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### Recognition, Representation and Children

Recognition and representation are essential parts of the multifaceted conceptual framework of social justice. It is essential to keep in mind the aspects of gender, race, and class when discussing social justice as well as concepts like poverty, inequality, privilege, and wealth that all fall under this umbrella. Social justice is a model of distribution of goods, money and services. In other words, justice in terms of the distribution of wealth, opportunities, and privileges within a society (Each Other.org.uk). Its main objective is to ensure life, freedom and wellbeing for all.

Recognition is defined as a model of individual rights that gives everyone a chance. It can be viewed as a formal acknowledgement or existence of something (Mirriam Webster). The political philosopher Nancy Fraser has developed her own theory of social justice which contains three dimensions: redistribution, recognition, and representation as mentioned in her article, "Rethinking Recognition." Moreover, Fraser argues that justice can be understood in two separate but interrelated ways: distributive justice which refers to a more equitable distribution of resources, and recognition justice which recognises the difference between social identities and groups ("Rethinking Recognition", Nancy Fraser).

For example, human rights, which are a pillar of social justice, recognize the fundamental worth of every person and acknowledge and respect their human rights. Human rights are a set of principles concerned with equality and fairness that recognize a person's freedom to make

choices about their lives and to develop their potential as human beings (Australian Human Rights Commission). There are both covenants and conventions of human rights. To differentiate between the two, covenants are typically more general such as the [International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights](#) (ICESCR) or the [International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights](#) (ICCPR) whereas, conventions are more specific like, the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (CRC). Each of these are forms of recognition of people's individual rights.

Along with recognition being a model of individual rights, it also involves cultural patterns and values of androcentrism which include the institutionalized patterns of cultural value that privilege traits associated with masculinity and devalues everything coded as 'feminine' (Fortunes of Feminism, Nancy Fraser). This results in and perpetuates a worldview that is persistently male, as a result of patriarchy, sexism, and misogyny. Even feminist movements that include issues like reproductive rights, gender-based violence, equal pay, and women's suffrage all recognize gender differences but remain an instrument of male dominance.

The concepts of recognition and redistribution are expressed in two distinct but interlinked dimensions: redistribution which references economic structure which refers to the market and recognition which indicates the social status order which reflects culture (UN Women). Namely, women are less likely to get jobs in the tech industry which affects the way the digital world is being constructed. The lack of fair recognition of women in the tech industry discourages girl adolescents to pursue studies and careers in this field. As a consequence, they are less likely to get jobs in tech and are economically excluded from this market. And even when the minority of women access this job market, they still face challenges such as underpaid work. Additionally, unpaid work such as cooking, cleaning, childcare and other reproductive and domestic labor are not considered productive labor, not included in GDP are often

underappreciated. These are prime examples of unfair recognition that stems from childhood, leads to gender exclusion, exploitation, economic marginalization and deprivation that are recurring societal themes that reflect androcentrism. Redistribution is a situation where gender serves as a basic organizing principle of economic structure. It is also a model of social justice.

Recognition is a model of individual rights, whereas representation can be understood as the equal political power and reframing justice at the national and transnational levels. With representation, a lack of voice equates to a lack of representation. There is currently an issue of racial and ethnic underrepresentation in society. Unfair recognition and representation of marginalized groups eventually lead to unjust redistribution that constructs boxes around minorities and limits their economic opportunities. In these situations, there is no agency, also known as the capacity of an actor to act in a given environment (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). If individuals lack the capacity to act independently and to make their own free choices, based on their will then there is no agency. Similarly, capability as defined by American philosopher, Martha Nussbaum is the power and ability to do something for our own happiness. Furthermore, functional capabilities are the basic building blocks that make human life possible and worthwhile (Martha Nussbaum). It's important to note that injustice involves maldistribution, misrecognition and misrepresentation. Put simply, justice requires both dimensions: redistribution and recognition.

The concepts of recognition and representation can be applied in relation to children and adolescents because although each concept falls under the umbrella of social justice, they are also something children and adolescents experience on a daily basis. The society in which children live and their upbringing dictate who they are and help to determine who they will become. Their childhood also influences how they choose to express themselves, impacts their

perspectives and affects how they view the world. Childhood and adolescence is a time when a person is deeply influenced by the world. Children's brains are like sponges, absorbing everything going on around them.

The stages of human life from infancy and childhood to adolescence and adulthood shape a person and help to develop who they are. The most common development in early childhood is to establish self-identity (PMC, National Library of Medicine). During the infant, childhood and adolescent stages, they are still considered "human becomings." It is not until a child reaches adulthood that they are acknowledged as "human beings." An adult is defined as a person who is at least 18, fully grown or developed. This theory is accredited to the founder and editor of *Nursing Science Quarterly*, Rosemarie Rizzo Parse (*Nursing Theory*). Children as agents play a distinct role in society and have great influence on the world in which they live.

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