



INTELLECTUAL OUTPUT-1

COUNTRY SPECIFIC TEXT: GERMANY

INCLUSION AND CRITICAL DIVERSITY LITERACY IN GERMAN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The JoinMe2 project aims to develop and promote a diversity conscious professionalization of teachers at higher education institutions. Against this background, our paper focuses on inclusive education and diversity in the context of German higher education. In the first part of the contribution, we give a brief overview of the German higher education landscape and thereby the context in which we are discussing aspects of inclusion and diversity. This is followed by an introduction to the terms, approaches and concepts of inclusion, diversity and intersectionality, as an understanding of these multi-interpreted terms is the starting point for following considerations. Based on an extensive literature review, we then present German higher education discourses along the respective diversity categories: dis/ability, gender, sexual identity and race/ethnicity/culture. We present theory-based contributions as well as current studies that have inclusion and critical diversity in higher education as central research topics. The paper concludes with a summary and a reference to research, action and professionalization needs, that are derived from the literature review.

Keywords: Critical Diversity Literacy; Intersectionality; Teachers in Higher Education

1. Introduction

The education system in the Federal Republic of Germany is divided into six areas: pre-school education, primary education, secondary education level I, secondary education level II, tertiary education and continuing education (KMK, 2019). The higher education system, along with the vocational education system, is part of the area of 'tertiary education' and represents an essential pillar of vocational preparation, professionalization and the personal development of young adults (Solga, 2019, p. 597).

In Germany, institutions of higher education are mainly divided into universities, universities of applied sciences and colleges of the arts. These institutions are predominantly funded by the state. Furthermore, there are also higher education institutions led by the protestant and catholic churches and by private institutions. Most of the latter are universities of applied sciences (Hochschulkompass, o.J.).

According to the latest statistics of the Federal Ministry for Education and Research from 2021, there are 424 higher education institutions in Germany (Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, 2021). Over the last 20 years the number of students at German universities and universities of applied sciences has increased steadily. In 1999/2000 about 1.75 million students were enrolled in the winter semester, whereas in 2020/2021 almost 3 million students were matriculated. Both figures include German and international students (Statistisches Bundesamt [Destatis], 2021, p. 8). The rising number

is a result of growing educational accessibility due to different processes taking place in the German higher education system over the past decades. These processes can be summarized as internationalization, competitiveness, economization and employability. They result in educational expansion and hence increased heterogeneity (Banscherus et al., 2015; Dannenbeck & Dorrance, 2016; Karakaşoğlu, 2016; Knauf, 2016; Liebeskind, 2019; Lutz, 2013).

Due to the expanded access to higher education as well as the expansion of the universities of applied sciences, studying is now possible not only for those who passed the A-Levels (Abitur), but also for other students. There are three educational pathways leading into the higher education system (Leuze & Lörz, 2019). The traditional way to obtain the higher education entrance qualification is by means of the “first educational pathway” (Erster Bildungsweg) during the regular school period in secondary school (Gymnasium/Oberschule). Then there is the “second educational pathway” (Zweiter Bildungsweg) offering the possibility to obtain a university entrance qualification, i.e. usually part-time in evening school. For the so-called non-traditional students, the “third educational pathway” (Dritter Bildungsweg) offers an opportunity to enter the higher education system through the recognition of professional qualifications and competencies (Freitag, 2012). However, data from the biennial report “Education in Germany” (Bildung in Deutschland) shows that inequalities still exist in terms of access and successful study careers (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2018). The number of students from academic families is three times higher as the number of students without an academic family background. In European comparison, Germany is one of the countries with the lowest number of students from families without tertiary education. Only 3 percentage of the first-semester students enter the university on the third educational pathway and many of them drop out before completing their degrees (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2018, p. 157). Another group that experiences barriers and discrimination at German universities are racialized students (even if they are not internationals, but born and brought up in Germany), as the traditional university in Germany continues to ignore the reality of its diverse composition of students. Discrimination and exclusion of students have at least two problematic aspects. On the one hand, it violates democratic values of equal treatment and non-discrimination. On the other hand, it prevents students from succeeding in their studies and thus contradicts the genuine goal of a university to help students to obtain their degrees. Hence, debates on inclusion, especially inclusive higher education, and on diversity are more and more emerging and the resulting demands for inclusive teaching are becoming increasingly urgent. However, figures like the ones mentioned above are only available to a very limited extent in Germany. For example, German universities currently hardly collect any discrimination-relevant data on students and university staff. But actually, this is due to two reasons; first, to have a quantitative overview of the distribution, and second, to collect data on discrimination experiences, in order to be able to act accordingly. There are isolated surveys of universities that examine the experience of discrimination of university members, such as the University of Bielefeld (Berghan et al., 2016) or the University of Kiel (Klein & Schindler, 2016). Generally, there is a lack of differentiated quantitative data collection on university teachers and administrative university staff as well as qualitative studies “on the university as a lifeworld” and on biographical resources as well as network resources (Lutz, 2013).

In this article we provide an insight into the current discourse in Germany, which of course is not complete but at least will show some of the main discussions and research results in relation to relevant categories of discrimination. Following, we will first elaborate on the terms: *inclusion*, *diversity* and *intersectionality*. Based on an extensive literature review, we then present the German higher education discourse along the respective diversity categories of dis/ability, gender, sexual identity, and race/ethnicity/culture. Even though no clear line can be drawn between these categories and they are related to each other, we try to organize the article broadly along these blurry lines to meet the specifics of each. The research covering the topic of ‘dealing with

classism' in higher education in Germany is unfortunately too sparse. Thus, we omit this category from our overview, even though we consider it urgently necessary to generate more scientific findings on this topic as well, since socioeconomically disadvantaged persons are still significantly less likely to study and to successfully complete their studies. For elaborating more on the respective discourses, we will present theory-based contributions as well as current studies that have inclusion and critical diversity in higher education as central research topics. The paper concludes with a summary and a reference to research, action and professionalization needs derived from the literature review.

2. Inclusion, Diversity and Intersectionality

Especially within the last 10 years, *inclusion* has become a popular term along with the notions of 'heterogeneity', 'diversity' (Hericks, 2021) and 'difference' (Arens et al., 2013; Budde et al., 2020; More & Ratković, 2020), which have been a topic of discussion since the 90's. A multitude of different understandings, concepts and theoretical frameworks exist for these terms, so that there is a lack of a common understanding.

The concept of inclusion has received increased attention in Germany, especially since the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in 2009 (Biewer & Schütz, 2016). By ratifying the Convention, the Federal Government and the Federal States have committed themselves to implementing it. In Article 24 "Education" (CRPD), the signing states agree to ensure an inclusive education system that includes all levels and to guarantee opportunities for lifelong learning. This so-called "*narrow*" understanding of inclusion is explicitly directed at persons with disabilities and aims at their equal and full participation in society by removing structural, constructional and attitudinal barriers. The CRPD does not represent a special right of persons with disabilities. Nevertheless, like the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of Women, it is based on general human rights, highlighting discriminations that persons with disabilities experience in particular, and thus providing a legal basis for reducing such discriminations. In addition to this narrow understanding, there is a "*broad*" understanding of the term inclusion that refers to marginalised groups in society in general (Budde et al., 2020). This broad understanding also focuses on all people and lines of difference, without taking into account the power relations within which differences become a relevant factor (Biewer & Schütz, 2016; Lindmeier & Lütje-Klose, 2015).

At institutions of higher education, the concept of 'inclusion' is contested, too. Basically, it is about reducing barriers for students, but the interpretations of the target group differ. There are three main differing concepts of inclusion at German universities and thus three different target groups (Knauf, 2016): (1) Inclusion as reducing barriers for students with disabilities, (2) inclusion as opening up to and recognizing diversity, and (3) inclusion as comprehensive university development. The first approach aims to reduce barriers for students with disabilities, which higher education institutions are obliged to do since the ratification of the CRPD by the German Government. So far, this has been implemented mainly through the creation of counselling services, the hiring of disability officers, improvements in the accessibility of university buildings for people with walking impairments, and the granting of compensation for disadvantages and generous deadline regulations. The second concept goes hand in hand with diversity concepts that aim to adequately and successfully address the growing heterogeneity of students and the discriminations that often accompany that heterogeneity. In the sense of a broad understanding of inclusion, the aim is to give greater consideration and recognition to factors related to the student's origin (educational background of the family, migration background), individual-related factors (impairments, educational biography) and situation-related factors (employment, parenthood). The third concept of inclusion focuses on the concept of inclusion itself, linked to a fundamental attitude of people and the actions of organizations. The goal here is not only to convey inclusion as

specialized knowledge, but also to exemplify it as a university organization. In this context, inclusion is also about representations of diversity among university staff, the development of inclusive research approaches and the critique of a non-inclusive curriculum (Heinemann & Castro Varela, 2017; Knauf, 2016). Thus, both a narrow concept of inclusion related to disability and a broad concept of inclusion related to the recognition of diversity can be found in institutions of higher education.

As there are multiple discourses of inclusion, there are different understandings of *diversity*, too. Diversity in the context of university can be understood as a strategy to improve the competitive opportunities of universities. Diversity can also be understood as a social and institutional guideline. A third understanding is the awareness of human beings' diversity and the recognition of their uniqueness. The understanding of diversity from the perspective of emancipatory movements is fighting historically based concepts and constructions of discrimination and essentialization (Darowska, 2019). Consequently, diversity policies often pursue emancipatory and neoliberal goals at the same time (Bender et al., 2013; Platte et al., 2018). All in all, dealing with heterogeneity is often referred to under the key term *diversity management*, which has its origins in globally operating companies, and is also discussed in higher education from an educational perspective. Here, too, two streams of this approach can be identified, which can also overlap: affirmative diversity management approaches and deconstructive power-sensitive diversity approaches (Walgenbach, 2014, p. 101). Affirmative diversity approaches aim to recognize difference and diversity. They promote this through the call for more diversity inside educational institutions as well as through pedagogies which are based on the recognition of difference. Power-sensitive diversity approaches analyse how difference is created in the first place. Referring to social constructivist and interactionist approaches, as well as to post-structuralist, discourse-theoretical and deconstructivist perspectives, these latter approaches to diversity understand categories of difference not as naturally given, but as [socially or discursively – depending on the respective theory] constructed categories. This understanding of difference can also be found in approaches and perspectives of cultural studies, in postcolonial theories, as well as in critical race theories (Melter & Mecheril, 2011) and intersectionality (Riegel, 2016). A central critique of power-sensitive diversity approaches is directed at the binary logic of difference that is homogenizing and essentializing. This logic is powerful because it asks subjects to assign themselves as disabled or not disabled, man or woman, with a migration background or without a migration background, etc., and it excludes those who cannot or do not want to clearly assign themselves to this logic. This is a painful issue for trans people, Black Germans and many others (Walgenbach, 2014).

This critique of homogeneous and universal categorizations led to *intersectional* approaches. Intersectional perspectives were developed by Black women in the 1970s and 1980s (Eisenstein, 1978). The term "intersectionality" was introduced by the Black U.S. legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw (2019). Using the metaphor of a street crossing, she explains how different lines of discrimination intersect there and how this results in a particular situation of discrimination. After becoming popular in the US, intersectional approaches were taken in Germany, too. They aim to theoretically and empirically analyse the way in which various constructions of difference and relations of inequality interact. Therefore, they use a multidimensional view to identify various social and societal spheres and their interconnectedness in relations of domination and power (Riegel, 2016, p. 41).

We, the authors, follow a deconstructive and intersectional approach when we work, write and teach about 'inclusion' and 'critical diversity literacy', too. We try to intervene in the unquestioned reproduction of dichotomous categorizations that sort, exclude and lead to exclusions. Further, we strive not to harm vulnerable groups with our way of asking questions, using examples, pictures or the like. The question of who could potentially be hurt by what words and what kind of questioning can only ever be answered depending on the respective social discourse. In an international project, this varies greatly, especially when it comes to diversity issues. We, as academics working in

Germany, have therefore decided not to participate in the quantitative survey within the framework of the JoinMe2 project, in the context of which we are writing this article. The survey contains numerous questions that – in the context of the German discourse - reaffirm dichotomous categories and reproduce discriminating and violent approaches to marginalised groups. For this reason, in the following sections of the paper, we do not refer to survey data gathered in the JoinMe2 Project for Germany—as it is done in the other chapters of this book— but to an extensive literature review.

3. Literature Review – What works in German Inclusive Higher Education?

The search for literature and research started by using the German Education Index (Fachportal Pädagogik) which offers nearly 1.000.000 references concerning all areas of education. At first, the search started with the terms "inclusion" and "higher education". The result was 528 titles, published between 2009 and 2020. In a second step the number of titles was reduced by filtering out the ones that did not refer to German research. As inclusion in Germany is often linked with dis/ability (Dannenbeck & Dorrance, 2016), we additionally searched for the terms “diversity” and “higher education”, which led to only 15 titles (10 after filtering). Furthermore, we found articles through targeted searches in handbooks and by using Google scholar. Thus, by adopting a snowball system, we went from the literature we had found to other relevant literature.

In the following, we present the results of the literature review in the diversity categories of dis/ability, gender, sexual identity and race/ethnicity/culture. We then outline the state of the art in literature and research, that focuses on diversity and diversity-consciousness in the higher education system more generally.

3.1. Dis/ability

When inclusion is discussed and researched, it is usually linked to the narrow understanding of inclusion already explained above, which is about the equal participation of people with disabilities in all areas of life and society (Dannenbeck & Dorrance, 2016). Disabled activists have been demanding and fighting for equal participation, self-determined living and a change in thinking for decades (Köbsell, 2012) and UNESCO named the inclusive design of education systems as a central goal as early as 1994 in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994). Despite this, inclusion has only received increased attention in education, socio-political, and scientific circles since the ratification of the CRPD in 2009. In the context of educational science, however, this has mainly taken place in the field of school research and practice so far (Ackermann, 2013). Research on inclusion in vocational education and training, adult education and also in higher education (Tippelt & Schmidt-Hertha, 2013, p. 223) is still underrepresented.

In 2009, the German Rectors' Conference (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz [HRK]) produced the paper "A University for All" at its General Assembly, in which they drew up recommendations for successful and inclusive study for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses (Hochschulrektorenkonferenz [HRK], 2009). The paper also called on higher education institutions to review and improve conditions for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses, to remove barriers and make appropriate provisions, and to provide appropriate training for higher education staff at all levels.

Since 2013, the German Federal Government has published a report on the living conditions of people with impairments every four years. The central findings of the third and most recent report on participation for the area of education and training show that the proportion of children and young people with impairments in the mainstream school system is rising. Thus, the inclusion rate is also increasing (between 2014 and 2017 from 2.36% to 2.98%), but at the same time the proportion of children and young people with impairments in segregated special schools has hardly changed (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 2021, p. 122). In 2016, 71.1% of the pupils who attended a separate special school did not achieve a lower secondary school-leaving certificate. In addition,

there are large differences with regard to the school-leaving qualifications of people aged 20 to 64 with and without impairments (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 2021, p. 169). While 8% of people with impairments do not have a school-leaving qualification, the figure for people without impairments is only 4.1%. The proportion of those who have not completed school is highest in the group of people with impairments and with a so-called migration background (19.3%) (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 2021, p. 168). Twice as many people without impairments (40.9%) as people with impairments (19.7%) have a higher education entrance qualification. The trend towards higher education qualifications is stronger among people without impairments than among those with impairments (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 2021, p. 166). This has an enormous impact on the further course of life. Inequalities of opportunity and selections, that were experienced in the school system, continue to have an disadvantaging effect throughout an individual's life. People with disabilities are less likely to obtain a vocational qualification that corresponds to their school-leaving qualifications than people without disabilities. They are also less likely to achieve academic degrees (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales, 2021, p. 173).

In the nationwide online study "beeinträchtigt studieren (best)" (study with impairments), data on the situation of students with impairments was collected for the second time in the winter semester 2016/2017 (Poskowsky et al., 2018). Nearly 21.000 students with disabilities at 153 universities participated in the online-study. The data and the results provide information about the influence of impairments on the choice of study program and the successful completion of the degree program, about barriers while studying and possible compensation thereof about the use of impairment-specific counselling services and the financing of impairment-related additional requirements. The results are presented in a differentiated manner according to forms of impairment, which are based on the self-attributions of the students surveyed. Mental illnesses (53%) were most frequently stated by the respondents as the form of impairment that had the greatest impact on their studies. Chronic-somatic illnesses are mentioned by 20% of the respondents. Less frequently mentioned impairments included movement impairments (4%), hearing impairments, deafness or speech impairments (2.8%), visual impairments or blindness (2.5%), partial performance disorders (4%), other impairments or severe illnesses (6%), combinations of mental and chronic-somatic illnesses (2%), and other multiple impairments (5%) (Poskowsky et al., 2018, p. 20). For 15% of the students surveyed, their disability had been officially determined. Pertaining to that particular group, 9% of the survey respondents had a severe disability (degree of impairment is 50% or higher) and the other 6% had a disability (degree of impairment is less than 50%) (Poskowsky et al., 2018, p. 29).

Students with study-related impairments interrupt their studies more frequently and also change their degree programme more often. Impairment-related difficulties are reported by 89% in organising and carrying out their studies. Above all, this relates to the density of examinations, deadlines, the prescribed workload and compulsory attendance, a lack of space to withdraw to, as well as more difficult contact and communication with teachers, fellow students and administrative staff for fear of stigmatization and rejection. Using a mixed-methods approach, Bartz (2020) conducted a supplemental case study based on both the "best" questionnaire and narrative interviews conducted with students with disabilities. The study examines the various barriers (learning environments, learning materials, attitudes of university lecturers) faced by many students with disabilities and discusses the measures needed to ensure that students with disabilities can study without stigma and discrimination. Some lecturers do not adjust the conditions of the courses or the learning settings. Even if there are lecturers who try to consider special needs and to adapt the conditions, discrimination still takes place at a different level. Students with disabilities and visible migration backgrounds experience racism and ableism at the same time (Bartz, 2020), because lecturers might not attribute stuttering to a speech impediment, but to being a 'foreigner' and therefore having problems with the language. Another example given in the study is the comparison of one disability with

another, which lecturers do when they compare and equate the situation of a disabled student with a student who has a child or other individual situations. In doing so, these lecturers disregard disabled students as experts of their own needs and are furthermore not familiar with the concept of disability. The narrative examples given in this survey underline the need for reflective training for lecturers.

Generalizing or equatizing disability for all is a practice analysed in another qualitative study. Part of the EU project "European Action on Disability within Higher Education" investigated the perception patterns of university lecturers at the German University of Leipzig regarding students with disabilities (Aust, 2018). The results also show attitudinal barriers of university lecturers that can be traced back to a medical understanding of disability. A medical understanding goes hand in hand with the perception that disability is an individual problem and that people with disabilities are to be regarded as objects of care in need of help (Waldschmidt, 2005). Yet there has long been a paradigm shift from the medical to the social model, with disability, as defined in the CRPD, arising from the interaction of long-term individual impairments and environmental and attitudinal barriers. People *are* not disabled, but are prevented from participating in society by precisely such barriers. Disability studies in particular are less concerned with the question of how disability should be defined and who is considered disabled, but rather understands disability as socially constructed:

"In terms of scientific theory, disability studies prefer to understand disability as a construction, whereby this general line of thought encompasses the most diverse theoretical approaches. Furthermore, they see themselves as a decidedly socio-critical science. In analogy to sexism and racism as social power mechanisms, the term Ableism is used to criticise the normative expectation of functional ability, which goes hand in hand with the devaluation of 'disabled' bodies. Inspired by the disability movement, the research topics focus on fundamental and human rights, inclusion and participation, equality and accessibility. The guiding principles of self-determination and self-advocacy are reflected in the methodological debates, research designs and applied methods." (Waldschmidt, 2020, p. 178).

Accordingly, disability studies analyse how disability, but also normality, have been historically, socially and culturally constructed and how they are embedded in relations of power and domination.

The university project "QuaBIS" examines the role of people with experiences of disability as mediators and producers of knowledge in the academic sphere (Goldbach et al., 2020). The aim of the project is to establish diversity-conscious structures in teacher education in order to thus change higher education structures to be more inclusive. Inclusion-oriented teacher education should not only impart knowledge about inclusion, but also exemplify inclusion. On the basis of a questionnaire survey, 64 students and six education and inclusion experts were asked about their views on inclusive learning at the university. The education and inclusion experts are people with experience of disability who have previously worked in special, segregated companies for people with disabilities (Werkstätten für Menschen mit Behinderungen), who have been qualified for teaching and research at universities and have taught in two seminars (educational science and general special needs education). The survey investigated what ideas students and education and inclusion officers have about inclusive learning at higher education institutions, to what extent they reflect on their actions, to what extent they practice higher-education teaching in a diversity-reflecting manner, and whether students see the participation of people with experiences of disability in teaching as an enrichment.

For the participating students, inclusive learning at universities means the acceptance and appreciation of all seminar participants and a prejudice-free interaction. Rarely, however, is it understood to mean mutual enrichment. This idea is different for the six education and inclusion speakers, who rather wish to be more responsive to each other, to work with each other and to bring each other's "other" life worlds closer. The majority of the students interviewed agree to question their own actions. One student criticizes ableist structures in the university. Basically, the students would like to see more education and fewer

reservations as well as more internal differentiation. The desire for more accessibility is rated as less important. In principle, the students experience the university as conscious in respect to heterogeneity, but they express the wish for more participation in the design of teaching. The students also lack the ability to bring work results into the seminar with individually different forms of presentation. The criterion that seminar requirements should be designed individually for all participants is the least fulfilled aspect according to the students' assessment. The students rate the participation of people with disability experience as an enrichment to their studies. The authors of the study question their results with regard to a possible social desirability in answering the questions. Even though it is a small study, it is very relevant due to the lack of research on teachers with experiences of disability in higher education and also with regard to the analysis of an inclusive and diversity-conscious higher education institution. The authors state that the analysis of othering processes and segregation practices in the context of joint learning at higher education institutions still is a research desideratum (Goldbach et al., 2020).

For the design and implementation of accessible, inclusive teaching, the concept of "Universal Design for Learning" (UDL) has been discussed and tested in Germany for a few years. It builds on the Universal Design (UD) concept, which was initiated in the USA in the 1970s by the disability rights movement, that fought for barrier-free access in public buildings, among other things (Fisseler, 2015). Architects and product designers then developed the UD concept, consisting of 7 principles, with the aim of designing buildings barrier-free from the outset so that everyone can have access and move freely within them. The UD concept was expanded for the education sector in order to not only remove structural barriers there, but also to make teaching universal. For a university, which is based on universal design, this means reflecting and dismantling "ableism and institutionalised discrimination, manifest in persistent attitudinal, architectural, and social structural barriers that have excluded disabled and disadvantaged people from most universities" (Powell, 2012, p. 29). The aim of UDL is to identify and break down barriers that arise due to teaching methods, materials and curricula. Thus, UDL aims to make teaching more flexible in terms of attendance options, participation options, modes of presentation that address different or multiple senses simultaneously (e.g. visualised and auditory or haptic forms of presentation), as well as methodological and social forms, so that everyone can participate on an equal footing without having to develop special solutions for individuals (Fisseler, 2015). However, so far UDL has not been frequently employed in German-speaking countries to facilitate inclusive, accessible teaching (Gattermann-Kasper & Schütt, 2021).

The research that exists so far with regard to inclusive higher education is predominantly focused on students, less on teachers or other higher education staff. Despite existing questions regarding accessible study conditions as well as inclusion-related higher education research, there is still a lack of comprehensive and differentiated research on disability in the inclusive higher education discourse (Raab, 2019). Above all, there is a lack of higher education research on university teachers with disabilities. (Klein & Schindler, 2016). Likewise, the connection between disability, higher education and inclusion, as well as inclusive and discrimination-critical teaching, has so far remained largely unconsidered in higher education discourse and is instead excluded from discussions (Raab, 2019, p. 517). According to the higher education laws of the German federal states, students with disabilities or chronic illnesses should not be disadvantaged in their studies and should be able to take part in the programs at higher education institutions as far as possible. In this narrow understanding, inclusion is also explicitly anchored in teacher education (Blömeke, 2019). This is also visible in research. The subject of research on inclusion, disability and higher education is primarily the teacher training programme and student teachers (e.g. Greiten et al., 2017), who are to be sensitized to inclusive training in schools (Bruhn et al., 2018; Golus et al., 2020; Greiten et al., 2017; Schüle & Klomfaß, 2016), e.g. natural sciences (Egger et al., 2020) or physical education (Erhorn et al., 2020).

Contributions and research that deal with the sensitizing and professionalization of university staff are still largely absent from the discourse on inclusion in higher education.

3.2. Sex and Gender

Gender is one of the central categories used in national and international education statistics to examine the possible differences between persons marked as male and female, particularly regarding their education, training and further education opportunities and its development. In recent education reports, which are predominantly quantitative in nature, a development is emerging according to which women*¹ have benefited from the educational expansion. They are increasingly achieving higher educational qualifications and participating in tertiary education, and they are also more strongly represented in the labour market (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2018). Nevertheless, there are still differences with regard to educational aspirations, the choice of study subjects, as well as professional positions and income after or despite passing through the tertiary education system. Women* acquire the degrees necessary to enter the university more frequently than men*. Their university entrance qualification rate is 10 percentage points higher than that of men* (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2018, p. 155). Although women* with academic qualifications are less at risk of unemployment and are employed in better-paid gainful employment positions compared to women* without academic qualifications, they are more frequently unemployed, more frequently employed part-time and less frequently employed in better-paid professional positions compared to men* with the same qualifications. This picture also emerges among employees in higher education institutions. 56% of the approximately 700,000 employees at German higher education institutions are employed as academic or artistic staff². However, the proportion of women in this group is only 38%. And only every fourth professorship is held by a woman* (ibid., p. 161). In the engineering sciences, the figure is as low as 14%, while in the humanities it is 39% (Federal Statistical Office 2020). Gender differences and inequalities in the labour market are attributed to the compatibility of family and career - which still predominantly affects women - as well as a 'gender-typical' choice of study subject and career, which are associated with poorer career opportunities (Leuze & Lörz, 2019, p. 656). Gender-specific differences in the choice of field of study have hardly changed (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2018). Men* more often choose an engineering or natural science subject, women* more often opt for a teacher training or a social science programme.

For some years now, educational policy interest has been directed towards increasing the proportion of women in the STEM subjects (Science, Technology Engineering Math)³ (Kampshoff & Wiepcke, 2019, p. 254). These subjects are described as so-called professional "male domains" in which women* have been underrepresented up until now. In principle, the proportion of female students in STEM subjects has increased, which is predominantly attributed to numerous education policy support programmes and support measures. But there are also gender-specific differences within the STEM subjects. Women more often choose to study natural sciences, while men tend to study engineering (cf. Heine et al., 2006 cited in Leuze & Lörz, 2019, p. 636).

Although regular education reports can quantitatively show trends and developments and outline an overview of access, transitions, choice of subject, drop-outs and graduations (and beyond), all differentiated according to socio-demographic categories,

¹ Wie use women* and men* to point out that the statistics might also include people who cannot and do not want to subordinate themselves to these binary categories and thus position themselves between or outside the dichotomy.

² Artistic staff includes employees who are outstandingly qualified through artistic work, but who have not completed a classical academic/scientific career. Artistic staff is often employed in artistic degree programmes of universities and universities of applied sciences.

³ In German these are known as MINT-subjects (Maths, Informatics, Natural sciences, Technology).

'having access' is not synonymous with equal opportunities and freedom from discrimination. Contributions that theoretically and empirically deal with higher education and gender from a power-critical and deconstructive perspective criticize a binary, heteronormative and biological understanding that divides gender in only two categories: man and woman. This leads to the systematic exclusion and marginalization of people who cannot or do not want to assign themselves to either gender (Klenk, 2019a). This critique also applies in particular to higher education research itself (Kunadt et al., 2014). Another critique is directed at well-intentioned but not well-differentiated practices, which in their consequences emphasise difference and thus also reproduce it. For example, gender and diversity studies, which deal with the complex topics of 'gender and higher education', problematise that gender issues are either completely ignored or women in STEM subjects are marked as "deficient others" (Springsgut, 2021). This would, for example, be partly reinforced and thus reproduced by educational policy support measures aimed at generating and promoting girls' and women's interest in STEM professions (Götschel, 2019, p. 177; Kampshoff & Wiepcke, 2019).

Differentiated diversity-conscious work on the topics of sex and gender means "taking into account the diversity of people without problematically reducing them to their difference along rigid identity categories" (Götschel, 2019, p. 175). Rather, processes of reflection are necessary with regard to one's own institution, profession and mediation practice in order to be able to recognise and dismantle previous difference-generating practices with the aim of shaping higher education, teaching and research in a gender-neutral way and to be able to develop and exemplify a gender- and diversity-informed attitude and competence (Klenk, 2019a). This would require an appreciative cooperation between higher education didactics and the disciplines, which is currently only taking place in isolated cases at German universities and is not systematically anchored. So far, there are also only a few findings on gender-equitable and gender-reflective teaching and didactics (Kampshoff & Wiepcke, 2019; Klenk, 2019b). Furthermore, there is a lack of literature and research in which gender constructions are questioned and more differentiated statements are made about other gender identities and how a gender-conscious approach can be implemented and practised at universities (Hornstein, 2019).

René Rain Hornstein (2019) presents a theory- and experience-based contribution on how higher education institutions can be designed to be inclusive and non-discriminatory for trans, intersex and non-binary people. Here, Hornstein discusses forms of institutional trans* discrimination and shows intersectional perspectives for gender equality work at universities. Trans*⁴ people experience processes of discrimination and exclusion in the education system and on the labour market. Their access to higher education is often difficult due to previous experiences of discrimination and the associated low self-confidence. They often also experience further discrimination during their studies. This goes hand in hand with a lack of possibilities for gender assignments that go beyond a binary assignment, possibilities to have first names changed and to be able to decide on desired designations themselves in the process, although there have been legal regulations since 2018 that introduced "diverse" as a third gender category (German Personal Status Law). In addition, the gender and first names with which people identify themselves may be entered in certificates and university certificates, irrespective of legally registered information. However, it is problematic that many universities have not yet adapted their administrative databases for these possibilities. Further discrimination is created by the lack of gender-neutral toilets. This also affects university sports and the problem that shower cubicles and changing rooms are also only accessible for men or for women (Hornstein, 2019; Stern, 2019). Still, trans* people are often marked as mentally ill or unstable and are rarely perceived as resilient people with agency. In terms of teaching and research, many universities in Germany still lack an environment where trans* students feel welcome. In addition, cis students need to be educated about how they can act as allies towards trans* students and what their role as allies could look like. This also

⁴ The * behind trans marks the heterogeneity of the group.

requires appropriate knowledge and action on the part of teachers, especially regarding trans* discrimination, as well as reflection on their own role and involvement. Furthermore, trans* people working at universities are still underrepresented. In addition, there is a fundamental lack of trans* topics in higher education teaching, although trans* is a topic that affects e.g. psychosocial, educational science or even medical degree programmes (Stern, 2019). Regardless of gender identity, students should be sensitised to and informed about trans* issues and learn to deal with them in a reflective way in order to be able to act professionally in their later professional activities.

The following prerequisites and actions are recommended for a trans*open university: 1) fundamental interest on the part of the universities in the feasibility of studies for all students (and thus also for trans* students), 2) the willingness to deal with the topic of trans* as well as with intersectional interweavings of marginalization (e.g. trans* people with disabilities, trans* people of colour) and 3) taking seriously and implementing the needs for improvement mentioned by trans* students. Trans* students express their willingness to enter into exchange with the university. Furthermore, an institutional service infrastructure is needed to offer counselling and empowerment spaces where trans* students and their supporters and allies can exchange and network. This is also needed across universities. Universities need to develop policies and measures that prohibit and prevent discrimination and should generally be aware of and implement legal innovations and developments. In addition, transgender research should also be anchored in the university and the representation of trans* people among teachers and professors should be monitored and reflected upon (Hornstein, 2019; Stern, 2019).

3.3. Sexual identity

Sexual identity is one of the diversity categories that has received the least attention in research on higher education. In Germany, there is a legal framework to protect LGBTQ* people from discrimination, which is anchored in the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG⁵). According to the law, discrimination on the basis of sexual identity and gender identity is not to be tolerated in the workplace or in everyday business. A representative study conducted by the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency (Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes (ADS) shows in respect to the discrimination experiences of LGBTQ* people, as in), that out of 1007 respondents, 2.4% "have experienced discrimination based on sexual identity" (Kalkum & Otto, 2017, 15f.). About 75% of the lesbian and gay people surveyed had experienced discrimination on the basis of their sexuality (cf. *ibid.*, p.17). These and other studies show that homonormative relationships in Germany are most affected by discriminatory experiences, which could be due to the fact that homosexual relationships are nominally more strongly represented and visible in society compared to other varieties of queer life.

In addition, the Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency conducted a study of LGBTQ*teachers and asked them about their experiences of discrimination and how they deal with it in everyday school life (Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes, 2017, p. 44). Teachers generally report a positive school climate with regard to their sexual identity, but some also perceive a tendency towards resentment (cf. *ibid.*, p.8f.). Compared to the private environment, sexual or gender identity is discussed less in everyday school life; only one third of bisexual teachers and 50% of homosexual teachers are open about their sexual and gender positioning. They fear exclusion or loss of authority and also report insecure interactions on a personal level, as most of them are not extensively informed by their employers about the legal protection against discrimination for teachers (cf. *ibid.*, p.18ff.).

Discrimination studies conducted by some universities show that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is experienced (3.7%) or observed (7.9%) much less frequently than other forms of discrimination (Berghan et al., 2016; Klein & Rebitzer, 2012). In

⁵ AGG = Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (2006)

pedagogical research as well as in theoretical contributions, sexual orientation is predominantly neglected (Klenk, 2019b). There are few contributions on educational professions in general, whereby the focus here tends to be on school contexts and the professionalization of teachers (Schmidt & Schondelmayer, 2015). Here, the professionalization of prospective teachers in higher education is also addressed in isolated cases, from which a corresponding need for sensitization and professionalization for university teachers (in teacher training) is derived (Gotthardt et al., 2019; Vierneisel & Nitschke, 2019).

3.4. Race/Ethnicity/Culture

In 1991 in their classical work on 'nation, class and race', Balibar and Wallerstein describe the concept of 'neo-racism', which is still relevant today.

"It is a racism whose dominant theme is not biological heredity but the insurmountability of cultural differences, racism which, at first sight, does not postulate the superiority of certain groups or peoples in relation to others but 'only' the harmfulness of abolishing frontiers, the incompatibility of life-styles and traditions (Balibar 1991, p. 21)".

Following this analysis, we discuss race/ethnicity and culture in one chapter as all three notions and concepts are used for the same purpose - dividing the population into those who 'belong' to the hegemonic part of the society and those who are only 'tolerated' and have to justify their right to be inside the national or regional borders again and again. For international students the situation is a little bit different than for racialized students who were born and brought up in Germany. While international students come to Germany knowing that they are from the 'outside' and get several offers from the International Offices of the respective universities to feel at home and network with other internationals, racialized German students experience racism inside institutions of higher education – mostly without having any institutional support to fight it, which leads to quite a high drop out rate. Currently 43% of the German students with a so-called migrational background drop out without a degree (Ebert & Heublein, 2017, p. 1).

In Germany, around 20% of students have a so-called migration background. Of these, 69% have German nationality, 19% have another nationality and 12% have both German and another nationality (Middendorf et al., 2017a, p. 11). Almost two thirds of students with a migration background were born in Germany. The proportion of students with a migration background belonging to the "low" educational background group is three times greater than the proportion of students without a migration background. Students with a migration background show a higher interest in studying, but are not always able to achieve these studies. They more often assess their study situation as problematic (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2018, p. 163) and they more often doubt their ability to study, even if their performance is good (Rokitte, 2012, p. 43). Interruptions in studies occur somewhat more frequently among students with a migration background than among students without a migration background, and the drop-out rate is also significantly higher (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung, 2018, p. 163; Middendorf et al., 2017b).

In the context of race/ethnicity/culture and higher education, previous research and theoretical contributions refer (among other topics) to student experiences of discrimination (Karakaşoğlu & Doğmuş, 2016; Nguyễn, 2022; Springsgut, 2021), and diversity-related attitudes of student teachers (Bello, 2020). Other topics are the higher education (Akbaba et al., 2022; Thompson & Vorbrugg, 2018), as well as the professionalization discussed against the background of critical race theories - especially for teacher education (Aygün et al., 2020; Fereidooni, 2019; Massumi & Fereidooni, 2017) and for educational workers (Mai et al., 2018). Furthermore, there are analyses and reconstructions of the perspectives of higher education teachers of colour (Ahmed et al., 2022). In some cases, they are also used to derive needs for action and sensitization on the part of higher education teachers (Polat, 2019). Above all, there is a lack of

"comprehensive research into the interaction of complex mechanisms producing inequality in the tertiary education sector within the framework of qualitative analyses" (Springsgut, 2021, p. 11), which refers to the interweaving of social origin and migration experience and the resulting privileging or disadvantaging effects.

In her sociological dissertation, Karin Springsgut (2021) addresses this research gap. By means of seven group discussions in four universities as well as four thematic-narrative interviews with students, she investigated "how students experience discrimination within the university and how these experiences are linked to (family) migration history, social origin and gender" (Springsgut, 2021, p. 238). The study aims to reconstruct (documentary method) perceptions of recognition and disregard as well as privilege and disadvantage in the university. The sample includes 22 students and 2 doctoral students who themselves or whose parents immigrated to Germany. Sixteen of these students have parents without an academic degree. In the narratives of the students and doctoral candidates, it becomes apparent that *gender* and *ethnicity* are central categories of difference in the higher education context, which go hand in hand with discrimination, devaluation and stereotyping. This is particularly evident in the intertwining of gender and religion as well as gender and ethnicity. An example is the muslim, hijab-wearing women. In the university environment, they experience culturalised attributions as immature women who are oppressed by their male family members and increasingly report experiences in which they are questioned disrespectfully about their private lives and their supposed origins. Moreover, they are not perceived as Germans, regardless of whether they have German citizenship or learned German as their first language. Racializing attributions as "migrant others", not belonging to Germany, are experienced by those marked as muslim as well as by Black students and students of colour. The way social and educational discourses of migration form discourses of muslimization can also be seen in another study that analysed practices of othering (Said 1999) towards Muslim or Muslim-read student teachers (Karakaşoğlu & Doğmuş, 2016). Both the supervisor and student teacher perspectives were examined. The studies show that deeply rooted images of Islam and Muslim people as deficient, uncivilised and unfashionable others on the part of teacher trainers hinder the professionalization processes of student teachers because these stereotyping images repeatedly lead to (anti-Muslim) racist practices (on the part of the trainers) and thus to (anti-Muslim) racist experiences (on the part of the student teachers). The results of the studies are critically examined from a power-critical perspective, with which the professionalization needs of both teacher trainers and student teachers - as future teachers and possibly also trainers - are derived, and which aim at a reflective approach to othering processes and the deeply rooted and homogenising images behind them.

Another intertwining element in the framework of intersectional analysis is the intersection of race and class, i.e. the socio-economic capital (income, education, occupational status) of the parents. Especially when the parents of migrant-marked students have academic educational qualifications, this has the effect of privilege. In contrast, women of colour whose parents are 'migrant workers' report intersectional experiences of discrimination (Springsgut, 2021, p. 251). The students interviewed experience themselves in an area of tension between "prime example of successful integration" and "foreigner with stereotyping about their linguistic and cultural deficits" (ibid, p. 253).

Experiences of discrimination in university are often not directly addressed by those affected, nor are they often reported to university offices or counselling centres. Reasons for this are the power structures and hierarchies in which students find themselves and the associated fear of disadvantages in examinations and the awarding of grades (ibid.). In addition, students criticise the fact that diversity and equal opportunities activities at universities are formally written down in guidelines, but are not implemented or exemplified in practice. This problem was also described and analysed thoroughly in the context of universities in England in the various studies Sara Ahmed did on this subject (2006; 2012). The silence of students with experiences of discrimination can be

interpreted by fellow students and teachers as approval of racist and sexist practices and expressions (Springsgut, 2021). In a qualitative interview study, Như Ý Linda Nguyễn (2022) uses an intersectional perspective to explore how structures of dominance impact interactions between speakers and listeners in university learning spaces. Based on three interviews with students marked as Black, People of Colour, working-class, female-read and partially queer-positioned, Nguyễn analyses silencing practices in seminar spaces both between students and by lecturers. In doing so, she shows how practices of silencing in predominantly white and/or middle-class university structures dominate, produce relations of difference and generate processes of exclusion for marginalised students. The silence of students is also understood in this study as a possible practice of resistance.

When we look at the university teachers on the other hand, for people with a so-called migration background, a similar picture emerges as for women. The higher the professional activities or positions in German universities, the lower the proportion of employees with a migration background. In addition, the proportion of academics with a migration background is significantly lower when measured against the proportion in the population as a whole (König & Rokitte, 2012). Among professors and mid-level academics, 14% of respondents in a nationwide study have a migration background (defined in this study as having at least one parent who was not born in Germany) (Schomburg et al., 2012, p. 27). The proportion of academics, teachers and professors of colour is also still underrepresented at German higher education institutions (Ahmed et al., 2022).

Inspired and framed by postcolonial theories, Ahmed et al. (2022) in their qualitative interview study analyse the speaker positions of lecturers of colour, working on diversity-conscious topics and teaching students about power-critical perspectives in majoritarian white university spaces, as well as about experiences of racism, consequences and strategies of resistance. They examine the question of what needs to happen for teachers of colour to be heard in a white-dominated university. The answers are directed at higher education institutions to reflect on their white structures and self-understandings by focusing on the representations of employees of colour in different professional positions and employment relationships as well as on the existence of spaces for counselling, protection and empowerment.

Polat (2019) states three quality criteria for a diversity-conscious professionalization at universities: processes of self-reflection, a critical reflection of racism and irritations of normalization practices. The task of higher education institutions as "privileged places for powerful knowledge and enlightenment" (Polat, 2019, p. 471), is to create spaces in which learners can confront themselves and their view of others, question previous patterns of interpretation taken for granted and critically reflect on their own involvement in social power relations. Such reflective processes can be generated through deliberate irritations in teaching. This presupposes that university teachers themselves have an awareness of their own involvement in discourses and practices of power.

Accordingly, a sensitization of the majority white members of the university is necessary, especially with regard to their positioning as well as their involvement in discriminatory and culturalising practices (Aygün et al., 2020). In the moments of experienced discrimination in the seminar room, it is not the task of the affected students to draw attention to hurtful practices, but that of their fellow unharmed students. Likewise, teaching staff must also be sensitised to recognise the sometimes subtle practices of discrimination in order to be able to create teaching-learning situations that are sensitive about discrimination (Springsgut, 2021). For university teachers, this results in the task of recognizing students' silence as a possible practice of resistance and consequently reflecting on their own practices of silencing as well as breaking the silence created by students in order to reduce the dominance relationship between silence and speech in teaching and to be able to correctly interpret the meaning of the respective silence (Nguyễn, 2022).

Higher education that is based on critical race theories should establish a critique of racism as a cross-disciplinary agenda. This also includes a critical reflection on powerful (re)productions of knowledge and related educational content, stereotyping materials and the seminar reading used, as well as critically questioning the studies referred to (Aygün et al., 2020).

For some years now, researchers who look at the university from a decolonial perspective have increasingly been calling for the teaching material and content to be questioned, especially regarding which racist images they reproduce and whose voices and lifeworlds are actually made visible and invisible. Referring to decolonial and postcolonial approaches, the demand is made to break the Eurocentrism of universities and to include non-Western perspectives in the canon (Mignolo/Walsh 2018; Heinemann 2020). This research is still in its early stages in Germany, but is now being received more and more widely (Kilomba 2008, Kessé 2015, Heinemann/Castro Varela 2017, Akbaba/Heinemann i.P.).

3.5. Inclusion and diversity-consciousness, didactics and competencies

On diversity and inclusion in a broad understanding, i.e. without a focus on specific categories of difference and diversity, there are some edited volumes with a focus on higher education. These address, for example, diversity management in higher education (Auferkorte-Michaelis & Linde, 2018; Heitzmann & Klein, 2017), diversity and diversity politics in higher education from a feminist and postcolonial perspective (Bender et al., 2013), diversity-conscious and inclusive higher education didactics (Platte et al., 2018), habitus- and diversity-conscious teaching (Kergel & Heidkamp, 2019), inclusive higher education (Dannenbeck et al., 2016) and discrimination- and power-critical as well as intersectional perspectives on equal opportunities in higher education (Dankwa et al., 2021; Darowska, 2019).

The large number of anthologies and articles illustrates the relevance of the topic. Nevertheless, the contributions are predominantly educational policy, normative-legal, theory-based as well as practice- and experience-based contributions. There is still a lack of research contributions. One of the few exceptions to this is the study by Vierneisel and Nitschke (2019). With their quantitative survey, they investigated the knowledge, experiences, relevance, challenges and needs of university teachers in teacher training on diversity in teaching. The sample refers to 138 interviewed teachers at the University of Leipzig. Although the respondents rate the topic of diversity in the general public as very relevant, only three quarters of the respondents consider the topic of diversity as teaching content as very or rather important (Vierneisel & Nitschke, 2019, p. 109). One third of the respondents stated that they (tended to) have no knowledge about addressing diversity as part of the curriculum. More than half of the respondents have never yet implemented diversity-conscious teaching. Over 40% of the university lecturers surveyed cite a lack of time and monetary resources as reasons for not taking part in further training on the topic of diversity. Around 45% say they lack information about training opportunities on the topic of diversity. Only just under 9% have already taken part in a training course on the topic of diversity in general and only around 4% in a training course on the topic of diversity in teaching (ibid., p. 112). The study was extended to two other universities in the federal state of Saxony (Dresden and Chemnitz), where the results of the Leipzig study were largely confirmed. There is a need for action in terms of awareness-raising and further training for university lecturers, particularly with regard to the ability to recognise discrimination and to critically and consciously question supposedly objective knowledge about diversity (Vierneisel & Schreiter, 2019, p. 88). As in this study, diversity in general and related discussions of diversity competence and diversity consciousness are predominantly discussed in the context of educational disciplines (Sielert, 2017). Diversity-conscious teaching, on the other hand, has so far hardly been widespread in medical discourses (Pelzer, 2019), nor in therapeutic health professions (Schiller, 2019), nursing (Artner et al., 2019) and social work (Leiprecht, 2019).

This is particularly surprising in view of the fact that, at the latest since the AGG (2006), many universities at least publish the written claim to a diversity-conscious university space on their homepages and official guidelines. It is obvious that this also requires diversity-conscious further training of university staff. Auferkorte-Michaelis and Linde (2018) also name four central fields of action for university diversity strategies, which include this point centrally. They call for this both at the level of personnel development and in relation to the competence development of groups of higher education actors. At the programmatic level, a curricular anchoring of diversity aspects in subject teaching and in interdisciplinary courses (1) is necessary, as well as the anchoring of diversity in research and development (2). At the organizational level, diversity management is needed in governance, process organization, support structures and personnel development (3), as well as in the competence development of the groups of higher education actors (4) (ibid., p. 10ff.).

In this context, Clemens Dannenbeck and Carmen Dorrance (2016) argue for a change of perspective on the part of higher education institutions. Instead of permanently problematising the growing heterogeneity in tertiary education, it should rather be taken as a basis for adequate strategies for dealing with this normality. A 'problematization' of heterogeneity would be in contradiction to the opening and academizing processes of higher education institutions in terms of economic and educational policy. Consequently, the challenge would not lie in the opening of universities, but in the marking of "non-traditional" students as heterogeneous problem groups (Bittner & Fiebig, 2018).

Inclusive higher education development should therefore face the challenges of regularly analysing and critically questioning institutionalised exclusion processes and access mechanisms beyond integration measures, as well as examining and reflecting on the extent to which currently existing study conditions prevent barrier- and discrimination-free study. According to Dannenbeck and Dorrance (2016, p. 30), higher education institutions should undergo an inclusion-informed critique, keeping the following aspects in mind, among others: developing and practising biographical, age, cultural and gender sensitivity, and developing socio-economic equity. This also involves shaping a professional self-image through a theoretical foundation of pedagogical and didactic practices (ibid., p. 25). Likewise, a certain "diversity knowledge" (Lutz, 2013) should be promoted and developed in all status groups of university staff through e.g. training on social inequalities, anti-discrimination law, stereotyping practices, as well as on resilience. An inclusion-oriented reflection of one's own practices at all levels of higher education does not (exclusively) mean focusing on specific, differentially marked and supposedly homogeneous groups with the sole aim of achieving a certain quota, but rather aims "at the design of study conditions that structurally and practically contribute to a reality that enables and fosters participation or prevents and hinders it" (Dannenbeck & Dorrance, 2016, p. 30). This does not mean that a critical-reflective view of certain marginalised groups in higher education is not necessary. It is problematic when certain differentially marked groups are viewed and addressed as homogeneous groups, denied their belonging in the academic educational space and repeatedly marked as "deficient others".

Contributions to *higher education didactics* deal with questions of what good teaching should be like and how good studies can be ensured for all (Bittner & Fiebig, 2018). The central concern here is not only how inclusion and diversity can be integrated as knowledge elements in the teaching of different subject areas and modules, but how teaching can be designed in an inclusion- and diversity-conscious, barrier- and discrimination-free way (Schmude & Wedekind, 2014). Increasingly, the students' perspective is in the foreground here (Bittner & Fiebig, 2018; Platte et al., 2016). Within the project "Students coach teachers: Inclusive university didactics", it was explored how a change of perspective - by recognising and listening to students as experts in their studies - could generate and promote reflection processes regarding inclusive didactics in teaching (Platte et al., 2016, pp. 306–307). Over a period of three semesters, eight students conducted ten participatory observations in seminars and subsequently reflected

on their observations together with the respective teachers. Within the framework of the project, a manual was developed which, however, cannot be used as a rigid process pattern, but rather as a template for reflection. The "reflection of traditional teaching formats, role attributions and relationships" (Bittner & Fiebig, 2018, p. 74) is a central criterion for inclusive higher education, alongside access to tertiary education and ensuring the necessary infrastructure to pursue the studies. Field reports and studies in which the students' perspective is in the foreground prove to be helpful for the students' self-reflection as well as for the teachers. They also promote a communicative exchange as well as participatory elements in the design of teaching and studies for the students.

Diversity-conscious university didactics also aim to promote and develop diversity competence among both university teachers and students. Based on the three-level model by Schulte et al. (2018), diversity competence is composed of knowledge, attitude and action. The knowledge level refers to general knowledge about diversity. The attitude level aims at the self-reflectivity of the teachers, with whom, for example, it is questioned, "How am I perceived in my role? What role do my gender, skin colour, appearance and demeanour play for the students?" (Schulte et al., 2018, p. 187). With the attitude level, however, teachers should also develop competences regarding the perception of students, with which they can reflect, for example, "Who is allowed to speak in my class and how often?" (ibid.). Competences linked to action should enable the review of teaching methods as well as reflection on possible difficulties, e.g. whether accessible media are used or whether the entrenchment of stereotyping is avoided. With this competence model, the FOM Diversity Toolbox was developed, which contains an online collection of didactic tools to promote diversity competence.

Another concept of diversity competence that we would like to briefly introduce here is the Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) approach developed in post-apartheid South Africa, which we mainly refer to in our own higher education and academic activities. 'Critical diversity literacy' according to Melissa Steyn (2015) "can be regarded as an informed analytical orientation that enables a person to 'read' prevailing social relations as one would a text, recognising the ways in which possibilities are being opened up or closed down for those differently positioned within the unfolding dynamics of specific social contexts." (ibid., p. 381). The CDL concept consists of ten criteria:

1. An understanding of the role of power in constructing differences that make a difference [and lead to inequality].
2. A recognition of the unequal symbolic and material value of different social locations. This includes acknowledging hegemonic positionalities and concomitant identities, such as whiteness, heterosexuality, masculinity, cisgender, ablebodiedness, middleclassness, etc. and how these dominant orders position those in non-hegemonic spaces.
3. Analytic skill at unpacking how these systems of oppression intersect, interlock, co-construct and constitute each other, and how they are reproduced, resisted and reframed.
4. A definition of oppressive systems such as racism as current social problems and (not only) a historical legacy.
5. An understanding that social identities are learned and are an outcome of social practices.
6. The possession of a diversity grammar and a vocabulary that facilitates a discussion of privilege and oppression.
7. The ability to 'translate' (see through) and interpret coded hegemonic practices.
8. An analysis of the ways that diversity hierarchies and institutionalized oppressions are inflected through specific social contexts and material arrangements.

9. An understanding of the role of emotions, including our own emotional investment, in all of the above.
10. An engagement with issues of the transformation of these oppressive systems towards deepening social justice at all levels of social organization.

In our view, these ten points summarise the concerns of the previous remarks very well, but we would like to end with a few more concluding remarks.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, based on a literature and research review, we have outlined how inclusion and diversity are discussed and researched in the context of higher education in Germany. In the following, we briefly summarise the key findings.

Inclusion in higher education is predominantly examined and discussed from a narrow, disability-related understanding. Diversity, on the other hand, is examined from the perspective of individuals, other lines of difference and, more rarely, in their intersectional entanglements. On the one hand, diversity is understood from an affirmative perspective, with the aim of acknowledging diversity, and on the other hand, the diversity discourse is also guided by a power and critical theory perspective, which is concerned with analysing and deconstructing the production of difference.

Despite the large number of contributions found with the search terms "inclusion and higher education" and "diversity and higher education" in literature databases and through further research, it can be stated that the contributions are not very research-based, but rather theory-, practice- and experience-based. Over the last 10-20 years, it can be observed that the significance of intersectional entanglements is increasingly coming into focus. The concept of intersectionality aims to render visible the entanglement of the social constructions of difference. It emphasises the heterogeneity of socially produced and constructed groups and highlights the interconnections and interdependencies associated with this, but it is also able to uncover discrimination and inequalities of opportunity in a more differentiated way from a power-critical perspective. Only recently has there been sporadic research on the diversity consciousness of teachers. Most publications focus on the development of diversity consciousness among students. Our assumption is that this is not due to the fact that there has been a lack of comprehensive, systematic monitoring of the experience of discrimination at universities in Germany to date, in which all status groups are taken into account and surveyed (Berghan et al., 2016, p. 10). Nevertheless, the structurally based urgency of professionalizing higher education teachers towards a reflective approach to diversity can also be justified in a differentiated way from a normative-theoretical perspective. Universities, as part of democratic societies, also have a social mandate to convey democratic values, to reduce discrimination and to enable equal participation. Therefore, they should increase research on diversity and discrimination issues, change institutional structures dealing in-depth with the demands to decolonise the university, and last but not least they should urgently set out to train and professionalise their teaching staff - who are the key to shaping a just university - to take on their responsibility towards a diverse student body and the diverse society we are living in.

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