NW 25: Inclusion and Exclusion in Education: a Children’s Rights Perspective

Inclusion and Exclusion in Education: a Children’s Rights Perspective

Abstract

Relating to the overall conference theme ‘Inclusion and Exclusion. Resources for Educational Research’, EERA Network 25: Research on Children’s Rights in Education welcomes contributions that focus on how structures and processes of inclusion and exclusion relate to children’s rights in early childhood, primary and secondary education. Proposals can be related to the following rights aspects: (a) non-discrimination, (b) interculturality and diversity, (c) participation.

Description

Equality and non-discrimination are very - if not the most - widely recognised human rights, since the adoption of the Universal Human Rights Declaration (1948) (McNaughton, 2012). Also, the right to education of all children on the basis of equal opportunity is enshrined in numerous legal treaties, among which the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989).

However, in a context of real or perceived increase in migratory pressure and cultural diversity, social justice and fundamental freedoms in education systems are curtailed by political and social trends of inward-looking, intolerant and xenophobic attitudes and cultural isolationism. Building upon exclusion processes (no or limited access to education, separated or special classes, no or interrupted professional training, etc.), these trends reduce children to one aspect of their identities (nationality, ethnicity, religion, (non-)special needs, etc.), limiting their freedom and jeopardizing their whole education process (Cole, 2012; Tomaševski, 2002).

On the other hand, inclusion is a complex process. It takes special measures in order not to merely assimilate children to a given structure, overlooking their individual needs and/or qualities and simply displacing exclusion more deeply into the educational sphere, reproducing discriminations in the classroom. Such biases limit genuine participation opportunities for the child and his exercise of citizenship (Rustemier, 2002; Sanchez-Mazas & Giesch, 2013).

Exclusion processes are an internal part of inclusion processes and investigating one requires studying the other, as well as the complex relationships between the notions of non-discrimination, equality and equity in education (Espinoza, 2007; Hedegaard Hansen, 2012). This special call invites the attendees to critically discuss how inclusion and exclusion as processes of modifying degrees of freedom for children relate to children’s rights to non-discrimination and participation notably and/or on how inclusion and exclusion as a structure of organising integration and dealing with diversity and interculturality are or could be configured by children’s rights.

Relating to the overall conference theme ‘Inclusion and Exclusion. Resources for Educational Research’, EERA Network 25 Research on Children’s Rights in Education welcomes theoretical, methodological and empirical research submissions as well as practice and project reports that focus, from various disciplinary perspectives, on how structures and processes of inclusion and exclusion relate to children’s rights in early childhood, primary and secondary education. Proposals can be related to the following rights aspects:

(a) non-discrimination,

(b) interculturality and diversity,

(c) participation.

For this special call we invite papers, research workshops, round tables, posters, pecha kuchas, video presentations and symposia. Collaborations across networks are encouraged.

Presenters may later be invited to contribute to a shared network publication.
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References


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