

We are IntechOpen, the world's leading publisher of Open Access books Built by scientists, for scientists

6,900

Open access books available

186,000

International authors and editors

200M

Downloads

Our authors are among the

154

Countries delivered to

TOP 1%

most cited scientists

12.2%

Contributors from top 500 universities



WEB OF SCIENCE™

Selection of our books indexed in the Book Citation Index
in Web of Science™ Core Collection (BKCI)

Interested in publishing with us?
Contact book.department@intechopen.com

Numbers displayed above are based on latest data collected.
For more information visit www.intechopen.com



Curriculum Ideologies Reflecting Pre-Service Teachers' Stances toward Inclusive Education

Marita Mäkinen

Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.76326>

Abstract

This chapter presents the results of the study of pre-service teachers' curriculum ideologies and what kind of belief stances about inclusive education they reflect. The chapter also provides insights into the steps the schools are taking toward inclusive school culture in Finland. The data were collected from 115 pre-service teachers in connection with two undergraduate study courses within the Primary School Teacher Education (PSTE) program. Their written reflections were interpreted through the lenses of curriculum ideology framework and inclusive education reform agenda. The findings reveal two types of tensions between pre-service teachers' curriculum ideologies: "knowledge versus experience" and "adoption versus reconstruction." These tensions reflect pre-service teachers' prerequisites for working in inclusive settings and ways to interpret the inclusive agenda stated by the international and national declarations. The results are discussed and suggestions are made for ways to enhance the implementation of inclusive education and develop teacher education.

Keywords: inclusive education, pre-service teachers, teacher education, curriculum ideologies

1. Introduction

In the current global educational movement, the term inclusion is not agreed upon. According to Kiuppis's [1] review of the UNESCO policies, the various definitions of inclusion seem to stem from the divide between the progress of "Inclusive Education" and "Education for All."

"Inclusive Education" originates from the Salamanca Statement [2], which is considered the starting point of a "new thinking" in special needs education. Since then, it has had a pivotal

role in the definition of educational international policies (e.g., [3]) and in the reforms of school curricula and guidelines of pedagogical practices of many countries, pushing the field of education to strengthen systems and develop support for children with special needs [1].

“Education for All,” in turn, began in the social justice agenda and was introduced by the “World Conference on Education for All” in Jomtien in 1990; the idea behind this concept was a call for every child to have a right to a basic education. This agenda has strongly accelerated since the agreement of the “United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” [4]. Accordingly, inclusion has been accepted worldwide as a basic right and the foundation for an equal society. Furthermore, in many countries, the education systems have been reformed to reduce inequalities, develop teacher and system capabilities, encourage supportive learning environments, and develop high-quality support for vulnerable learners so that they can reach their potential (e.g., [5]). Although the idea of inclusion has been widely accepted, the global declarations espousing the ideals of inclusion rarely, if ever, mandate educational systems to establish inclusion.

In Finland, it has been corollary to agree with this “Education for All” philosophy because education has traditionally been perceived as a mechanism for enhancing social justice and equal educational opportunities for all students. However, the education system has maintained the “twin-track model” of labeling “exceptional” the individualized instruction, accommodations, and support most appropriate for their students before they are entitled to receive needs within special education settings.

The ongoing change started within the Special Education Strategy [6], which launched the updating of the legislation [7] and the National Core Curriculum [8] to be in line with the Salamanca Statement [2]. Since then, student diversity in mainstream settings has been rebuilt on the instructional “three-tier support model.” The support consists of three steps: general, intensified, and special support. In addition, multicultural approaches are topical in Finland, entailing educational strategies that incorporate previously marginalized ethnic groups into the curriculum. The most recent National Core Curriculum [9], which has been implemented in schools since August 2016, relies on an inclusive principle in its underlining of student participation and requiring the meaningfulness of learning, making it possible for every student to experience success, as stated in the following:

The development of basic education is guided by the inclusion principle. The accessibility of education must be ensured. This means supporting the pupils’ learning, development and well-being in cooperation with the homes. Basic education offers the pupils possibilities for versatile development of their competence. It reinforces the pupils’ positive identity as human beings, learners and community members. Education promotes participation, a sustainable way of living and growth as a member of a democratic society. Basic education educates the pupils to know, respect and defend human rights. The social task of basic education is to promote equity, equality and justice. ([9], p. 18).

As the excerpt indicates, Finland has adopted the UNESCO [10] policy guidelines that combine both notions of inclusion by understanding inclusion as a “process aimed to offering

quality education for all while respecting diversity and the` different needs and abilities, characteristics and learning expectations of the students and communities, eliminating all forms of discrimination” (p. 18).

However, the discrepancies between these two inclusion approaches have given rise to pedagogical confusion for teachers regarding how to interpret the NCC’s [9] agenda and apply inclusive pedagogies. Pedagogical concerns have also been caused by the fact that the “inclusive principle” includes a twofold demand for teachers: inclusive pedagogy should address the individual learning needs of students (cf. [11, 12]), and it should include all students who face barriers to full participation in learning (cf. [13]).

As discussed earlier, the reforms of putting inclusion into the curriculum are interlaced and presently highly debatable concepts in terms of enhancing the quality of teaching for all. Teachers especially feel confused because they are viewed as having the most direct impact on the day-to-day educational experiences of students in inclusive classrooms. They are responsible for encountering and treating all students equally, regardless of their [dis]abilities, social class, ethnicity, religion, or gender, as stated in the NCC [9]. At its heart, inclusion involves teachers’ commitment to the values of equity, equality, and participation.

Hence, teachers’ set of beliefs in a situation where they are expected to implement new curriculum agenda and practices are crucially important for the success of the reform (cf. [14–16]). Therefore, if the attitudes and beliefs of teachers are not considered, especially when a radical change is in progress, more resistance from the teachers’ side will be experienced (cf. [17]), and the commitment to change will be limited [15, 18]. As Schubert [19] has noted, curriculum is the practical application of a teacher’s personal beliefs. That is to say, teachers’ beliefs give meaning to their curriculum, and their instructional endeavors reflect their curriculum ideology [20, 21].

For the current study, the curriculum reform in Finland serves as an impetus for exploring how pre-service teachers have understood and interpret the inclusive principle stated in the NCC [9]. The meaning of considering pre-service teachers is derived from the fact that they are regarded as change agents because of the updated knowledge that they have recently acquired. Furthermore, signals of confusion among the teachers, as shown in Haines et al. [24], signals the need to collect data from teachers to identify their set of beliefs and what kinds of curriculum ideologies they hold. The results are critical for enhancing the successful implementation of the inclusion principle, as well as developing teacher education.

This chapter also presents insights into the steps the schools in Finland are taking toward inclusive school culture, which is examined and interpreted through the lens of pre-service teachers. Therefore, in the chapter, I present the results of the study and address the following questions:

- What are the curriculum ideologies of pre-service teachers participating in the teacher education program?
- What kind of stances about inclusive education do these reflections represent?

2. Curriculum ideologies

According to Schiro [20, 21], a curriculum ideology is a practical philosophy that influences a teacher's day-to-day behaviors toward curriculum issues. However, other scholars use the phrase curriculum orientation (e.g., [14, 19, 22, 23]). In the current study, I draw on Schiro's [20, 21] framework, in which the beliefs about the purpose of curriculum (education) are divided into four distinctive ideologies: the *scholar academic*, the *social efficiency*, the *learner-centered* (child study), and the *social reconstruction* ideology.

The scholar academic ideology is concerned with maintaining "cultural literacy" by having students study the content and modes of inquiry of traditional academic subjects. The social efficiency ideology aims at efficiently carrying out a task for society, providing knowledge and skills that give students the ability to function in society. The learner-centered ideology places the student in the center of the educational endeavor and is concerned with helping each student grow into a unique individual who has a healthy self-concept. The social reconstruction ideology attempts to help students understand the crises facing society, develop a value stance toward those crises, and learn how to act to relieve the crises, thereby bringing into existence a better society [20, 21].

According to Schiro [20, 21], these ideologies are roughly parallel to the academic, vocational, personal, and social goals for education. Each curriculum ideology is more akin to a pedagogical subculture than to a goal; each has an impact on teachers' thinking about the nature of knowledge, the curriculum intent (aims, goals, and learning objectives), teaching strategies, learning, students, and evaluation methods (e.g., [19–21, 25, 26]). They also affect students because the underlying values and beliefs of each ideology not only influence what is taught but also how and why it is taught [20, 27]. It has also been shown that curriculum ideologies play an important role in the success of any reform movement [25].

3. Research site and methods

In connection with two undergraduate courses entitled "Inclusive Education" and "Teaching Practicum," the current study was conducted at a multidisciplinary research university within the Primary School Teacher Education (PSTE) program in Finland. All participants were enrolled in both courses. The participants were 115 pre-service teachers who were completing their teacher qualification for primary school. The "Inclusive Education" course focused on discussing the theoretical underpinnings of student diversity (such as language, abilities, background, religion, and gender) and the current instructional support system as a means of enhancing inclusive school culture. The students were encouraged to work in small teams to construct a shared understanding and build new ideas of how to enhance inclusion in daily school curriculum.

In addition, the course included a week-long field experiment that asked students to visit one school community and find out how the inclusion principle was implemented in accordance with the NCC [9]. They were encouraged to observe the school community and classroom practices, conduct interviews with the in-service teachers, special needs teachers, school

principals, and welfare staff, take part in teacher meetings, and so forth. The students also wrote reflective journals based on the coursework and field experiments. They were challenged to express their beliefs, attentions, and values on what had caught their attention relating to the ongoing reform.

The data from the "Teaching Practicum" were collected through the pre-service teachers' written narrative reflections, which allowed them to examine their lived experiences, biases, and assumptions about teaching. These two types of writings provided a window through which to understand the essence of the pre-service experience of teaching in inclusive settings. The data set thus comprised 230 reflective texts written during and after these two courses. Participants were numbered 1–115 with an acronym PRE, which refers to reflective journals, and a different acronym PRAC, which refers to narrative reflections.

Through the content analysis (cf. [28]), it was possible to articulate variations of students' meaning making and varied ways of experiencing and interpreting their curriculum ideologies from the perspective of inclusive reform. The meaning unit was determined as either a complete description of an individual's lived experience or a brief notional statement called an "episode." Thereafter, I divided the episodes into topics, which consisted of repetitive reflections that emerged through several readings of the data. The topics were then classified and reduced into themes. Finally, six main themes emerged to describe the pre-service teachers' belief stances toward inclusive education (reported elsewhere). However, in this chapter, I do not follow the study analysis as such but rather examine the data from the perspective of thinking with theory [29], which method uses the data to think with, and use theory to think about the data. I interpreted the data through the lens of Schiro's [20, 21] framework by connecting the data and the curriculum ideologies to each other from the perspective of inclusive reform.

The analysis of thinking with theory revealed two main tensions between pre-service teachers' curriculum ideologies [20], namely "knowledge versus experience" between the scholar academic and learner-centered ideology and the "adoption versus reconstruction" between the social efficiency and social reconstruction ideology. I picked crucial episodes that serve as examples of how the pre-service teachers interpreted the inclusive reform and what types of curriculum ideology they reflect. In this way, I was able to highlight the teachers' belief stances and prerequisites for working in inclusive settings and ways to interpret the NCC's [9] inclusive agenda.

4. Knowledge versus experience

Although the basis of scholarly academic ideology rests on the belief that acquiring an understanding of academic knowledge involves learning the content knowledge and ways of thinking [20], the learner-centered ideology focus is solely on the student. The student's educational needs and interests are central to learning and must be incorporated in the learning experience. In the following, two pre-service teachers make meaning and reflect on their experiences of the teaching practicum. The former episode refers to a scholarly academic ideology and the latter one to a learner-centered ideology:

It is not enough that you have understood and your pupils have understood the subject matter; rather everyone should even understand the same matter by the same time and in addition together. (...) I have been wondering, indeed, how I know my subject matter of school so badly. I must concentrate on using the right terms. I fail even with my well-practiced demonstrations. My authority feels insufficient. If the students take the upper hand, it all ends up in chaos. The problem with questions is that you prepare a new topic with questions, that you ask children questions about things they cannot have enough information about. (...) My personal opinion is that it is the teacher's task to teach. (PRAC 89).

A successful moment is when students are eager to learn new things and feel encouraged to use their new skills (...) when we experience a moment of flow together, when we experience joy and freedom. There was a kind of positive atmosphere in the classroom. I listened and gave them opportunities, and then I felt that I created security in a way that nobody laughed at anybody no matter what they said. It's important to stay positive.

All learning seems to be based on interaction (...) only in interaction first with another person and later with other persons will students get a mirror to look in and a frame in which he or she can develop. (PRAC 08).

The episodes above illustrate the tension between knowledge and experience, which occurs between the traditional curriculum, developed to guide students on how to acquire knowledge and solve problems, and the learner-centered curriculum, advocated by constructivism as a way to emphasize an individual's activity and learning experience.

According to scholarly academic ideology, the meaning of knowledge is its ability to contribute to the extension of the academic discipline (cf. [20]). Thus, the subject matter is determined and selected from the knowledge bases of disciplines, such as biology or physics, by "specialist scholars" who are expected to bring down this knowledge to teachers and students. The impact on teachers is that they should also be specialists in the disciplines being taught, keeping the hierarchy between scholars at the top and students at the base.

In turn, the main idea of the learner-centered ideology is that learning is seen as an active process driven by the interest of the individual student. Schiro [20] exemplified the distinction to the previous ideology as "I have experienced" is more important than "I know," that is, the first-hand experience of reality is more important than the second-hand experience gained through a textbook. Curriculum is designed in line with Piagetian ideas about the stages of development, assuming that the construction of the learning process should be in harmony with students' cognitive stages (cf. [30, 31]). The impact on the teachers is that they are seen as facilitators of the discussion, debate, and interaction between students and their learning environment.

Although scholarly academic ideology prefers teaching methods such as Socratic questioning, didactic discussion and supervised practice, for the learner-centered ideologist, teaching is to be adapted to the individual student, and the student's authentic activity is seen as a prerequisite for education [20]. These distinctions between the stances on teaching are crucial in terms of inclusive education. The following episodes demonstrate two contrasting ways pre-service teachers observed and formed an attitude regarding the activities in the inclusive classroom. The first episode echoes scholarly academic ideology, even though the participant attempted to recognize the individual students, while the latter one refers to more learner-centered ideology:

There was a one student labeled as receiving intensified support in the Finnish class. This student sat in front of the classroom, in the middle of two other students. The lesson proceeded through a common conversation into the writing task. The task was made independently. Most of the teacher's time was spent in assisting that one 'intensified support' receiving student. Writing was not easy for him, and he needed the teacher's help frequently. So, the teacher had to go through the text word by word with him. When assisting that student all the time, the teacher did not have any time to go around the class during the performance of the assignment. She shouted the instructions to other students while sitting beside the demanding student, and the instructions were essentially to ensure that the class was disciplined, and all behaved in an appropriate manner. The demanding student suffered from the situation as well as the class that remained ignored by the teacher (PRE 26).

Some of us have obstacles that require more than normal enterprise and assistance, but despite that diversity is not an obstacle to moving forward or working together. This observation raised strongly during the field work. I looked at that so-called tomboy in the class, and I admired his way to see the world, in that case, the class, differently. I wondered, what kind of things he saw and felt. He was not cynical at all. I noticed that shared values were more important for him than the values of the individual. He gave his attention with a smile to the student sitting next to him, although he himself was in turbulent. He was empathic! I understood that the way how we usually differentiate learning and try to slick down these students' learning paths by taken them away from the mainstream classes, is not the way I believe in. (PRE 101).

The above episode refers to the preference of viewing the subject matter as the most valued property, which must be delivered to the students; as Schiro [20] stated, the curriculum is intended to acculturate children into a discipline. This inclination made pre-service teachers concerned about how they should accomplish goals regardless of the imbalance between mastering the subject matter and managing the classroom (cf. [32]). In turn, the latter episode illustrates that such a learner-centered ideology has the learning process as an end in itself. The view differs from an educational policy-driven paradigm of student centrality that emphasizes that curriculum should be characterized by "learning outcomes" describing the measurable skills or abilities that students should be able to do or demonstrate as a result of learning (e.g., [33]).

This returns to a question about the focus of learning: should we pay attention to generic skills capacities instead of a detailed specification of content knowledge? Wheelahan [34] raised the view about the "crisis of curriculum," arguing that the worldwide education policy drives toward stripping knowledge out of the curriculum due to the shift in learning outcomes (cf. [34, 35]). But then, the current knowledge society and information overload within the explosion of digital technologies raise a critical question about the changing nature of knowledge and children's life worlds, meaning making, and learning as a whole. Accordingly, this leads to the question of which one is more valuable: the subject matter or generic skills. For example, there is literacy, which guarantees equal access to the most powerful forms of knowledge; literacy is crucial because it allows learners to gain these basic skills and builds students' discipline-specific understanding of how texts represent both the knowledge and the ways of knowing, doing, and believing in different disciplinary communities (cf. [36, 37]). Hence, the subject matter and generic skills are two sides of the same coin and should not be separated from each other.

5. Adoption versus reconstruction

Unlike the two previous curriculum ideologies, instead of focusing on individual learning, the ideologies of social efficiency and social reconstruction perceive learning as a social process. However, although the social efficiency ideology states that the initial aim of learning is to meet the acute needs of the society, the social reconstruction ideology makes use of the social process to develop students' abilities to analyze and understand society, creating solutions and a vision for a better society. The next reflective episodes exemplify the pre-service teachers' reflections on the challenges toward schooling to respond to the multiple demands of a society. The first talk brings up the social efficiency ideology, and the next one refers to social reconstruction ideology:

I recognize the growing demands everywhere. I should increase media literacy and use ICT devices to meet today's challenges, I should support the students to identify their feelings and support them to work on them, and so on. I am expected to bring the PISA success back to the top, etc. That sounds pretty unreasonable. Not to mention inclusive teaching. I look forward to the new core curriculum to bring improvement to this situation. However, it should not be forgotten that the school is not the only place, where to turn over a new leaf of children's lives. (PRAC 12).

The most unforgettable teaching experience was the idea that came to my mind suddenly in the history lesson. I turned off the classrooms lights and lighted some candles. I asked the students to put our souls into some refugee's soul who had been traveling in a sinking boat in the Mediterranean Sea. We had to try to think what the person felt when the boat was sinking. It was a very quiet moment. Then I asked the students what they had been thinking. One of the students, for example, told that she had been thinking a child who had been saved. This child had been crawling on the broadside of the boat and she had seen through the window another person who was inside the boat looking through window and praying. Altogether that particular moment in our classroom was beautiful and rich in atmosphere. I think that this kind of moments and situations felt like the most important matters in the school. Schools mission is not to fulfill child with information as efficiently as possible, but recognize the injustice of the world and find ways to make the world a better place to live. (PRAC 51).

The above episode depicts the social efficiency belief, according to which the meaning of skills and knowledge is to create a solid base of the abilities needed to function in society. Thus, the first milestone is to determine the needs of society, as one of the pre-service teachers tried earlier. The next step is to develop a curriculum that meets the determined needs. In contrast, the latter episode reflects the idea of the social reconstruction ideology that assumes that there is no such thing as an absolute knowledge or skill needed to survive in society. Many pre-service teachers parsed learning, like in the learner-centered ideology, as a process. The episode shows how they attempted to incorporate learning experience with current social issues, as in the above episode illustrating how to be sympathetic and understand the refugees' feelings under their dangerous conditions.

In terms of inclusive education, the social efficacy ideology is quite demanding for teachers. Teachers are expected to find the most efficient teaching methods for delivering the knowledge and skills to the students with the aim of producing "educated people" who achieve the

objectives and thus fulfill the needs of society (cf. [20]). The social reconstruction ideology, in turn, has such an impact on teachers that they are expected to provide students with learning experiences that can develop their critical analytical skills and stimulate them so that they can contribute to the reconstruction of society [20, 38]. Therefore, the necessary knowledge does not exist in books, but rather, it lies within the knowers in the meaning that the person gives to the words and experiences.

According to the social efficiency ideology, teachers are placed in the center to control everything in the classroom, and the students are perceived as “raw materials” to be shaped. This may lead to teacher-led instruction methods because of assuming that the teacher’s job is to decide what students are expected to learn, why they are learning it, how they are supposed to learn it, and what books they will be reading. This seems to be an overwhelming claim for a teacher in heterogeneous groups of inclusive settings. In turn, because, for social reconstruction ideologists, teaching is more collaborative, the development of an inclusive pedagogy is more possible. This is because social reconstruction ideologists appreciate group discussions for joint learning and developing solutions for existing problems [20]. The following episodes reflect two contrasting ways pre-service teachers reflected on experiences of inclusive classrooms. The first episode echoes the social efficiency ideology and the latter one the social reconstruction ideology:

Our current school system has worked well as we have been recognized as the PISA success country etc. In the future, we want to continue to be among the leading countries in education. In order to be able to continue in the top of the world, and to be highly valued in the field of education, we will need new innovations in our schools. School practices should constantly keep on evaluating, in order to be able to meet the needs of society. Many experts and politicians, including the Ministry of Education, have emphasized the importance of adding information and communication technology as a medicine to our bad Pisa success. (PRE 38).

The class talked about the refugees in Finland. Some of the students suggested that we have understand that each of their lives was unique. They knew that some had come to Finland as babies, others as children, and others encountered cruelty at home, others were struggling with bad feelings. Each of them was different, but together. I was different with them, and in that one room, in those hours, I understood about inclusive education more than ever before in my life. Inclusion is not limited to one category of people or age group, it is a conceptual model for the whole school and for better society. All children are able to learn, and the greatest benefit comes from collaboration, learning together. Diversity is valuable, and the sense of communality is emphasized in the fact that student diversity is seen as a positive resource for that school, but also for society, and everyone can get involved. (PRE17).

The episodes refer to the current situation in Finland, indicating the tension between the social efficiency ideology and social reconstruction ideology. The discrepancy has occurred, for example, because of the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) achievement program (e.g., [39–41]). The success has created tension in schools—concurrently with the inclusive reform—to reproduce the result by raising the effectiveness of schooling by extending both the requirements of knowledge content and demands for academic achievement in the NCC [9]. Social efficiency drivers have laid pressure on moving toward standardization and test-based accountability along with the inclusive agenda. This twofold pressure is conveyed in the pre-service teachers’ narrative journals.

The latter episode mentioned earlier refers again to the debate concerning the integration of refugees in Europe. In addition, the episode depicts the inclusive shift through one of the pre-service teacher's reflections, referring to the social reconstruction curriculum ideology. In all, the pre-service teachers seemed to observe sensitively, in particular, in the collaborative environments in school communities, and they desired tangible collaboration and team teaching. Furthermore, they appreciated the idea that they could learn from their own and others' experiences through active reflection on their actions and their consequences (cf. [42]). They valued the partnership model [43] to boost their professional learning through close and supportive relationships with colleagues, which was also a prerequisite for their favorable belief of the inclusive shift in schools.

6. Discussion

Through the lens of curriculum ideologies, the findings reflect some aspects that are useful to note when implementing inclusive practices in schools, as well as for creating future directions for teacher education. First, it has become important to understand prospective teachers' own conceptualizations and set of beliefs of how to make meaning of the reform agenda, which aims to support learning and respond to students' diversity in inclusive settings. Schiro's [20] framework served an indirect channel to explore pre-service teachers' reflections of uncertainties and possible fears. Allowing for questioning may encourage teachers to transform their curriculum insights into new situations and gain understanding of unpredictable circumstances in school settings (cf. [44]).

Moreover, the notion of inclusion represented a scheme into which they could mirror their beliefs, values, and attitudes toward their future teaching careers. According to the data, the beliefs on inclusion occurred as a complex macro-level societal phenomenon that was in conflict not only with the demands to fulfill the needs of "normal students" but also the current needs of society. Another inconsistency they felt concerned the prevailing school cultures; the inclusive reform represented a risk: it may both shake the prevailing school cultures and professional practices, and the reform itself was at risk of being drowned out in the prevailing school cultures.

Accordingly, the results indicate that the notions of adoption and adaptation, introduced by Hewitt [45], are relevant when considering the tensions emerging from the data. Hewitt [45] defined adoption and adaptation as the approaches of teachers in curriculum implementation. In line with social efficiency beliefs, adoption refers to a top-down assumption that changes required by society should be applied with a linear implementation by the teacher of the curriculum, which is designed by external specialists and politicians. In contrast, adaptation, such as social reconstruction ideology, refers to the fact that curriculum reform movements should be made in collaboration with real implementers by classroom-level specialists. This necessitates continuous negotiations and flexibility between the politicians, designers, and implementers of the curriculum (cf. [46, 47]).

This dialog could create an arena for joint understanding about the societal circumstances in which the theoretical and practical knowledge are taken into account and where the societal approach to learning is considered. In doing so, it promotes a vision of a better society in which the problems and conflicts could be resolved, and the society can be developed.

However, there is a risk that if the social efficiency ideologists shift their terminal objectives to raising academic standards, they also may shift their ideology from social to academic, despite escaping from the scholarly academic emphasis on more learner-centered education. This is critical, for example, in Finland, where the education system seems to be at a turning point regarding what path it may take. As of yet, fortunately, Finland has not chosen a high-stakes testing policy as most countries have but is looking for a new way [48–50]. To keep in line with the social justice philosophy and the “Education for All” agenda, it is important to give up straightforwardly confronting the beliefs beyond the different curriculum ideologies. Instead, the school-based curriculum ideology could offer a bottom-up approach that considers students, parents, and stakeholders, as well as incorporates the best parts of the ideologies to enhance student-driven social justice curriculum.

As Dewey [51] criticized how the academic knowledge of education has developed standards that promote “docility, receptivity and obedience” (p. 18) among students, while teachers are turned to be agents who transmit knowledge and skills and enforce rules of conduct. This is, according to Dewey, one of imposition from above and outside, creating a gulf between school and students (cf. [52]). In turn, the teachers’ essential task should be to bridge the gap between students’ prior knowledge and experiences and appropriate content knowledge, gaining students’ individual experiences of their surrounding environment and using this to understand, analyzes, and improve the society around them.

Consequently, in conjunction with Bandura’s [53] views, the data of the current study indicated that social reconstructive ideology could contribute to creating sustainable “collective efficacy” in developing inclusive school cultures. This means that by focusing on “collective efficacy” while teaching practicum in an inclusive setting, the pre-service teachers need to draw attention to educational inequalities and search for solutions that promote a just education for all.

Author details

Marita Mäkinen

Address all correspondence to: marita.makinen@uta.fi

Faculty of Education, University of Tampere, Finland

References

- [1] Kiuppis F. Why (not) associate the principle of inclusion with disability? Tracing connections from the start of the ‘Salamanca process’. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. 2014;18(7):746-761
- [2] UNESCO. The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. Paris: UNESCO; 1994
- [3] UNESCO. Policy Guidelines on Inclusion in Education. Paris: UNESCO; 2009a

- [4] UN-CRPD. United Nations Convention on Rights of Person with Disabilities. 2006. Retrieved from: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/>
- [5] UNESCO. A Guide for Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education. Paris: UNESCO; 2017
- [6] Ministry of Education. Special Education Strategy. Finland: UNESCO; 2007
- [7] Basic Education Act. Finlex. (2010/642). Available from: <http://www.finlex.fi/fi/laki/alkup/2010/20100642>
- [8] NCC. National Core Curriculum for Basic Education (Changes and Amendments 50/011/2010). Helsinki, FI: Finnish Board of Education; 2010. Available from: http://www.oph.fi/download/132551_amendments_and_additions_to_national_core_curriculum_basic_education.pdf
- [9] NCC. National Core Curriculum for Basic Education 2014. Helsinki, FI: Finnish National Board of Education; 2016
- [10] UNESCO. Inclusive education: The way of the future. In: Final report of the International Conference on Education (48th Session). Paris: UNESCO; 2009b. Available from: http://www.ibe.unesco.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Policy_Dialogue/48th_ICE/ICE_FINAL_REPORT_eng.pdf
- [11] Avramidis E, Norwich B. Teachers' attitudes towards integration/inclusion: A review of the literature. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*. 2002;**17**:129-147
- [12] Varcoe L, Boyle C. Pre-service primary teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *Educational Psychology*. 2014;**34**(3):323-337
- [13] McMaster C. The inclusive practices tools: Trying to take a short cut to inclusion? *New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work*. 2013;**10**(2):220-230
- [14] Jenkins SB. Measuring teacher beliefs about curriculum orientations using the modified-curriculum orientations inventory. *The Curriculum Journal*. 2009;**20**(2):103-120
- [15] Rahimi M, Alavi J. The role of teaching experience in language teachers' perceptions of a top-down curriculum change. *The Curriculum Journal*. 2017;**28**(4):479-503
- [16] Senger ES. Reflective reform in mathematics: The recursive nature of teacher change. *Educational Studies in Mathematics*. 1999;**37**(3):199-221
- [17] Fullan MG. The meaning of educational change. In: Fullan MG, editor. *The new meaning of educational change*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press; 1991. pp. 30-46
- [18] Orafi SMS, Borg S. Intentions and realities in implementing communicative curriculum reform. *System*. 2009;**37**:243-253
- [19] Schubert W. *Curriculum: Perspective, Paradigm, and Possibility*. New York, NY: Macmillan; 1986

- [20] Schiro M. Curriculum Theory. Conflicting Visions and Enduring Concerns. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2013
- [21] Schiro M. Educators' perceptions of the changes in their curriculum belief system over time. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*. 1992;7:250-286
- [22] Eisner EW, Vallance E. Conflicting Conceptions of Curriculum. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan; 1974
- [23] Tanner D, Tanner L. Curriculum Development: Theory into Practice. 3rd ed. Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall; 1995
- [24] Haines SJ, Kervick CT, Shepherd KG, Levitt MJ. Enhancing quality: Listening to participant voices to improve our master's program in special education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 2017;66:24-32
- [25] Ashour R, Khasawneh S, Abu-Alruz J, Alsharqawi S. Curriculum orientations of pre-service teachers in Jordan: A required reform initiative for professional development. *Teacher Development*. 2012;16(3):345-360
- [26] Cheung D, Wong H-W. Measuring teacher beliefs about alternative curriculum designs. *The Curriculum Journal*. 2002;13(2):225-248
- [27] Eisner EW. The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall; 2002
- [28] Krippendorff K. Content Analysis: An Introduction to its Methodology. 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2012
- [29] Jackson AY, Mazzei LA. Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research: Viewing Data across Multiple Perspectives. Abingdon, Oxon & New York: Routledge; 2012
- [30] Kliebard HM. The Struggle for the American Curriculum 1893-1958. Boston, MA: Routledge & Kegan Paul; 1987
- [31] Thorolfsson M, Finnbogason GE, Macdonald A. A perspective on the intended science curriculum in Iceland and its 'transformation' over a period of 50 years. *International Journal of Science Education*. 2012;34(17):2641-2665
- [32] Mäkinen M. Narrative reflections as descriptors of teachers' work engagement in inclusive schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 2013;35:51-61
- [33] Cedefop. Application of Learning Outcomes Approaches across Europe: A Comparative Study. Luxembourg: Publications Office; 2016
- [34] Wheelahan L. Why Knowledge Matters in Curriculum. A Social Realist Argument. London: Routledge; 2010
- [35] Priestley M. Whatever happened to curriculum theory? Critical realism and curriculum change. *Pedagogy, Culture & Society*. 2011;19:221-237

- [36] Kiili C, Mäkinen M, Coiro J. Re-thinking academic literacies – Designing multifaceted academic literacy experiences for preservice teachers. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*. 2013;**57**(3):223-232
- [37] Moje E. Foregrounding the disciplines in secondary literacy teaching and learning: A call for change. *Journal of Adolescent Adult literacy*. 2008;**52**(2):96-107
- [38] Eisner EW. Five Basic Orientations to the Curriculum. In: *The education imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs*. New York, NY: Macmillan; 1985
- [39] OECD. *Learning for tomorrow's World. First Results from PISA 2003*. Paris: OECD; 2004
- [40] OECD. *PISA 2009 Results: Executive Summary*. Paris: OECD; 2010
- [41] OECD. *PISA 2015 Results (Volume II) Policies and Practices for Successful Schools*. Paris: OECD; 2016
- [42] Shulman LS, Shulman JH. How and what teachers learn: A shifting perspective. *Journal of Curriculum Studies*. 2004;**36**(2):257-271
- [43] Darling-Hammond L. *Getting Teacher Evaluation Right: What Really Matters for Effectiveness and Improvement*. New York: Teachers College Press; 2013
- [44] Douglas AS. Raising the standard: Contradictions in the theory of student-teacher learning. *European Journal of Teacher Education*. 2017;**40**(2):157-170
- [45] Hewitt TW. *Understanding and Shaping Curriculum: What we Teach and why?* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage; 2006
- [46] Pinar W, Reynolds WM, Slattery P, Taubman PM. *Understanding Curriculum*. New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishing; 2004
- [47] Yurdakul B. Perceptions of elementary school teachers concerning the concept of curriculum. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*. 2015;**15**(1):125-139
- [48] Hargreaves A, Shirley D. *The Global Fourth Way: The Quest for Educational Excellence*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin; 2012
- [49] Rajakaltio H, Mäkinen M. The Finnish school in cross-pressures of change. *European Journal of Curriculum Studies*. 2014;**1**(2):133-140
- [50] Sahlberg P. *Finnish Lessons: What can the World Learn from Educational Change in Finland?* New York, NY: Teachers College Press; 2011
- [51] Dewey J. *Experience & Education*. New York, NY: Touchstone; (1938/1997)
- [52] Kim JH, Abernathy D. Understanding curriculum as a polyphonic text curriculum theorizing in the midst of standardization. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*. 2012;**28**(1):31-46
- [53] Bandura A. *Self-Efficacy: The Exercise of Control*. New York, NY: W.H. Freeman; 1997