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Local School Ideologies and Inclusion: The Case of Swedish Independent Schools

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This paper reports on the development of a framework for the classification of local school ideologies in relation to inclusion that provides a tool for classifying the general educational direction as well as work with pupils in need of special support of individual schools. The framework defines different aspects of local school ideology in terms of values related to the societal level, school level, and individual level of the education system. The paper also reports on a study exploring variations among Swedish independent schools, concerning local school ideology using the framework as a theoretical tool. In this qualitative analysis, eight schools were selected from results of a questionnaire to all Swedish independent schools (return rate 79.5%) for further analysis based on interviews with different categories of school personnel, parents, and pupils. Five different patterns of local school ideologies were found more or less in line with values of inclusion, e.g. the holistic – inclusive and the market oriented – exclusive. Results are discussed in relation to the multiple and sometimes competing objectives that every school has to deal with and make priorities between. Implications for pupils in need of special support in a school system rapidly undergoing marketization are finally discussed.

Keywords: inclusive schools; school ideology; school culture; special needs; independent schools, framework

Introduction

During the last decade inclusion has become, as Pijl, Meijer and Hegarty put it 'a global agenda' (1997). Even so the development of an inclusive education seems to move slowly (e.g. Ainscow, Booth, and Dyson 2006; EADSNE 2003; Slee 2011).). Instead of understanding this slowness as a failure to implement policy (e.g. Ball 1987; Ball 1990), an alternative way is to look upon inclusion as one of several items on the educational agenda local schools need to make meaning of and incorporate in their 'culture' and every day practice. For this reason inclusion may not be the priority for all schools. Understanding the development of inclusive education in this way calls for studies of variation in values related to schools' interpretation of educational agendas in relation to inclusion. As pointed out by Ainscow et al. (2006) we know relatively little of schools in this respect. In Sweden, as in many Western societies, two examples of

other items on the educational agenda are the quest for raising standards, often narrowed down to increased goal attainment in literacy, mathematics and science and an increased demand upon schools and teachers for accountability. Closely linked to these items are the increased marketization of education, which in turn with its market-driven ideologies can be seen as contradictory to inclusive values (Ainscow et al. 2006). The focus of this study is independent schools in Sweden, as they are one expression of the increased marketization of schooling.

The aim of this article is twofold: a) to develop a conceptual framework for classification of local school ideologies related to inclusion and work with Pupils in Need of Special Support, PNSS¹ and, b) to classify variations in local school ideologies among Swedish independent comprehensive schools using the framework.

The Rise of Independent Schools within the Swedish Compulsory School System

A particular educational system can be viewed as an expression of a specific interpretation of democracy with regard to schooling (Manzer, 2003). In the Swedish context the concept of ‘one school for all’ has been closely linked to the development of the so called ‘welfare state’. Decisions about schooling have been made in the ‘large democracy’ (Englund 1996), that is in a political context. Further, it was deemed important that children from diverse backgrounds actually went to the same schools and classrooms. This was not a matter of individual choice by the families but something prescribed by political decisions. Until around twenty years ago a uniform school system with only public schools was regarded as one of the most important aspects of the equity and equality of education.

The rise of independent schools expresses a new way to look at public education. An increased variation within the school system in terms of schools with different profiles was advocated. In the early 1990’s both left and right wing governments stressed the need for a freedom of choice within the educational sector as a basic principle of a national school organization in a ‘free society’ (Proposition 95 1991/92, 8). Making conditions for independent schools similar to those of the public schools was considered to be one way of increasing the freedom of choice within the educational system. The idea being that parents and pupils would gain more power to influence schooling by being able to *choose* which school to go to. This has been described by Englund (1996) as a shift to an increasing influence of the ‘small democracy’. Advocates for independent schools also argued that competition for pupils in an educational market would increase the efficiency of schools and quality of the education.

At the time of the study independent schools were to be found in 62% of the municipalities. The % of pupils attending independent schools has increased from 2% 1995/96 to 11.8% 2010/11 (Official Statistics of Sweden [OSS] 2011). Teacher density is lower in independent schools as compared to the public schools and the % of teachers with university education in pedagogy is lower. The merit rating (a composite measure of the grades of the pupils) of pupils in grade 9 is however higher in the independent schools.

Most of the research concerning independent schools has been on a general level, e.g. whether independent schools increase educational inequality and/or express a qualitatively new way to understand schooling. The discussion has been dominated by a fear about segregating consequences. Very few studies have attended to special needs education within independent schools. One exception is a

study by Persson and Andreasson about special educational support and the work with intervention plans in comprehensive schools where some independent schools were included (Swedish National Agency for Education [SNAE] 2003). The study was made 2000/01 and since then the % of pupils in independent schools has increased considerably as mentioned above. There are however two more recent surveys. One is addressing special needs education in a sample of comprehensive schools including both municipal and independent schools (Giota, and Emanuelsson, 2011). The other is a national survey directly addressing special needs education within independent schools (Göransson, Magnusson, and Nilholm, in press). All three of these studies indicate that independent schools utilize a variety of ways in their work with pupils in need of special support. No studies have however looked closer at the variation between individual schools regarding underpinning values in relation to inclusion and PNSS.

A Framework for Local School Ideologies and Inclusion FLSI

As pointed out by e.g. Florian and Kershner (2009) ‘The elements of inclusive pedagogy clearly spread beyond individual classrooms to include the beliefs, values and decision-making processes evident in the wider contexts of school and society’ (p. 175). The FLSI is an attempt to capture certain core values and beliefs in terms of local school ideologies, regarding education in relation to inclusion. The concept local school ideology is understood as a value frame constructed through negotiations between different stakeholders (e.g. Ball 1987). The framework defines different aspects of local school ideology in terms of values related to the societal level, school level, and individual level of the education system (cf. Daniels, Lauder and Porter, 2009):

- societal level – values and beliefs regarding purpose and primary aim of schooling
- school level – values and beliefs related to effective/progressive pedagogical practices
- individual level – values and beliefs regarding work with PNSS.

Values and Beliefs Regarding Purpose and Primary Aim of Schooling – Societal Level

In an analysis of values underlying the charter school movement Lazaridou’s and Fries’ (2006) propose a three-fold typology of values regarding purpose and primary goal of schooling related to the three main political philosophies: egalitarianism, communitarianism and libertarianism. The typology is based on Manzer’s (2003) work on political ideological traditions and educational regimes. The purpose of the typology is to ‘surface and clarify the values of stakeholders’ (Lazaridou and Fris, 2005, p 66). The *egalitarian* view regards education’s main purpose, as helping to attain a more equal and equitable society. Pupils’ personal development is focused as a primary goal of schooling. From the *communitarian* perspective, transmission of the culture and contribution to continuity in society is the primary goal of schooling. It places great emphasis on membership in a group, on safety in school and on discipline. According to the *libertarian* perspective, education’s main purpose is to contribute to a competitive society with minimal regulation from the state and where the responsibility for oneself is stressed. Accountability, knowledge goals and pupils’ responsibility for their own learning are emphasized. Relating

those perspectives to a general understanding of inclusion we propose that the egalitarian view is most in accordance with inclusive values with its focus on equity, equality and the uniqueness of each individual.

Values and Beliefs Related to Effective/Progressive Pedagogical Practices – School Level

This aspect refers to school culture in terms of providing an educational environment where *all* pupils can thrive and learn, i.e. an educational environment that meets the variety of pupils. Several different organizational models of school cultures have been developed (e.g. Brady 2008; James and Conolly 2009; Kugelmass 2006), for the purpose of this research we have turned to ‘The new model of school culture’ developed by Schoen and Teddlie (2008) based on Schein’s model of organizational culture (1985, 2010). The reason for this is that the model is a result of a literature review encompassing school effectiveness research and school improvement research, which has bearing on our understanding of inclusion. The model makes it possible to evaluate to which degree a school culture is in line with school improvement. For the sake of analysis the values and beliefs that characterise a school are categorized as being *in line with school improvement*, *in between* or *not in line with school improvement*.

The model discerns four different dimensions of school culture, the first being *professional orientation* which focuses on practices and attitudes within the faculty as regards professional development concerning student learning and teaching, specifically the degree of collective involvement within the faculty. Secondly *organizational structure* which refers on a general level to the governance of the school, e.g. type of leadership, organization of faculty members, type of written documentation, distribution of responsibilities. The third dimension *quality of the learning environment* which focuses on indicators of a learning environment that provides opportunities for all pupils to engage in meaningful and cognitively challenging experiences. The final dimension is *student-centered focus* which refers to the degree with which values and practices regarding e.g. instructional strategies and other pupil support are pedagogically differentiated depending on the abilities and interests of the pupil.

Values and Beliefs Regarding Work with PNSS – Individual Level

Regarding values and beliefs in relation to work with PNSS, most analysts agree that there are at least two basic perspectives within the field of special needs education (Nilholm, 2006). According to one educational difficulties are primarily viewed as the result of individual shortcomings and segregated educational arrangements are mainly proposed as solutions. This perspective is labelled somewhat differently by different scholars, e.g. as a *deficit perspective* (Ainscow 1998) or as a compensatory perspective (Haug 1998). As pointed out by Clark, Dyson and Millward (1998), this orthodoxy has been heavily criticized and an alternative perspective has emerged where social processes, rather than individual shortcomings, are viewed as lying ‘behind’ (Skrtic 1991) special educational needs. We refer to this perspective as the *relational perspective* (Persson 1998). Within this approach, different factors are proposed as causing the need for a special educational system: socioeconomic/structural inequalities, discourses, professional interests and/or the failure of mainstream education to adapt to children’s differences (cf. Clark, Dyson, and Millward 1998). Inclusive education is proposed as an alternative to a separate special educational system (Booth,

and Ainscow 2002) and special needs education is often discussed as a democratic issue (e.g Skrtic 1998; Haug 1998; cf. Nilholm 2006). Ainscow (1998) also discerns a third perspective which can be called the '*interactive*' perspective. From this perspective educational difficulties are viewed as a combination of individual shortcomings and factors at different levels within the environment. This interactive perspective has much in common with the relational perspective and is in accordance with the notion of inclusion, while a deficit perspective is not in accordance with the notion of inclusion.

Summary

The FLSI attempts to provide a conceptual tool for the classification of local school ideologies. It defines values and beliefs related to different levels of the education system:

- Values and beliefs regarding purpose and primary aim of schooling – societal level
 - egalitarian
 - communitarian
 - libertarian
- Values and beliefs related to effective/progressive pedagogical practices – school level
 - fully in line with school improvement
 - in between
 - not in line with school improvement
- Values and beliefs regarding work with PNSS – individual level
 - relational perspective
 - interactive perspective
 - deficit perspective

Examples of Local School Ideologies in Swedish Independent Schools

Using the FLSI we will now proceed to present an empirical study of local school ideologies in a sample of eight independent compulsory schools in Sweden.

Method

Participants

Eight schools were chosen from 546 independent comprehensive schools answering a national survey comprising all independent comprehensive schools in Sweden (response rate 79.5%). A stratified purposeful sampling procedure was used to reflect a variation between participating schools. Results from the national survey were used to categorize the schools in three different groups. Category A consisted of schools

with either a high proportion of answers indicating a relational perspective, or a high proportion of answers indicating a deficit perspective. Category B consisted of schools which either specialized in

education for particular diagnose-groups of pupils, or had many segregated groups for PNSS. Category C finally consisted of schools whose answer on an open ended question indicated, that they challenged traditional educational practices by providing alternative ways to meet diversity among pupils. Three schools were chosen from category A, two representing a relational perspective – A1r and A2r – and one a deficit perspective – A3d. Two schools were chosen from category B – B1 and B2 – and three schools from category C – C1, C2, and C3.

Data Collection

Two types of data were collected from the participating schools: a) semi-structured interviews with principals, special teacher and/or SENCO's (special educational needs coordinators), class-teachers, pupils in need of special support and parents; b) an evaluation by the respondents regarding purpose and primary aim of schooling based on Lazaridou's and Fris'(2005) typology as described in the framework. A paper with a description of the typologies was shared with the respondents and the respondents were asked to rank the typologies in relation to how they reflected their own school's practice. This question about typologies was put to the principals, special teachers or SENCOs, the class teachers and the parents. During the interviews the respondents were asked to look upon themselves as representatives of the school and a recurring follow up question during the interviews was 'do you think this is representative of the views of all the faculty members/parents/pupils?'

In total 72 people were interviewed in 48 interviews. Interview length varied between 34-121 minutes with a mean of 55 minutes. All interviews were recorded and transcribed resulting in 540 A4 pages of text. Most of the transcribed interviews were checked by respondents (not the interviews with the pupils), before they were

Table 1. Number and time of interviews in the eight schools

School	Principal	Special teacher/SENCO	Class teachers	Pupils	Parents
A1r	1* (57 min**)	1 (52 min)	3 (55 min) ***	3 (58 min)	1 (58 min)**** 1 (40 min)
A2r	1 (66 min)	1 (48 min)	1 (54 min) 1 (49 min)	2 (35 min)	1 (55 min) 1 (40 min)
A3d	1 (55 min)	1 (76 min)	3 (57 min)	2 (38 min)	1 (48 min) 1 (34 min)
B1	1 (121 min)	2 (55 min)	2 (56 min)	2 (35 min) 3 (39 min)	1 (51 min) 1 (48 min)
B2	1 (61 min)	1 (68 min)	1 (85 min)	1 (30 min)	-----
C1	1 (62 min)	2 (65 min)	2 (61 min)	3 (50 min)	1 (60 min) 1 (30 min)
C2	1 (53 min)	1 (57 min)	2 (56 min)	3 (34 min)	1 (56 min) 1 (57 min)
C3	1 (62 min)	1 (69 min)	2 (69 min)	3 (66 min)	1 (53 min) 1 (62 min)

Notes: *number of persons interviewed; **57 minutes; *** interviewed in group,

****interviewed separately

included in the data. Table 1 shows interviewed respondents and time of each interview in each school.

In all but two schools, one special teacher or SENCO was interviewed. Schools B1 and C1 however had several SENCOs/special teachers and two at each school were interviewed together in a group. In all schools but two, class teachers were interviewed in groups of 2-3. At school A2r two class teachers were interviewed individually as this was the only practical possibility. At school B2 it was only possible to interview one pupil and one class teacher. Despite several contacts with the principal with requests for information to contact parents this was not received, hence data from parents are missing from this school. In all other schools pupils were interviewed in groups. At school B1 two groups of pupils were interviewed as this was arranged in connection with our visit, as an initiative from the principal.

All participants were informed about the project and its aims and that participation was voluntary. All the parents to the participating pupils were informed beforehand and gave a written consent.

Data Analysis

Each school constituted the unit of analysis. Data analysis consisted of two main steps. The first main step aimed at getting a condensed description of each school. A first categorization consisted of organizing the content of each interview in: professional orientation, organizational structure, quality of the learning environment and student-centered focus (Schoen, and Teddlie 2008). Meaning units were then defined, condensed, and organized in themes. These condensed meaning units consisted both of direct citations from the text and descriptions keeping close to the transcribed text. Each respondent was still kept separate as to make tracing the meaning unit to the original text easier. The condensed meaning units from each respondent, still kept in each dimension, were then assembled. Put together, with the evaluation by the respondents of the purpose and primary aim of schooling based on Lazaridou's and Fris' typology (2005), this gave a condensed description of each school.

The next main step in the analysis was to analyze these condensed descriptions in relation to the proposed framework for school ideologies and inclusion.

Results

Table 2 shows the different local school ideologies in relation to the framework. Three of the schools have local ideologies in line with the notion of inclusion, C1, C2 and C3, in terms of expressed values and beliefs regarding purpose and primary aim of schooling, pedagogical practices and work with PNSS. The local ideologies of schools A1r, B1 and A2r show a more mixed picture featuring values and beliefs more or less in accordance with the notion of inclusion. Two schools, A3d and B2, have local ideologies least in line with the notion of inclusion. We call the local school ideologies: holistic-inclusive, formative assessment and evaluation, segregated participation, straggly, and market oriented-exclusive.

Holistic – Inclusive (Schools C1, C2 and C3)

At the core of each of these schools' local ideologies is a pedagogical philosophy on which they are founded. A majority of the respondents stated in the interviews

Table 2. Summary of local school ideologies in relation to FLSII.

School	Purpose and primary aim of schooling (Societal level)			Effectiveness/progressiveness of pedagogical practices (school level)			Work with PNSS (individual level)		
	Egalitarian	Communitarian	Libertarian	In line with school improvement	In between	Not in line with school improvement	Relational perspective	Interactive perspective	Deficiency perspective
C1				C1				C1	
C2				C2				C2	
C3				C3				C3	
A1r	A1r		XA1r	A1r			A1r		
B1	B1			B1				B1	
A2r	A2r					A2r	A2r		A2r
A3d	A3d		A3d			A3d			A3d
B2	B2		B2			B2			B2

that the main purpose of education is helping to attain a more equal and equitable society and pupils' personal development is focused as a primary goal of schooling.

Expressed values and beliefs relating to pedagogical practices are characterized by progressiveness. The faculties are said to be characterized by a vivid and continuous discussion about value ground and questions of a didactic nature. There is a consensus among the respondents' descriptions regarding professional orientation, organizational structure, quality of the learning environment and student-centered focus of the school. That is the respondents describe learning environments that are characterized by a very conscious pedagogical approach, articulated in terms of ethics, moral obligations and values as well as the importance of knowledge goals. This is for example formulated in terms of the importance of a holistic perspective on the pupils, making the pupils feel that they have a right 'to be as they are', supporting them to become 'good individuals as grownups', 'to take responsibility for their own learning', 'to become responsible citizens who can make independent and active choices'. Teaching in home group or class is sandwiched with thematic studies together with other classes for all pupils, and joint activities for the whole school.

Reasons for educational difficulties are expressed in terms of a mismatch between characteristics of the individual pupil and qualities of the environment with a focus on individuality and flexibility, i.e. they express an interactive perspective. In the respondents descriptions of the learning environments there is an emphasis on the importance of focusing on the individual pupil's need with individual planning for each pupil and flexibility in relation to individual pupil's needs regarding forms of special support 'it depends on what help one needs'. Special support in the class is said to be the main principle. The respondents however also state that depending on the character of the educational difficulties special support may be in the form of e.g. individual tuition by special teacher or instruction in a smaller group, for a shorter period. Special support may also involve supporting the pupil's strengths as a way of strengthen self-esteem. One principal exemplified this by discussing a boy who started at their school a few months before the interview: 'We got a boy now after Christmas who thought I can't do anything I'm not worth anything. He was weak in mathematics but he was very good at drawing. So he is getting some extra lessons in drawing and painting as well as extra support in mathematics, and through that he will hopefully grow and some blockages loosen'. The importance of differentiating the curriculum is also expressed in terms of the importance of person chemistry: '...that it shall fit with the pupils, that is, that the person chemistry between teacher and pupil and parents work. Some parents need a high level of clarity and straightforwardness, as some pupils do. It is important that these persons fit together, so sometimes we have to move around'.

Formative Assessment and Evaluation, (School A1r)

The focus of the activities of this school is music and dance. The local ideology has not developed within the context of any particular pedagogical philosophy. The principal also declares that they '...have not consciously tried to develop any super new thinking around pedagogical issues, but rather to secure a conscious way to work with assessments as a way to monitor and support the development of the pupils'. Salient features in the interviews are also ideas about the importance of organizing routines for assessment, follow-up and evaluation of the development of each pupil in accordance with the goals of the school and national steering documents. In this vein they have for example developed several types of matrixes to monitor and follow the development of each pupil.

There are matrixes in each subject with steps, these matrixes are then summarized in an overall matrix, etc. There is a conscious strategy for the professional development which the faculty is collectively involved in. The teachers are described as ‘very ambitious and committed’. Parents describe the faculty members as ‘open to new thinking’, however not in relation to PNSS. There is a clear consensus among the respondents, that school problems are to be understood as problems within the educational environment. The SENCO makes observations in the class room and she means that one of the biggest challenges is ‘to work with the teacher in the classroom’. She further claims that the atmosphere is that school problems ‘should be solved in the class room’. These are examples of some of the characteristics that together indicate a local school ideology in line with school improvement with a relational perspective on school problems. There is however disagreement among the respondents regarding the purpose and primary aim of schooling.

Segregated Participation (School B1)

The school resembles a special school, a way of describing the school also used by some of the respondents. The pupils consist of a small group of children with autism spectrum disorders, speech disorders, communication disorders and pupils with AD/HD. The school was established as a result of demands made by parents, which the principal emphasizes as important to know. The respondents express a communitarian view on schooling, with emphasis on group membership and safety, there is no talk about school as an agent for creating a more equal and equitable society. The ideology is further characterized by pedagogical values in line with school improvement, and by an interactive perspective on school problems.

At the core of this local ideology is a certain pedagogical strategy developed mainly by the principal in cooperation with a university according to the respondents. A main focus of the strategy is to provide safety and predictability for the pupils. Judging by the descriptions it has elements from TEACCH, cognitive behavioral therapy, and from nonverbal communication theories. Individualized instructions also seem to be a salient characteristic. This pedagogical approach is implemented in in-service training and weekly meetings where the faculty members are supervised by their own SENCOs or by external experts.

The school is managed and closely controlled by the principal whose relatives own the school. One of the parents says: ‘She is very notable, it is all very clear that this is her school, which gives the school stability and a clear direction’. Inclusion is, as described by the principal, a goal for her school. The school has also been successful in this regard, according to the principal, as some pupils have been able, to move on to and participate in main stream classes on the upper secondary school level.

Straggly (School A2r)

This local school ideology is founded around a bicultural concept. The underpinning values of the purpose and primary goal of schooling is described as communitarian with a focus on transmission of the culture of X-land.

The values and beliefs related to the effectiveness of pedagogical practices are not in line with school improvement. The leadership is described as weak with little influence over school

matters, there is no tradition of a jointly shared in-service training, the engagement by parents is described as low etc. The local school ideology seems to harbor two distinct pedagogical cultures, one culture representing a Swedish tradition and one the educational tradition of X-land according to the respondents. The pedagogical culture of X-land is described by proponents of the Swedish tradition as emphasizing discipline and rote learning with elitist aims, as trying to ‘take away the initiatives from pupils, that is what I think I see very often. The pupils get no real freedom and I think that is devastating. We’ve had some conflicts concerning this. There are absolutely different cultures in this school’. The faculty is described as a ‘war zone’ or as a ‘closely united group’, depending on whom you talk to.

Regarding work with PNSS there is a consensus that the school is not characterized by any innovative practices. Depending on whom you talk to school problems are expressed as a result of social processes or as a result of pupils’ shortcomings. There are neither any common strategies to identify pupils in need of special support, nor any common strategies regarding how to deal with diversity among pupils. It is described as being very much up to each teacher, to deal with it within the class. There are no special educational groups in the school, individual tuition after the school day as a form of support occurs but very seldom. Repeating a grade, by remaining in the same grade for two years, although not often used as means of PNSS does occur now and then.

Market Oriented - Exclusive (A3d and B2)

The local ideologies of these two schools are characterized by mixed vision of purpose and primary aim of schooling, values that are not in line with school improvement, and a deficit perspective on school problems. There is not agreement between respondents regarding underpinning values of the purpose and primary goals of schooling. However it is not a total disagreement. The purposes and primary aims of schooling are described as either representing a communitarian perspective, with focus on continuity, membership in the group, safety and discipline, or as representing a libertarian perspective with focus on accountability, knowledge goals and pupils’ responsibility for their own learning. Concepts like diversity, equality, community and equity do not seem to have any prominent standing. When directly confronted with these concepts in relation to PNSS, in a group interview with teachers they for example answer: ‘I have honestly not thought along those lines’ (Teacher 1). ‘Neither have I’ (Teacher 2).

Regarding values and beliefs related to pedagogical practices, the interviews give a picture that is more in line with non-progressive than with progressive schools. The interviews paint a picture of limited cooperation between teachers, a perceived lack of consensus regarding pedagogical issues, different value grounds and different views on how to meet PNSS etc. within the faculties. ‘There are different attitudes between teachers of different subjects, we don’t cooperate so much between subjects, we haven’t accomplished that yet’ (teacher). ‘I plan my own teaching, I close the door and try to make myself as happy as I can, but it’s a bit difficult with big visions and any long-term planning under such circumstances’ (teacher).

Teaching is described as being focused on the subjects and on individual work, rather than on dialogue and group assignments. Thematic studies and cooperation between classes is said to seldom occur. There is no spontaneous mentioning of different pupils’ learning styles or individualization of goals or ways to reach the goals. Lessons are described as being standardized

with the same structure and basic design. Parents and pupils are occasionally referred to as customers.

Regarding values related to PNSS educational problems are mainly explained in terms of pupil deficiencies, e.g. because they are abnormal, have concentration difficulties, are not study-motivated, or have a diagnosis. The deficiency perspective is also formulated in terms of pupils disturbing the activities of the school. The tradition regarding provision of special support, is that pupils are taken from their class for individual tuition or instruction in a smaller group. This is however also criticized by some of the respondents, who at the same time mention that there are different opinions about the role of the special teacher.

Discussion

FLSI as a Theoretical Tool for Classifying Local School Ideologies

The FLSI has been developed and used in our study to examine local school ideologies in Swedish independent schools. The Swedish school system is undergoing an increased marketization however there has been very few attempts to study the consequences of this shift in educational regime as regards pupils in need of special support. By defining values related to different levels of the education system the FLSI gives an enhanced understanding of the value frame underpinning decisions and priorities, making it possible to examine the prominence of different goals and the cohesiveness of particular local school ideologies. This is important considering the multiplicity of goals, of which one is the notion of inclusion, each school has to handle. By using the FLSI we have attempted to throw some light on what the consequences might be for pupils in need of special support in a context where market ideologies are increasingly more prominent.

Eight Schools and Five Types of Local School Ideologies

Using a sampling procedure aimed at reflecting a variation between the eight participating schools selected from the initial responses to the national questionnaires results show five patterns of local school ideologies. Two are contrary to each other in relation to values of inclusion. Three show a mix of values partly in line with and partly against the current understanding of inclusion. These three schools have in common that they are *not* based on values with any straightforward relation to neither inclusion nor market ideologies. The goals that are influencing these schools are of another nature: to develop the art of music and dancing (A1r), to develop a new pedagogy for pupils with neuropsychiatric diagnoses (B1), and to preserve a cultural identity among a group of immigrants (A2r). These goals colour the local ideologies of the schools and seem to be regarded as superior to other goals such as inclusion or marketization.

The schools classified as having a Holistic-Inclusive local school ideology have in common that they are based on pedagogical philosophies encompassing inclusive values. There are no expressions in the schools of the fact that they are part of a market or indication of whether this is regarded as advantageous or not. A salient feature of the ideology seems instead to be to further develop practices in line with the particular pedagogical philosophy. However the emergence of an educational market with the possibility of different alternatives has probably facilitated the establishment and running of these schools, e.g. they are not bound by any centralized administration or subordinated to decisions in a municipality, they can employ teachers with a pedagogical perspective in line with the school's philosophy and

emphasize goals and educational ambitions in line with that philosophy as long as they are within the limits of national steering documents.

Contrasting the Holistic-Inclusive local school ideology is the Market oriented-Exclusive local school ideology. These schools appear to be based on values more in line with market ideologies. Salient features of this local school ideology are accountability, an emphasis on knowledge goals which every pupil must be thoroughly aware of, on discipline, the use of what might be described as production efficient methods such as standardized lessons, and the celebration of short and fast decision making. Pupils and parents are occasionally referred to as customers. The notion of inclusion is not prominent in these schools, indeed it does not seem to be on their agenda at all.

Final Conclusion

Our study has been done within the Swedish school system which has recently been undergoing rapid marketization. An increasing variety of schools partly attracting specific groups of pupils distances the school system from the former vision of ‘of one school for all’. The results show that there are substantial differences between schools that can be understood as differences in local school ideologies more or less in line with values of inclusion. However important it is hardly surprising as there are many and sometimes competing objectives on the national level as shown in a critical analysis of the Swedish education system by Göransson, Nilholm and Karlsson (2011). One example of this is the option to choose school which was proclaimed to be a basic principle of a national school organization in a ‘free society’, but which on the other hand can be seen as bringing about a division of pupils with segregating consequences. It is here of importance to note, that the Swedish school system according to Vlachos (2011) does not provide parents with qualitatively good enough information to make informed decisions about school choice. Vlachos also emphasizes that Sweden seems to be unique in allowing private companies to run schools and allocate profits to the shareholders. This brings up some important questions such as: To what extent are PNSS valued and welcomed in a school system characterized by an increased marketization? To what extent is special support provided within inclusive or exclusive contexts?

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Note.

1. We use the concept “Pupils *in* Need of Special Support”, PNSS, rather than pupils *with* special educational needs, since that is how that group of pupils is defined within the Swedish legislation. It should be pointed out that several of these pupils would in other educational system be defined as pupils with disabilities, for instance, learning disabilities.

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