# PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSE STUDENT IDENTITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

# INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION TEACHING AND LEARNING

Series Editor: Patrick Blessinger

Recent Volumes:

# PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSE STUDENT IDENTITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON EQUITY AND INCLUSION

EDITED BY

## JAIMIE HOFFMAN

*University of Wisconsin La Crosse, USA*
*Noodle Partners, USA*

## PATRICK BLESSINGER

*International HETL Association, USA*
*St. John's University, USA*

## MANDLA MAKHANYA

*University of South Africa, South Africa*

Created in partnership with the
International Higher Education Teaching and
Learning Association



https://www.hetl.org/



United Kingdom – North America – Japan
India – Malaysia – China

**Reprints and permissions service**
Contact: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

ISOQAR certified
Management System,
awarded to Emerald
for adherence to
Environmental
standard
ISO 14001:2004.

**ISOQAR**
REGISTERED

Certificate Number 1985
ISO 14001

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# CONTENTS

# LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

| | |
|---|---|
| *Patrick Blessinger* | St. John's University and HETL Association, USA |
| *Laura N. Cobb* | American University of the Caribbean School of Medicine, Cupecoy, St. Maarten |
| *Diana Galvez* | University of Iowa, USA |
| *Carla Gonzalez* | University of Iowa, USA |
| *Jessica Graber* | University of Texas at San Antonio, USA |
| *Sandra J. Gruberg* | Pierce County Coalition for Developmental Disabilities, USA |
| *Maureen P. M. Hall* | Ross University School of Medicine, Roseau, Dominica, West Indies |
| *Jaimie Hoffman* | Ventura, USA |
| *Melanie Jacobson* | Ross University School of Medicine, Roseau, Dominica, West Indies |
| *Christopher Linski* | Colorado Technical University, USA |
| *Leslie Ann Locke* | University of Iowa, USA |
| *Mandla Makhanya* | The University of South Africa, South Africa |
| *Malaika McKee* | University of Illinois, USA |
| *Pamela O'Callaghan* | University of South Florida, USA |
| *Naomi Jeffery Petersen* | Central Washington University, USA |
| *William Trent* | University of Illinois, USA |
| *Anke Twigg-Flesner* | University Centre Hartpury, UK |
| *Rashim Wadhwa* | Central University of Kashmir, India |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Catherine Ward* | California State University, USA |
| *Shakoor Ward* | Ward Room 2.0, LLC, USA |
| *Keith B. Wilson* | Southern Illinois University, USA |
| *HyeJin Tina Yeo* | University of Illinois, USA |

# SERIES EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

## INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION
## TEACHING AND LEARNING

The purpose of this series is to publish current research and scholarship on innovative teaching and learning practices in higher education. The series is developed around the premise that teaching and learning is more effective when instructors and students are actively and meaningfully engaged in the teaching–learning process.

The main objectives of this series are to:

(1) present how innovative teaching and learning practices are being used in higher education institutions around the world across a wide variety of disciplines and countries,
(2) present the latest models, theories, concepts, paradigms, and frameworks that educators should consider when adopting, implementing, assessing, and evaluating innovative teaching and learning practices, and
(3) consider the implications of theory and practice on policy, strategy, and leadership.

This series will appeal to anyone in higher education who is involved in the teaching and learning process from any discipline, institutional type, or nationality. The volumes in this series will focus on a variety of authentic case studies and other empirical research that illustrates how educators from around the world are using innovative approaches to create more effective and meaningful learning environments.

Innovation teaching and learning is any approach, strategy, method, practice, or means that has been shown to improve, enhance, or transform the teaching–learning environment. Innovation involves doing things differently or in a novel way in order to improve outcomes. In short, innovation is a positive change. With respect to teaching and learning, innovation is the implementation of new or improved educational practices that result in improved educational and learning outcomes. This innovation can be any positive change related to teaching, curriculum, assessment, technology, or other tools, programs, policies, or processes that leads to improved educational and learning outcomes. Innovation can occur in institutional development, program development, professional development, or learning development.

The volumes in this series will not only highlight the benefits and theoretical frameworks of such innovations through authentic case studies and other empirical research but also look at the challenges and contexts associated with

implementing and assessing innovative teaching and learning practices. The volumes represent all disciplines from a wide range of national, cultural, and organizational contexts. The volumes in this series will explore a wide variety of teaching and learning topics, such as active learning, integrative learning, transformative learning, inquiry-based learning, problem-based learning, meaningful learning, blended learning, creative learning, experiential learning, lifelong and lifewide learning, global learning, learning assessment and analytics, student research, faculty and student learning communities, etc.

This series brings together distinguished scholars and educational practitioners from around the world to disseminate the latest knowledge on innovative teaching and learning scholarship and practices. The authors offer a range of disciplinary perspectives from different cultural contexts. This series provides a unique and valuable resource for instructors, administrators, and anyone interested in improving and transforming teaching and learning.

<div align="right">

Patrick Blessinger
Founder, Executive Director, and Chief Research Scientist,
International HETL Association

</div>

# INTRODUCTION TO PERSPECTIVES ON DIVERSE STUDENT IDENTITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Patrick Blessinger, Jaimie Hoffman and Mandla Makhanya

## ABSTRACT

*The chapters in this book focus on student experiences in higher education and how those experiences shape their identity and influence their academic success. This volume focuses on the key factors in identity development and how student experiences in formal, nonformal, and informal learning activities help shape their identities. This volume discusses the main theories and concepts involved in identity formation and how educators can increase their understanding and importance of identity in education. This volume argues that all forms of learning can create a more engaging and democratically oriented student experience. This volume also argues that inclusive leadership is an important factor in cultivating a rich and dynamic learning environment and bringing about greater equity and inclusion in teaching and learning.*

 **Keywords:** Inclusive education; student identity; higher education; teaching in higher education; student support; international education

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to establish a more coherent understanding of the current movement, and consequent reforms, for cultivating and promoting a more diverse and equitable environment in higher education (HE). As demand for HE continues to rise around the world, educators continue to respond to a more complex educational environment and a more diverse student population, more demands and expectations are placed on colleges and universities to address a wider array of social and economic problems and issues, and educational leaders and faculty continue to struggle with how best to meet the contemporary needs of all students. This not only impacts both academic policies and practices like teaching and learning but also co-curricular policies and practices. Thus, how institutional leaders, at a policy level, address students' needs and concerns, to how faculty, at a teaching and learning level, address students' needs and concerns, has become one of the chief issues in education around the world.

## *Defining Identity*

Identity, like many human qualities such as motivation or intelligence or satisfaction, is a theoretical construct – a proposed quality of a person or a group that cannot be observed or measured directly (Cronbach & Meehl, 1955). As such, a construct must be understood by way of a theory, model, or framework. In educational research, a reasonable and plausible construct helps to explain a phenomenon and therefore helps to shape relevant theories, models, and frameworks.

Because of its complexity and intertwined personal and group characteristics, questions and issues dealing with identity are often at the center of debate across a wide range of fields and disciplines. Identity can be defined at multiple levels – international, national, group, and individual. Identity can also be defined by macro characteristics – politically, economically, socially, and culturally – and defined by micro characteristics – race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religion, economic status, occupation, and many personal attributes. In addition, the term *identity* can take on varied meanings depending on the academic discipline and the theoretical lens through which it is viewed and analyzed, say for instance, political science versus sociology versus anthropology versus psychology versus philosophy, and so on.

Thus, although there can be considerable overlap between different characteristics of identity, personal qualities (self-identity) can, nonetheless, be distinguished from social qualities (group-identity). As a unique human quality, identity implies the capacity for self-awareness and personal reflection (Leary & Tangey, 2003). One's identity can, therefore, be viewed as the totality of one's awareness and concept of oneself; identity (one's unique sum total of human characteristics and qualities) is closely aligned with one's personality (one's unique combination of thoughts, feelings, and behaviors).

Since identity is concerned with one's personal self-awareness, it follows that identity formation (individuation) is in a continual state of development, although one's identity may develop faster during certain stages of life, like

childhood and adolescence. In this process, confusion or uncertainty may arise (especially during the early stages of life) as one evolves into a unique person. One's personal identity is shaped, in large part, by one's biology, by one's culture, by one's life experiences, by one's group memberships, and other social affiliations such as family, school, religion, profession, vocation, and the like. Identity is both personal and relational (i.e., in relation to other people, environments, experiences, etc.) (Weinreich & Saunderson, 2003).

As one's identity (and personality) tends to become more stable over time, one's sense of self as a unique agent (in relation to others) increases. Hence, during the socialization process one evolves from a relatively undifferentiated individual toward a more differentiated individual. Thus, identify formation can be viewed as a continual, relational process that develops over time within a broad and complex milieu of different factors. Since personal identity is a construct composed of several intertwined factors, a person can be said to possess multiple identities such as, racial identity, ethnic identity, cultural identity, national identity, socioeconomic class identity, religious identity, sexual identity, gender identity, peer identity, age identity, lifestyle identity, professional identity, disability identity, and so forth. Each characteristic becomes an attribute of identity formation. In turn, one's personal beliefs, values, attitudes, habits, and mindset are shaped by these factors, and in turn, influence one's behavior and choices.

In spite of the increased and far-reaching attention being paid to the topic of identity, the idea of identity still remains, at best, difficult to understand because of the many interacting factors. Thus, an understanding of identity depends on its theoretical and disciplinary viewpoints and the intersectionality of different personal and social characteristics that interact in complex and sometimes unforeseen ways. Given the importance of identity as a theoretical construct and as an outgrowth of personal and social meaning making processes, it is important that educators continue to analyze its importance in order to help shape sound educational policy and practices that meets the needs and concerns of all constituents in the educational process.

## Identity and Learning

Humans are unique among species in the animal kingdom in that only they possess the ability for higher-order critical and creative thinking and for complex meaning making (Goldberg, 2001). Colleges, universities, and other forms of educational institutions have been established by societies to transmit knowledge and skills as well as reproduce culture from one generation to the next. Gredler (2009, p. 432) notes that,

> the relationship between knowledge and society has changed from the early centuries of civilization, in which knowledge was a privilege of the few, to the current open access to vast domains of knowledge.

Given the importance of human learning and the need to produce learning in every generation, modern societies have developed education as a social institution, just as other political, economic, and cultural institutions have been

developed to help facilitate human social evolution. As such, institutions are social structures developed to establish order and norms for human behavior. Institutions establish social order by way of values, policies, rules, customs, symbols, and related practices that are transmitted from one generation to the next (Vygotsky, 1962, 1978, 1979). Through institutions (including education), society learns from previous generations in a highly effective and efficient way. Thus, a major challenge for any educational institution is how to meet the contemporary needs of current students while, at the same time, laying the foundation to meet the anticipated needs of future students.

Educational institutions use the teaching–learning process to achieve these goals. Learning is a complex process, and many theories, models, and frameworks have been developed to describe how learning works and the different aspects of learning. For instance, one way to describe learning is by using categories such as formal learning, nonformal learning, and informal learning, to better understand how identity is shaped via these different modes of human learning.

Also, as noted by Kovbasyuk and Blessinger (2013), several branches of learning theories exist, including behaviorist theories (e.g., Skinner, 1953; Thorndike, 1913; Watson, 1924), cognitive theories (e.g., Lewin, 1936; Tolman, 1932), interactionist theories (e.g., Bandura, 1986; Gagne, 1965; Piaget, 1963; Vygotsky, 1962), and more recently, academic motivation theories that includes expectancy value theory, goal orientation theory, and attribution theory. These theories tend to focus on psychological processes of learning, but more recently, the foci have centered on neurological and sociocultural-historical aspects of learning as well as on the linguistic and communicative aspects of learning. The current focus in understanding the complex nature of human learning centers on the interplay of personal and social factors to better understand learning from a more holistic and interdisciplinary context (Gredler, 2009).

Finally, the focus on understanding learning has shifted from laboratory experiments and mechanistic models (e.g., computer processing as a metaphor) to authentic classroom settings and more naturalistic metaphors (Kovbasyuk & Blessinger, 2013). As such, social learning theory and situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger, 1991) focus on identity development within the context of social participation as a key factor in learning. This theory posits that identity development occurs when individuals engage in the practices of the social communities (i.e., a community of practice) that one belong to and actively participates in.

In situated learning theory, learning, and therefore identity development, is situated within a particular social context (i.e., in relation to one's interactions with others). Thus, identity is both personal and social at the same time and develops over time. This implies that situated learning theory overlaps with other learning theories and extends our understanding of learning as involving identity formation. Wenger (1998, p. 5) defines identity as "a way of talking about how learning changes who we are and creates personal histories of becoming in the context of our communities."

Thus, identity can be viewed as one's own personal histories of becoming and belonging that is continuously formed through *negotiation of meaning*. Wenger further posits that meaning making occurs through two processes: participation

and reification. Participation is the process of participating in one's communities of practice and involves acting, feeling, communicating, and belonging. In short, a person's whole being is involved when we engage in participation. Reification is the process of giving meaningful form to our experiences. These forms take the shape of abstractions and other mental models such as symbols, metaphors, stories, conceptions, or ideals that we assign specific meanings to. As the identity is developed, individuals develop a unique belief system and a greater self-awareness of themselves in relation to others.

Thus, this view of learning asserts that learning occurs when students participate in their educational communities of practice and, as they participate, they become members of the community and, as they negotiate meaning of their experiences, their identity is developed and, as they develop an identity, they become more complete beings and self-regulating agents. Of course, learning and meaning making is not restricted to just communities of practices (i.e., learning occurs in any social setting – family, friends, clubs, and significant others) but such communities help increase our understanding of ourselves through our social interactions. This theory emphasizes the importance of social settings and social interactions in the learning process.

With respect to the importance of meaning making in the learning process, Kovbasyuk and Blessinger (2013) provide a detailed discussion of meaning making and learning and the different dimensions of meaning making, including the phenomenological, philosophical, psychological, and sociological dimensions. Their theory of learning as meaning making views meaning making as sense-making, as intentional, as critical dialogue with self and others, as experiential learning, and as being and becoming. Their theory of learning as meaning making extends Lave and Wenger's theory by focusing on holism, self-regulation, and the self-creating personal life–world. In sum, both theories hold that learning and identity development interact through the meaning making process and as an ongoing set of processes. As such, learning involves the whole person, it involves the cultivation of identity, and it involves the interaction of both personal and social worlds. In short, from this view, the ultimate objective of learning is to produce meaning in all its forms and at all levels.

## College Student Identity

Student identity influences their worldview, and as a consequence, helps shape how they learn and how they experience learning. To reiterate, student identity is shaped primarily by her/his personal experiences (i.e., race, ethnicity, nationality, gender, sex, and class) and one's sociocultural experiences (i.e., shared values, beliefs, customs, language, and schooling, among other factors). The universalization of HE and lifelong learning have resulted in a growing diversity of students among all levels and institutional types within HE. This growing diversity challenges universities to become more equitable and inclusive in how students experience their time at university (Shahriar & Syed, 2017).

While student diversity, in terms of demographic makeup, alone does not automatically guarantee that the educational experiences will be richer and

more beneficial to all students, it is nonetheless a necessary starting point. In the chapter titled "The United States Military Veteran: A Look at Their College Experience and Equitable and Inclusionary Practices" by Catherine Ward (this volume, Chapter 3), the author argues that institutions should replace the current deficit models of support with more equitable practices (i.e., the current paradigm places too much emphasis on students' individual and group characteristics and not enough on the role educators play in student achievement). Christopher Linski (this volume, Chapter 2) echoes this concern regarding student veterans and argues that HE institutions need to provide better support and accommodations for students with posttraumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injuries.

Identity development is an ongoing process that involves all aspects of a person's experiences. Student identity is formed through formal learning (i.e., curricular and cocurricular experiences) as well as nonformal learning (i.e., extracurricular) and informal learning (i.e., noncurricular). Some learning experiences such as study-abroad or service-learning or field-based learning experiences often provide opportunities for all three types of learning but if academic credit is awarded for the activity, it should be classified as a curricular-based activity. However, given the overlap between these types of learning, it can be difficult to separate some learning activities into mutually exclusive learning categories. All three types of learning occur continuously as part of any student's daily learning experience.

On the spectrum of learning activities, formal learning activities consist of those educational experiences that are part of a highly structured curriculum, assessments and grades are awarded, facilitated by an instructor, and lead to a credential such as a certificate or degree. These learning activities are classroom-based educational experiences, whether face to face or hybrid or online. Nonformal learning activities are relatively less structured and less curricular oriented. They are out-of-classroom experiences that are supported by the university, but grades are not typically awarded and not part of a certificate or degree program. Service-learning, for example, may be formal or nonformal depending on how it is integrated into a course and depending if it is a required and graded (mandatory vs voluntary) part of a course. Informal learning experiences are those activities that are not curricular or course-based and not graded. These activities may or may not be supported by the university, and they are voluntary and driven by the students. Social clubs, athletic programs, and the like are examples of this type of informal learning (Marsick & Walkins, 2001).

Nonformal and informal learning may be just as important to developing a student's identity as formal learning since identity development is as much a social and psychological experience as a cognitive one. As noted by Taylor and Cranton (2012), a person's self-perspective and self-identity develops when one engages in experiences that allow them to challenge their long-held assumptions, beliefs, and mental models. These types of educational experiences are most profound when they occur in relation to others who may hold different assumptions and worldviews. Furthermore, Freire (1998) maintains that meaningful transformation occurs when students are taught to critically think about the assumptions, beliefs, and worldviews in which they operate since it is only through this

rigorous examination of self and others that one can begin to overcome oppressive systems and begin to cultivate a more equitable society. Although informal and nonformal are more difficult to assess and evaluate, they are, nonetheless, just as important as formal systems in identity development.

## SUMMARY

In summary, it is the totality of a student's learning experiences and their interactions with others that help shape their identity. When it comes to identity development, nonformal and informal learning activities such as student groups and social clubs can be just as effective as formal learning activities in challenging students to think rigorously and critically about themselves and the world they live in. Therefore, a diverse offering of all types of learning can enhance a more engaging, democratically oriented student experience (Blessinger & Anchan, 2015). In addition, inclusive leadership (Stefani & Blessinger, 2017) that promotes and fosters student engagement in all its forms is also an important ingredient to bringing about equity in learning. As such, bringing together students of different backgrounds and experiences is key to cultivating a rich and dynamic learning environment.

## CHAPTER OVERVIEWS

In "Accessibility and Acceptance for University Students with Diverse Abilities," by Naomi Jeffery Petersen and Sandra J. Gruberg, the authors describes how the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was intended to eliminate discrimination toward people with disabilities in the workforce, public services, transportation, and other areas of life and work. The goal of ADA was to motivate private and public organizations create workplace environments and practices that were more accessible. The author argues, however, that the reality of people with disabilities (PWDs) often did not meet the goals of ADA, even on university campuses and academic programs. Within this context, the author examines the practices made by one American university to eliminate the physical, social, and academic barriers for students as required by ADA. The author discusses how these efforts helped create a voice for PWDs and the disability rights movement through the university's Accessibility Studies Program.

In "Assisting Student Veterans with Hidden Wounds: Evaluating Student Support in US Higher Education," by Christopher Linski, the author presents a phenomenological analysis of student veteran perceptions and experiences of HE institutions to provide sufficient student support programs and related accommodations for students with posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and traumatic brain injuries (TBI). The author examines data collected through semistructured interviews to answer the research question: What are the traits of student support programs in US HE institutions that assist in the successful degree completion of student veterans coping with hidden wounds? The author discusses the major

themes of the data analysis and the improvements required to better assist student veterans with PTSD and TBI.

In "The United States Military Veteran: A Look at Their College Experience and Equitable and Inclusionary Practices," by Catherine Ward, the author discusses how American HE institutions have experienced a large increase in student veteran enrollment due to the 9/11 GI Bill. The author explains that colleges and universities have struggled with supporting veterans in their transition from military life to college life. As a result, the author argues that many student veterans remain at the margins of college life, and as such, the issue is a matter of equity and inclusion that must be addressed. The author explains that the related academic literature shows that student veteran support must include greater awareness of the student veteran experience, institutional barriers to access. To this end, the author argues that institutions should replace deficit models of support with more equitable practices. The author also argues that the current paradigm of student success over emphasizes students' individual and group characteristics and overlooks the role that educators play in student achievement.

In "They Say They Value Diversity, but I Don't See it": Academic and Social Experiences of First Generation Latinx Students at a Predominately White Midwest Institution," by Carla Gonzalez, Jessica Graber, Diana Galvez, and Leslie Ann Locke, the authors examine the academic and social experiences of first-generation undergraduate Latinx students a Predominately White Institution (PWI) in the Midwest. The results of their study revealed that these students considered the Latinx student organization to be a significant resource for their social integration into the university, these students believed the university could do more in promoting ethnic student groups and their interests across campus, and these students believed the university treats all Latinx students as one homogenous group. The authors argue that these themes suggest that efforts to make PWIs more inclusive may benefit from ethnic student organizations and that PWIs could benefit by integrating Latinx student perspectives into institutional diversity policy, priorities, and programming that values multifaceted Latinx identities.

In "The Influence of Socioeconomic Status on Perceptions of Persistence among African American Students at Major United States Universities," by Shakoor Ward and Keith B. Wilson, the authors examine how psychosocial variables and socioeconomic status (SES) impacts persistence of African-American students at major public universities in the USA. The results of their study suggest that students from higher SES backgrounds possess the characteristics needed for persistence than students from lower SES backgrounds. This finding is consistent with the academic literature that shows that students from families with higher income levels and parental education persist at higher rates and earn higher grades.

In "EYES THEORY: A Proposed Racialization and Developmental Identity Model for Understanding Concepts of Race for International Students of Color Studying in US Higher Education Institutions," by HyeJin Tina Yeo, Malaika McKee, and William Trent, the authors present a new theory, EYES, which explains the psycho-sociological process of identity formation that occurs to international students who study abroad in geographical spaces in which race is

historically contested between a dominant white ideology with blackness as the dichotomic relationship. EYES theory may be understood by recognizing "eyes" as a metaphor for appraisals of self and others and social perceptions of racial stereotypes based on phenotypic traits. EYES theory proposes that social geographies have a white/black racial discourse that creates a racialization process. The authors argue that although their chapter focuses on experiences of international students in the United States, the implications of their new theory could have applications for other geographies where blackness and whiteness are the parameters for understanding a dialectic of white supremacy.

In "Failure Can Lead to Success When Remediation Builds Resiliency: How Struggling International Medical Students Gain Entry into US Graduate Medical Education Programs," by Pamela O'Callaghan, Maureen P. M. Hall, Laura N. Cobb, and Melanie Jacobson, the authors assert that US citizens attending international medical schools (US IMGs) are more likely to be of Hispanic, Black American, or Asian descent compared to US medical students. The authors argue that IMG students typically enter medical school with challenging academic backgrounds such as academic and clinical deficiencies. Thus, the authors argue that addressing these deficits through remediation interventions is critical to the student's performance as a physician. Within this context, the study measured the resiliency, self-efficacy, and self-compassion of IMGs who completed remediation while in medical school. The results of the study indicate older students experienced failure more often and were found to have significantly higher levels of self-compassion compared to younger students. The study also that the more remediation interventions students were provided, the more likely they were satisfied with their overall remediation experience and more likely to overcome their deficits.

In "The End of Lifelong Learning – Where Have All the Mature Undergraduate Students Gone? A *Literature* Review and Practical Recommendations from a Case Study in England," by Anke Twigg-Flesner, the author discusses how the number of mature students across England's HE sector has been declining since the rise in tuition fees in 2012. The author argues that mature students play a major role in upskilling the national workforce to provide services and skills currently sourced from the EU. The author argues that mature students can add to existing industry experiences, knowledge, and skills. English college and universities are changing the ways they provide support to mature students. The author argues that it is essential that colleges and universities create a supportive community for mature students and that academic staff need to engage mature students with their younger peers.

In "From Planning to Realization: Who Goes? Who Stops? What Matters?" – Rashim Wadhwa – the author discusses how Indian HE is supposed to be the source of equal opportunities to all students irrespective of their life circumstances. In examining this ideal, the author argues that Indian HE inadvertently plays a critical role in recreating inequalities between groups, especially first-generation students. For instance, the author argues that first-generation students are confronted with a caste-based inequality as well as a deficiency in cultural and social capital. It is within this context that the author discusses the findings of

the study that indicate location, category, family income, academic achievement, stream of education, and social and cultural capital are the relevant factors influencing educational attainment of first-generation students.

# CONCLUSION

As mentioned previously, and as these chapters illustrate, moving toward a more inclusive and equitable teaching and learning environment implies that positive changes need to be made. To that end, this volume focuses on the salient factors in identity development and how student experiences in the teaching and learning process help shape their identities. This volume suggests that teaching and learning (including curricula, instructional, and assessment design) can be designed to create more democratically oriented student experiences. Thus, inclusive leadership is a key factor in cultivating such educational environments.

# REFERENCES

Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social-cognitive theory*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Blessinger, P., & Anchan, J. P. (2015). *Democratizing higher education: International comparative perspectives*. New York, NY: Routledge Publishing.

Cronbach, L. J., & Meehl, P. E. (1955). Construct validity in psychological tests. *Psychological Bulletin*, *52*, 281–302.

Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Gagne, R. M. (1965). *The conditions of learning.* New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Gredler, M. (2009). *Learning and instruction: Theory into practice*. New Jersey, NJ: Pearson.

Goldberg, E. (2001). The executive brain: Frontal lobes and the civilized mind. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Kovbasyuk, O., & Blessinger, P. (2013). *Meaning-centered education: International perspectives and explorations in higher education*. New York, NY: Routledge Publishing.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from http://qvole.org/comm146/undergrdpgs/plee1/pris/Postings/Entries/2013/3/16_Eventology_(WI_13)_files/lave.pdf

Leary, M. R., & Tangney, J. P. (2003). *Handbook of self and identity*. New York, NY: Guildford Press.

Lewin, K. (1936). *Principles of topological psychology.* New York, NY: McGraw Hill.

Marsick, V. J., & Watkins, K. E. (2001). Informal and incidental learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *2001*(89), 25–34.

Piaget, J. (1963). *The origins of intelligence in children.* New York, NY: Norton.

Shahriar, A., & Syed, G. K. (2017). *Student culture and identity in higher education.* Hershey, PA: IGI Global Publishing.

Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and human behavior.* New York, NY: Macmillan.

Stefani, L., & Blessinger, P. (2017). *Inclusive leadership in higher education: International perspectives and approaches.* New York, NY: Routledge Publishing.

Taylor, E. W., & Cranton, P. (2012). *The handbook of transformative learning: Theory, research, and practice*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Thorndike, E. L. (1913). *Educational psychology: Vol. II. The psychology of learning*. New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.

Tolman, E. C. (1932). *Purposive behavior in animals and men.* New York, NY: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1962). *Thought and language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press (Original work published in 1934).

Vygotsky, L.S. (1978). *Mind in Society. The development of higher psychological process.* Cambridge. MA: Harvard University Press.

Vygotsky, L.S. (1979). Consciousness as a problem in the psychology of behavior. *Soviet Psychology*, *17*(4), 3–35 (Original work published in 1924). DOI: 10.2753/RPO1061-040517043

Watson, J. B. (1924). *Behaviorism.* New York, NY: Norton.

Weinreich, P., & Saunderson, W. (Eds.). (2003). *Analysing identity: Cross-cultural, societal and clinical contexts*. London: Routledge.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning, and identity.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.