of each form of violence represented in the diagram – direct, systemic and cultural violence – by bringing Galtung’s ideas into dialogue with other theorists writing on violence. A theoretically informed understanding of each form of violence signals issues to which researchers can be attentive in their analyses of education systems. We employ the example of the so called ‘global learning crisis’ through the discussion of each form of violence in order to demonstrate the relevance of an analysis of violence to one of the predominant

research and policy issues occupying education and international development practitioners and researchers. The absence of awareness of violence as causing and being magnified through the learning crisis, leads us to also draw attention to the ways in which violence is invisibilised in research, practice and everyday understandings of education.

We briefly introduce the 'learning crisis' before turning to our discussion. The term 'learning crisis' is central to current discourses about international education development. Popularised by the World Bank amongst other organisations (World Bank, 2018), the term is used to refer to the fact that although there has been some progress in improving access to primary education, learning outcomes (as measured in standardised tests of literacy and numeracy) remain very low in many parts of the low-income world. Worst affected are often learners from low socio-economic backgrounds, girls, minorities and rural dwellers. In order to address this crisis, the World Bank proposes a range of technocratic solutions, principally focusing on improving the effectiveness of teachers and teaching, the use of technology to support learning and improving accountability within education system. As has been argued elsewhere (Tikly, 2020; Sriprakash et al., 2019), there are several problems with how the idea of the learning crisis is currently framed in dominant global discourses.

Firstly, the idea focuses on a narrow range of cognitive outcomes linked to an instrumentalist view of education as contributing principally to human capital development. It stands in contrast to approaches that consider education in terms of promoting a wider set of capabilities that can contribute to the realisation of social, environmental and epistemic justice within peaceful, democratic and sustainable societies (Tikly and Barrett, 2011) or to the realisation of peace and transitional justice in the case of post-conflict societies (Bellino et al., 2017). Secondly, by focusing on the global South, these accounts also fail to take account of the highly unequal nature of education systems around the world including in the global North and their role in reproducing inequalities based on class, gender, race, culture, disability etc. Finally, and less developed in the existing critiques, but key argument of this paper, by focusing on technocratic solutions dominant discourses about the learning crisis elide the profound effect of different forms of violence in limiting the capabilities of learners. That is to say that the narrow focus of contemporary discourses about the learning crisis mask a much deeper crisis that blights our educational systems, namely a crisis of violence.

Direct violence

Much of the attention to direct violence in CIE research is located in the growing sub-field of education and conflict / education in emergencies. A major contribution of this work has been the systematic documentation of attacks on education and efforts to attempt to prosecute them as war crimes. A recent report by the Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack (2020) found that more than 22,000 students, teachers, and academics were injured, killed or harmed in attacks on education during armed conflict or insecurity between 2015-19 with more than 11,000 separate attacks on education facilities, students and educators. The number of countries experiencing attacks on education has also increased in recent years, with 93 countries experiencing at least one reported attack on education between 2015 and 2019. GCPEA found that women and girls were specifically targeted. Besides the physical and psychological damage inflicted on children and young people caught up in this violence,

armed conflict in general has devastating effects on school enrolments with an estimated 28 million children out of school in conflict affected countries (UNESCO, 2011). Pregnancy from rape, the health consequences and stigma of sexual violence, the risk of early marriage, and the privileging of boys' education over girls', all make it particularly difficult for girls to return to school (GCPEA, 2020). The 'war on drugs' has had a specific and notable effect on denying tens of thousands of learners access to a good quality education (Rodríguez-Gómez and Bermeo, 2020). These forms of direct violence are recognised in discussion around the so called 'learning crisis,' which highlight both the impact of conflict and direct violence on access to and completion education and that "even when conflict, fragility and violence do not directly disrupt access, they can affect learning by changing the pedagogical experience, such as through lack of resources or teachers or trauma from violence"(World Bank, 2018, 61). However, this understanding of the impacts of armed conflict violence on education is generally where awareness violence as an explanatory factor for 'poor' learning outcomes ends. These discussions largely ignore the other forms of direct violence that millions of learners experience as part of their schooling.

For example, corporal punishment is a widely occurring form of direct violence that is regularly researched but less regularly discussed alongside sweeping diagnostics of 'learning crisis' (e.g. UNICEF, 2015; Gershoff, 2017; Heekes et al., 2020). As Gershoff reports, corporal punishment remains legal in 69 countries where its prevalence is high. Although it is prohibited in 128 countries, its use often goes under-reported and remains widespread across the globe. It is correlated with poor academic and emotional outcomes. Bullying is a major source of school based violence; according to a recent UNESCO report (UNESCO, 2019), almost one in three students (32%) around the world have been bullied by their peers at school at least once in the last month, including via physical, sexual, psychological and cyber bullying.

Other types of direct violence are more likely to be 'invisibilised'. For example, data relating to the prevalence of sexualised violence in education is limited, although the data that does exist suggests that it is widespread both in the global North and the global South yet often goes unreported (Crawford and Hares, 2020; Parkes, 2015a; Parkes, 2015b). The same is true of homophobic bullying and violence based on gender identity/ expression (UNESCO, 2016). Data relating to some forms of violence including disablist and racialised violence including anti-Black, Islamophobic and anti-Semitic bullying are even more limited and often confined to a handful of countries where these data are collected.

The above paragraphs make clear the pervasiveness of direct violence in schools and the limited ways that dominant educational discourses like the 'learning crisis' acknowledge and understand direct violence to play a causal role in the learning outcomes (and capability functionings) that young people are able to take from their education. A preoccupation with what Diego Nieto (2021) describes as 'big C' conflict (armed conflict) can lead to a narrow understanding of direct violence that neglects its everyday presences in schools and in the lives of young people. In his work on peace pedagogies in Tumaco and Cali, Colombia, Nieto usefully includes a theorisation of everyday violence (little c conflict) and its normalisation in social life. Nieto's work is attentive to the ways that everyday, direct violence permeates the

lives of students inside and outside of their schools, including through violence associated with the drugs trade and through sexualised and racialised violence. The normalisation of violence is also the concern of Carolyn Nordstrom (2004) whose term 'the tomorrow of violence' shows how in its everydayness, violence moves beyond something that is located in the past or present to an inevitableness in the future, an enduring part of life that is included in the anticipation of the future. This inevitable and unremarkableness of much direct violence contributes to its invisibilisation to the degree that it goes largely unmentioned in many key policy documents on the state of global education (e.g. World Bank, 2018; GCPEA, 2020).

Systemic violence

Much of the work on the effects of direct violence is descriptive in nature and rarely seeks to explain how direct violence might be linked to systemic and cultural violence. Nieto's work is an example of more recent scholarship that has begun to make these connections. Here there is scope, however, for bringing work on direct violence into conversation with work that has tried to explain the role of education systems in reproducing different kinds of systemic inequalities, including those based on class, race and gender. Much neo-Marxist scholarship in the West for example, has sought to show how education systems reproduce class based inequalities; feminist literature has considered the role of education in socialising young people in terms of their gendered identities and future roles in the labour market; and work on race and education, including for example, critical race theory, has shown the role of education systems in reproducing White supremacy. There is potential, however, for deepening understanding the relationship between violence as an integral part of these wider processes of social reproduction.

Clive Harber's (2004) work on schooling as violence begins to make these connections. It offers a reminder that the history of the development of mass education systems is directly violent, in its evolution in industrialising Western Europe and its extension via the European colonial project to "discipline bodies as well as to regulate minds" (p. 9). The compulsory, coercive nature of mass schooling, Harber argues, make it a "bully institution" (p. 9) of discipline and punishment. Recent scholarship on gender-based violence links sexualised violence with wider gender based inequalities in society (see for example, Parkes, 2016; Parkes et al., 2013). Abolitionist theorist and activist Angela Y. Davis (2003) connects schools and prisons, arguing that schools in poor communities of colour in the United States are repressive, militarized institutions that "replicate the structures and regimes of the prison" placing a greater emphasis on discipline and security than on personal growth and development. These schools serve as "prep schools for prison" (p. 16) and are an institution of racism and repression. In words of Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang (2012), the school is a mode of control in the process of internal colonialism, "the biopolitical and geopolitical management of people, land, flora fauna." Focused on North America, their work draws attention to invisibilization of the ways in which settler colonialism directly and violently marks the "organization, governance, curricula and assessment of compulsory learning" (p. 1) and like Jessica Gerrard, Arathi Sriprakash and Sophie Rudolph (forthcoming) highlight the violently extractive histories through which educational institutions and systems have been established. Vally et al's (2002) work on the prevalence of corporal punishment and other

forms of direct violence in South African schools explicitly links the prevalence of violence with the authoritarian nature of the apartheid regime. There is a need to deepen and extend this kind of analysis to critically explore the role of direct violence in perpetuating systemic violence and vice versa.

Learning crisis discussions do identify some of the patterns resulting from systemic violence. For example, the World Bank's 2018's *World Development Report – Learning to Realise Education's Promise*, which introduces and outlines the nature of the 'learning crisis' explains that "individuals already disadvantaged in society— whether because of poverty, location, ethnicity, gender, or disability—learn the least. Thus education systems can widen social gaps instead of narrowing them" (p. 4). In the following section on cultural violence, we'll spend time with the idea of 'learning the least'. For now, we wish to recall how Galtung explained structural (systemic) violence as the institutionalization of unequal life chances and opportunities (which we expand to include unequal capabilities and opportunities to flourish). An attention to systemic violence then positions education as part of this process of institutionalization of unequal capability opportunities according to, for example, race, social class, gender or ability, as the research reviewed in this section has shown. Understanding education in this light – as an institution of systemic violence and as deeply implicated in the reproduction of intersecting regimes of inequality – therefore clearly demands more than the technical solutions pro-offered to solve the learning crisis. Appreciating the systemic violence behind the learning crisis and shaping who 'learns the least' shows both the path dependencies that the technicist 'solutions' to the learning crisis do not disrupt and the need for the reimagining of education that abolitionist and decolonial scholars call for.

Cultural violence

Recall that Galtung introduced the concept of cultural / symbolic violence in order to help understand how structural violence is maintained. He conceived of these forms of violence as what made other forms of violence look and feel 'right, at least, not wrong' (1990: 291). Galtung focused his discussion of cultural and symbolic violence on the media and on social norms, rituals and cultural practices. In doing so, Galtung's writing can verge on an orientalist linking of violence and culture and it can elide power dynamics - including around the production of knowledge - that construct and maintain forms of violence manifest in media, technology and cultural practice. By engaging in literature on epistemic injustice, ignorance and normative violence, explanations of cultural and symbolic violence expand to explore the practices of generating and maintaining dominant forms of knowledge that violently exclude. The scholarship reviewed here also is clear in qualifying Galtung's assertions around structural violence 'looking and feeling right' – these 'right feelings' are particular to dominant groups, to those who hold power and to those who benefit from its exercise. Ideas around epistemic violence and the maintenance of ignorance, discussed in more detail below, help to clarify how other forms of violence are maintained and naturalized, made to 'feel right' for those who benefit from them, even when explicitly spoken of by those who suffer their effects (e.g. Payne, 2021).

Boaventura de Sousa Santos (2012; 2007), postcolonial critical scholar who has been writing on epistemic in/justice for decades is explicit in the violence of the injustices he describes,

including via the concept of epistemicide – the elimination and destruction of ways of knowing and apprehending the world through the imposition of Western/European forms of knowing, including through formal education structures and institutions. Miranda Fricker's (2007) work on epistemic injustice highlights two forms of injustice through which individuals' capacities as knowers can be dismissed. The first is testimonial injustice, through which the utterances, lived experiences and testimonies of an individual or group are deemed to be irrelevant, untrustworthy and, therefore, dismissible. The second is hermeneutical injustice, whereby there is an intelligibility deficit between the one sharing their knowledge and the other receiving it; their way of uttering and explaining their experience cannot be understood within the frame of the interpretive resources available to the hearer. Crucially, these injustices are not only or simply the product of interactions between individuals, but are produced socially, through the social norms and practices of social systems which give rise to various forms of epistemic marginalisation (Anderson, 2012). Social norms and practices shape the dominant interpretive resources available and, therefore, the types of testimony heard and taken seriously.

Work on epistemologies of ignorance, developed in dialogue between philosophers of race and feminist epistemologists (e.g. Sullivan and Tuana, 2007), helps to illustrate the violence contained within the establishment of dominant ways of knowing. Charles W. Mills, exploring the workings of knowledge in maintaining white supremacy in the United States introduces the concept of 'white ignorance,' which enables a blindness to and denial of "the long history of structural discrimination that has left whites with the differential resources they have today, and all of its consequent advantages in negotiating opportunity structures" (2007: 20). Via the management of memory, the violent histories of genocide, land theft and enslavement in the United States are unseen and therefore their effects on contemporary opportunity structures and the maintenance of white advantage easily denied or obfuscated. Power is maintained therefore, in part through the ignorance of those who benefit from the historical processes that continue to confer those benefits unequally.

Theorisation on disposability (Evans and Giroux, 2015), necropolitics (Mbembe, 2019; Mbembe, 2008) and social death (Cacho, 2012) are also useful in illustrating the profound violence of dehumanisation that underpins capitalist economies. Lisa Marie Cacho, drawing on the work of critical geographer Ruth Wilson Gilmore and others, describes the 'violence of value' through which state-sanctioned violence, including via the law, determines the morality, deservingness, humanity and inclusion of individuals in racialised, sexualised and spacialised ways. Gilmore conceptualises racism as "a practice of abstraction, a death-dealing displacement of difference into hierarchies" (2002). Cacho, in focusing on the criminalisation of racialised migrants as rightless and unprotected shows how the neoliberal state creates spaces of social death, wherein individuals are "legally recognised as rightless" (p. 7). This removal of the inalienable right of humanity, is a cultural process by which "those with social privilege often still interpret economic, social, political and/or legal integration as a (conditional) "gift"" (p. 7) rather than an unconditional part of being human or, to paraphrase Françoise Vergès (2021) how normalisation and naturalisation of injustice and violence fabricates lives that do not matter and makes this banal.

These ideas work in different ways with ideas of power as productive, in the categorisation and hierarchization of human life, in the production and erasure of knowledge and knowers, the maintenance of (wilful) ignorance, and via the neoliberal, capitalist state's power to "define life" and the "status of living-dead" (Mbembe, 2008). In dialogue with Galtung's concept of symbolic/cultural violence, they provide theoretical explanation of the productive processes through which violence is exercised socially and culturally as well as reflected in cultural artefacts and institutions. They help to highlight both the depth and effects of cultural violence, and show how these can include but also transcend the symbols that normalise violence in media, religion, cultural norms and practices, etc. (as per Galtung's list).

Cultural violence is inherent with the framing of the so called learning crisis. Children, including up to 85% of children in Sub-Saharan Africa are framed according to what they lack – including "age appropriate skills" and the ability "to read or understand a basic story" (Save Our Future, 2020: 12). They are, as discussed above, 'learning the least'. This deficit framing ignores the knowledge, skills, resilience and agency that children do have – including for navigating violence in their daily educational experiences – and frames them against their failed future productivity (World Bank, 2018). Discussions of the learning crisis pay limited attention to the epistemic injustice in what and how many learners study. For example, European languages imposed during colonialism which may not be the same languages that learners speak at home are the primary or indeed only language of instruction in many contexts (Erling et al., 2021; Skutnabb-Kangas et al., 2014; Phillipson, 1996). Teachers have often also had to switch to teaching in European colonial languages with limited training, support or fluency. Curricula and pedagogy are still influenced by colonial education structures, often failing to represent or undermining indigenous knowledge systems and prioritising Eurocentric understandings of what constitutes valuable knowledge and skills (Tikly, 2020). Curricula contribute to and maintain historical narratives that silence, erase or devalue the experiences, memories and meaningful figures and events of minoritized groups, contributing both to the maintenance of structural ignorance and to the exclusion of learners' lived realities (Sriprakash et al., 2020; Paulson, 2015; Mills, 2007). "Hundreds of millions of children" are framed as reaching adulthood "without even the most basic of skills" and unable to "build a fulfilling career" (World Bank, 2018). In failing to contribute to the human capital of their nations, these learners (often treated as an undistinguishable mass rather than as individual children) are made disposable (and futureless) via the learning crisis discourse.

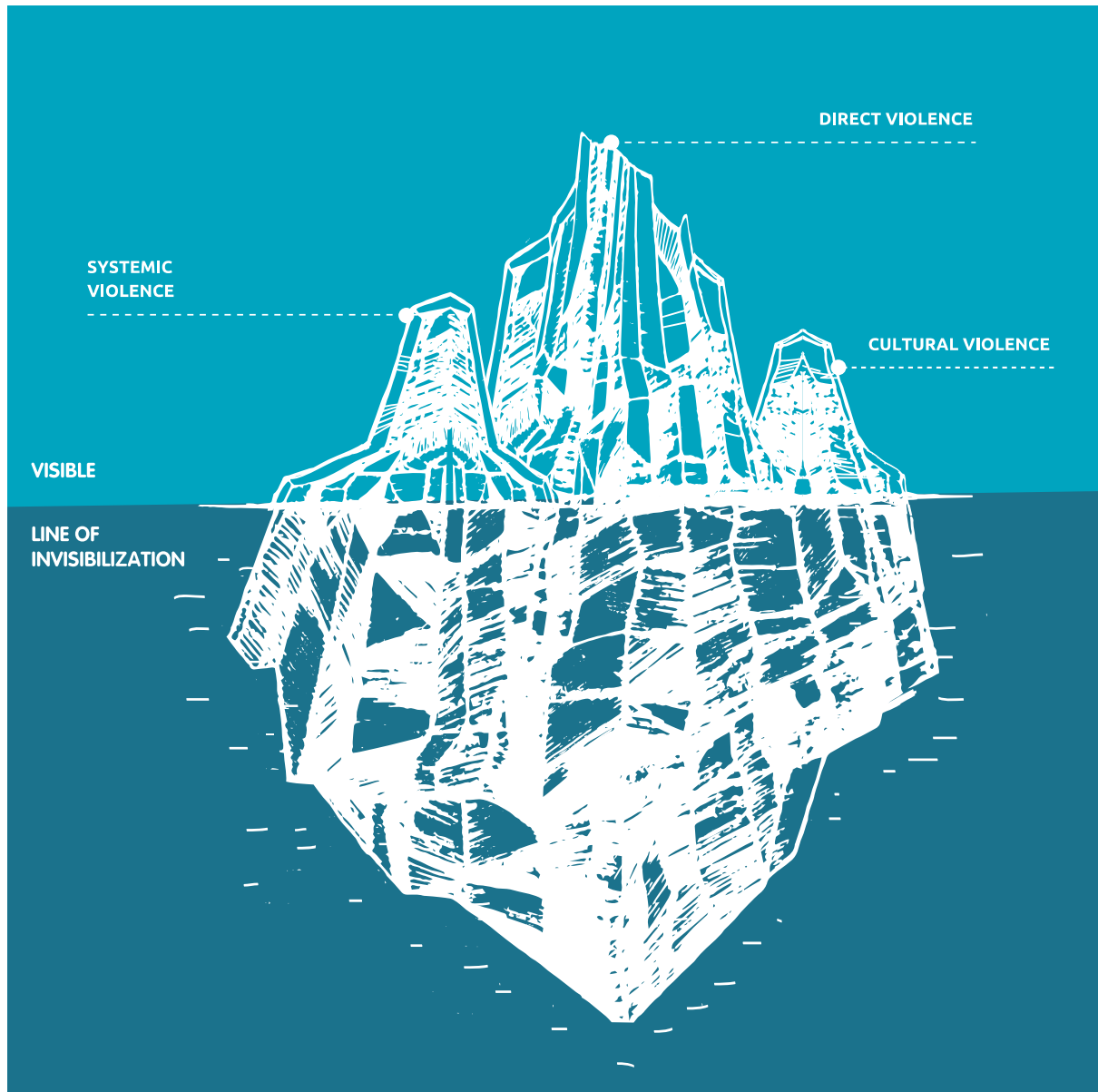
The 'invisibilisation' of violence

The table below summarises the violence inherent in 'global learning crisis' (turned 'catastrophe' due to the Covid-19 pandemic (Save of Future, 2020). Like much of the violence perpetuated via education, the violence described in the table below is often not seen, recognized or acknowledged by those not immediately affected by it.

	Direct violence	Systemic violence	Cultural violence
Learning crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effects of armed conflict (big C conflict) • Everyday violence (little C conflict), including gendered, sexualised, racialised and ableist violence and drugs-related violence • Corporal punishment • Bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unequal life chances and opportunities to flourish institutionalised via education • Effects of patriarchy, white supremacy, capitalism and coloniality in and on education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Epistemic violence, including via language of instruction, curricula and pedagogy • Management of memory and devaluing of historical narratives • Learners made disposable and futureless

The degree to which violence permeates education, illustrated via our example of the so called learning crisis, and the degree to which this is absent from much discussion suggests a revision to Galtung’s violence triangle in relation to the visibility (or lack thereof) of all forms of violence. Recall that for Galtung direct violence is visible, enabled and normalized by what he understood as the invisible forms of violence, namely structural and cultural violence. To describe this, Galtung used the metaphor of an iceberg, with direct violence as the visible tip. We return to this metaphor with our revised iceberg model, below. Our iceberg, however, shows that all forms of violence (direct, systemic and cultural) are visible (or can be made visible) and also are invisibilised by social processes. For example, the effects of systemic violence are evident in the disparities in opportunities and learning outcomes available to different groups. Similarly, the effects of cultural violence are evident in any appraisal of the Eurocentric bias of many curricula around the world or in the harmful effects on educational outcomes for groups of learners expected to learn in a second or indeed third language. Children held in cages at borders is clear evidence of the processes of dehumanisation and social death described above. We contend it is no longer theoretically useful, empirically accurate or ethically acceptable to think of these forms of violence as invisible¹.

Diagram three: The invisibilisation of violence: a revised iceberg model of violence



Importantly, violence of all forms is visible through lived experience of it – ignoring these lived experiences as invisible or illegible is a form of epistemic and cultural violence as we’ve discussed above. This form of erasure of lived experience of violence is implicit in Galtung’s writings in the assumption that cultural violence ‘feels normal or feels right’ to his reader. Invisibilisation of violence – its normalization, its tomorrow horizon, the wilful ignorance of it, its everydayness, the acceptance of the denial of life for those deemed disposable – is an exercise of power and part of the harm that violence produces. In our revised iceberg, the water is not a break between the visible and invisible forms of violence, but rather a fluid reminder of that invisibilisation of violence is an active and power-laden process. Theoretical and analytical attentiveness to violence in research can help to visibilise violence and challenge the ways in which it is made invisible in the everyday and in analysis. Water levels

can rise and fall and violence will be more or less visible for individuals and groups due to their lived experiences or ignorance of it.

Conclusion

We have presented two models in this paper. One way of conceiving the relationship between them is to think of diagram two, which presents an ontology of violence, as a transverse cross-section of the iceberg presented in diagram 3. The cross section shows the nature of the relationships between the three forms of violence that make up the ice-berg and the wider environment. These represent the two main theoretical contributions that arise from our efforts to revitalise Galtung's work and draw attention to the prevalence of violence in education. The first is to highlight the depth ontology of violence allowing for a fuller appreciation of the nature and causes of violence and the multiple scales upon which it operates. The second theoretical contribution is around the visibility and invisibilisation of violence. The revised iceberg model insists that not only are all three forms of violence connected and may contribute and reinforce each other, but all three are visible, including through the lived experience of individuals with these different forms of violence. Likewise, all three can be invisibilised, normalised and made to feel inevitable and unavoidable via actions of power that maintain and entrench violence and its effects. Bringing the two models together helps us to show the degree to which violence permeates education – including the current global priority to address the learning crisis – and is normalised through it – including through the invisibilisation of direct, systemic and cultural violence as causes of the learning crisis.

The framework has a number of implications for policy, research and practice in education and we hope will be taken forward, critiqued and expanded upon to help extend analysis of violence in order, ultimately, to acknowledge and reduce its effects on learning experiences. The framework assists in understanding the truly global nature of the crisis in education as all three forms of violence impact on education systems in high, middle, and low-income contexts. This goes beyond the narrow focus on low- and middle-income contexts that characterises discourses about the learning crisis. It is also important for pointing towards the causes of the crisis and how education systems might play a role in addressing these. It draws attention to the role of educators in recognising and engaging head on with the effects of violence. It also demands that policy makers seek to address the roots of violence, though of course these cannot be addressed through education alone. However, it does require directly confronting the role of educational institutions in producing and reproducing inequalities based on class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability etc. It also requires taking account of the transformative potential of education to produce learners that have the transformative agency required to realise wider social and environmental change.

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