

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: Newcastle University		
Unit of Assessment: 26 Modern Languages and Linguistics		
Title of case study: Including Critical Gender and Ethnicity Perspectives in the Education System in Peru		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2003 to 2014		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Patricia Oliart	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Senior Lecturer in Latin American Studies, Head of Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American Studies	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2003 to the present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013–December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact		
<p>Oliart's research has influenced the shaping of public policy and capacity building in the educational sector in Peru. It has also affected public discourse about education, gender, and race. By uncovering the social and cultural history of education in Peru, Oliart's work has revealed the institutional cultures of education systems. Her work influenced Peru's National Education Plan between 2007 and 2021 and informed education policies for rural girls between 2014 and 2016. Furthermore, teacher training programs on intercultural education and the anthropology of education in Peru and Bolivia have been informed by Oliart's research. The Fe y Alegria Education network have also used Oliart's work, and their collaboration has helped to close the gender gap and improve teacher retention rates.</p>		
2. Underpinning research		
<p>Oliart's work demonstrates the links between the quality and characteristics of the provision of state-funded education and the resultant reproduction of social inequalities in Peru, which negatively affect rural areas, indigenous peoples, and women. Her interdisciplinary research encompasses the history of education, anthropology of the state, and critical pedagogy, and employs a multi-sited ethnographic approach. She studies the tensions between competing political projects and demonstrates how twentieth-century Peruvian education policies failed to address ingrained mechanisms of public service corruption and systemic social, gender and racial discrimination. Her use of hitherto untapped archival sources and innovative ethnographic methods also revealed teachers' and administrative officers' resistance to change and innovation in the education system. Her research has fostered a critical evaluation of the 1990s World Bank-led education reform in Latin America, as it failed to address how local power relations shape the culture of the education system that, in turn, is instrumental in the production and reproduction of social, racial and gender inequality (PUB1, research concluded in 2008). In 2012 Oliart was invited to contribute to a book series on the history of education in Peru. Her commissioned research produced a nuanced analysis of the intellectual and political project behind the education reform of 1972 led by a progressive military regime (PUB2). Unlike other research related to the period, it reveals direct links between the Peruvian reformers and radical pedagogy movements in the US and Europe at the time, and the creation of a critical mass in the education community that has shaped the formulation of education policies for decades.</p> <p>Fe y Alegria is a federation of schools, teacher training programmes and community radio stations in rural and urban marginal areas operating across 19 countries. In 2002 Oliart was appointed by the Peruvian branch of Fe y Alegria (80 schools, 84,000 students and close to 2,000 teachers) to</p>		

design a collaborative study in order to address the gender gap as articulated specifically by the problem of teenage girls dropping out of rural schools in Cusco. Using dramatization to elicit students' comments, and storytelling to work with adults, her study revealed how cultural change had impacted gender and sexuality in rural Indigenous communities in Peru (PUB3). The analysis explained how contemporary global youth culture had interfered with traditional forms of indigenous courtship, crucial for the conformation of young couples in Andean rural communities. Identifying the absence of these issues in teachers' training programmes, the publication included a review of similar research conducted in other areas in the world so as to enrich access to resources and to provide suggestions for the joint intervention by different state agencies on issues that deeply affect the wellbeing and potential integration or exclusion of rural indigenous youth. Fe y Alegria also collaborated with Oliart's research on how the gender gap between boys and girls is produced in rural education. The main finding helped to establish that it was the important economic role of girls in very precarious rural household economies, and not necessarily the disregard for their education, that was behind the gender gap in rural schools. The resulting publication is widely used in teacher training programs and postgraduate programs on gender and public policies (PUB4).

Another publication employed in postgraduate training programs is a volume in which Oliart applied her innovative work with multi-sited ethnography in public institutions to study the implementation of a decentralization law in three different regional offices in the Andes. The study, concluded in 2004, demonstrates how local power dynamics and politics shaped the implementation of state policies, inspiring the development of monitoring and support practices for the application of policies at local level (PUB5).

3. References to the research

All publications were peer reviewed and published or edited by prestigious academic institutions and publishers in Peru and Spain. The printed version of PUB1 sold out and is now available online, and two chapters have been used in recent anthologies on Peruvian education and anthropology. PUB2 is part of a 14-volume series and is the second most sold volume of the collection. All publications are available on request.

1. Oliart, P. 2011. *Políticas educativas y la cultura del sistema escolar en el Perú*, [Education Policies and the Culture of the Education System in Peru]. Lima, Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.
2. Oliart, P. 2014. *Educación en tiempos de cambio 1968–1975*. [Education in Times of Change, 1968–1975]. Colección Pensamiento Educativo Peruano. Lima, Derrama Magisterial, Commissioned by the Derrama Magisterial.
3. Oliart, P; Mujica, R and J. García. 2005. *Género, Sexualidad y Adolescencia en la Provincia de Quispicanchis*. [Gender, Sexuality and Adolescence in Quispicanchis, Lima]. Instituto Peruano de Educación en Derechos Humanos y la Paz. Commissioned by Fe y Alegria, the Peruvian Institute of Education in human rights, and funded by the Ford Foundation.
4. Oliart, P. 2004. 'Para qué estudiar?: La problemática educativa de niñas y mujeres en áreas rurales del Perú'. ['Why Attend school? The Education Conundrum for Girls and Women in Rural Peru']. In: Schicra, I. (ed.) *Género, etnicidad y educación en América Latina*. Madrid: Ediciones Morata, pp. 49–60.
5. Vasquez, T. and Oliart, P. 2007. *La descentralización educativa 1996–2001*. [Education Decentralization 1996–2001]. Lima: Instituto de Estudios Peruanos.

4. Details of the impact

Oliart's work has shaped understandings about education, gender and interculturality among education practitioners, students, government officials, and civil society organisations, opening new and creative perspectives for education, both within Peru and across the Andean region. She has influenced education policies for local networks and nationally, in addition to contributing to resources for teacher training and teaching materials for anthropology of education in the region.

The impact of Oliart's work can be organised into three main categories:

1) Influencing the formulation of National Education policies

Oliart's research contributions have established her as an authoritative voice on the understanding of education in Peru and which has reached influential actors in the design of education policies, particularly among members of the National Council of Education (NCE). This is a specialized, consultative, and autonomous body of the Ministry of Education (MED). It participates in the concerted formulation, monitoring, and evaluation of the National Education Project (Education White Paper), and the implementation of education policies and plans. Its members include a wide range of stakeholders including specialists, representatives of political forces and members of the education community. The first past President of the NCE testifies to the significance of Oliart's work in impacting policy decision-making processes stating: "As part of the consultation process, I invited Patricia Oliart as a specialist to comment on the first version of the National Education Plan (NEP). Patricia contributed an eight-page document with valuable suggestions and recommendations, which were included in the final version of the plan in force until 2021" (IMP1). The recommendations relevant to this ICS pertained to suggestions on how to overcome gender and racial discrimination in schools in rural areas, strategies to improve relationships between schools and rural communities, and a recommendation to evaluate the unintended consequences of the implementation of the World Bank reform in rural areas. The former cabinet chief of the Vice-Ministry of Pedagogic Management at the Ministry of Education (2014–2016) and member of the NEC team in charge of elaborating the next NEP (the education White Paper) for 2022–2037, considers that Oliart's work has influenced and shaped Peru's education policies in a way that has been "imaginative, systematic and rigorous", stating that it "contributes to generating, designing, and imagining policies" (IMP2).

One of the editors of PUB2 and former member of the NCE, asserts that Oliart's comprehensive analyses of the political dynamics behind the formulation of education policies will have "a long-term, permanent and sustained impact" that contributes to reflective consideration in the elaboration of new policies (IMP2). According to another member of the NCE, Oliart's research on the military regime education reform sparked fresh debate about the political nature of education policies to inspire future developments in education (IMP2).

2) Influencing debates on race, gender and education

Chapter 1 of PUB1 contributed significantly to shaping public debates on racism promoted by the vice-ministry of interculturality from 2013 to 2016. This chapter was considered a key text in these debates, with printed copies being distributed freely in schools and municipalities, and uploaded to the national government's digital repository, thereby becoming accessible to all. This text has entered a wider public domain than that of educational settings alone, informing debates on the role of education in the reproduction of racism and how to overcome it. Various online platforms, including dedicated webpages for teachers, education officials, and cultural collectives have included a PDF file of this chapter in their archives (IMP3). This is testimony to Oliart's text's reach and relevance in helping shape current debates taking place in the wider education community across the country, where, just a decade ago, issues of gender and racial discrimination were not part of the agenda but are now coming to the fore.

Beyond this text, Oliart's voice and opinion is sought-after in other wide-reaching, influential public fora. The Teacher's Union TV channel on YouTube reproduced segments of an interview with Oliart on three separate occasions in 2015, in relation to the memory of the education reform of 1972 (IMP3). More recently, the continuing impact of Oliart's research is evidenced by the prestigious invitations she received in May and June 2020 to participate in various symposia in 2021, a year marking the bicentenary of Peruvian Independence from Spain. The National Commission, created by the Ministry of Culture to commemorate the bicentennial, has invited Oliart to record a podcast sharing her reflections on the changes needed within the provision of public education across the country. Oliart received a similar invitation from the Peruvian Embassy in London, which is also currently running a series of events to mark the bicentennial of Peru's independence (IMP4).

3) Impact on schools, pupils and teachers

Interventions based upon Oliart's report on teenage sexuality in rural Cusco (PUB3) saw a marked improvement in girls' attendance at schools, thus contributing towards solutions for closing the gender gap in education. As stated, Oliart is a longstanding collaborator with the Fe y Alegria Central team, and her contribution helped teachers and administrators to understand the dramatic transformations in teenage sexualities in Quispicanchi (Cusco, Peru), and to intervene in the crucial problem of female school desertion. Recommendations based on her research and understandings of the gender gap in attendance were implemented. These include specific teacher training; policies and pedagogical interventions; the incorporation of gender perspectives in the curriculum; and the creation of conversation spaces and additional support for girls. Subsequently, and compared to schools outside their network, Fe y Alegria have maintained a high registration and retention of girls over 12 in rural schools. Fe y Alegria maintains a retention rate of 94% for 5th and 6th grades, thus succeeding in closing the gap between boys and girls.

The approach taken by Fe y Alegria based on Oliart's report was then adapted and extended across state-funded rural schools (97% of rural schools) throughout Peru. This came about when the Director for Rural Education at the Ministry of Education between 2013 and 2016, drew upon the model of teacher workshops implemented at Quispicanchi and integrated an intercultural gender equity approach in schools' governing structures. According to the former director for Rural Education, Oliart's framework has had enormous influence in substantiating and illuminating their experiences and has ensured that an interdisciplinary understanding of gender equality now "hold[s] a key place in the Ministry" (IMP5).

PUB1, PUB3 and PUB4 have also been used for rural and indigenous teacher training programmes throughout Peru and Bolivia, contributing to inclusion in the curriculum of discussions around the role of traditional masculinities in the reproduction of ethnic and gender discriminatory practices in the education system (IMP6).

In 2018 and 2019, Oliart conducted research workshops with over 80 teachers in Lima, as well as with students and schoolteachers in Arequipa, in which participants considered critical perspectives on gender and ethnicity and political issues in education. Oliart's work helped teachers better understand the wider implications of their capacities as educators and, as one schoolteacher confirmed, these fora provided a "stimulus to reflect" on their decision making, judgements and how they are "influenced by prejudices and unequal power relations" (IMP7).

Oliart has also created a website providing research resources for teachers, including her research on discrimination and education (IMP8). Finally, in August 2020, the Society for Education Research in Peru organised a webinar with UNICEF representatives and Oliart, which attracted 1,390 followers and which has since been frequently reproduced (IMP9).

In summary, Oliart's work demonstrates significant impact in local and national understandings of the interlinkages between education, gender and interculturality. She has contributed to national policy processes that will help ensure more sustainable and equitable education practices in female retention and girls' wellbeing in schools; her research has been at the forefront of influential public debates around racism in educational settings and in bringing to light potential solutions for overcoming such discrimination; her active collaboration with Fe y Alegria has proven that research can be an instigator to real change by helping to shape practices that successfully close the school gender gap.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

IMP1: Testimonial by Minister of Education (2011 to 2013), current member and former President of the National Education Council (dated 22 December 2014).

IMP2: Interviews with two members of the National Education Council: (i) Cabinet Chief of the Vice-Ministry of Pedagogic Management at the Ministry of Education (2014–2016), Basic Education Management Specialist at USAID- Perú (2011–2014), Programme Director at

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International Youth Foundation (2006–2011); Member of the National Education Council Commission elaborating the National Education Plan for 2022–2036 (interviews on 30 September 2016 and 16 July 2018); (ii) former President of the Peruvian Society for Research in Education, member of the National Education Council; Co-Convenor of the collection on the History of Education in Peru (interview on 14 September 2016).

IMP3: List of URLs where Chapter One of Oliart 2011 (PUB1) has been uploaded and URL of interview repeated in teachers' TV channel.

IMP4: Invitations to record podcasts from the Ministry of Culture and the Peruvian Embassy.

IMP5: Interview with Director of Rural Education at the Ministry of Education (2012-2014) (interview on 7 October 2016).

IMP6: Bibliography of sources where Oliart's work has been used or referenced for the design of teaching and in the design of social policies.

IMP7: Letters from CECYCAP, Fe y Alegria, and Alternativa on the impact of workshops held in 2018 and 2019.

IMP8: Statistics of use for the [website](#) with resources for working with adolescents where Oliart's research and current research on education is accessed by teachers and used in workshops conducted over 2018 and 2019.

IMP9: Statistics from the [webinar](#) in which Oliart participated in August 2020.