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Policy Processes and Discourses of Inclusion in Sweden's Art and Music Schools

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Background

Art and Music Schools are present in about 97% of Sweden's municipalities. They have been regulated by informal norms and local structures, but in 2015 a process was begun to create policy documents on a national level.

Inclusion has been highlighted as an important foundation for Sweden's Art and Music Schools, but that foundation has also been problematised.

Aim

The overall aim of the research project is to expose the discourses that emerge when Sweden's Art and Music School leaders talk about policy processes and democratic aspects of music education.

The research question is: what are the discursive intersections when Sweden's Art and Music School leaders talk about practice, policy and democratic rights for children and adolescents?

Analysing policy processes might be a way to contribute to the policy process, undertaking research *on* policy, but also *for* policy; as well as research *on* inclusion, but also *for* inclusion.

Methodology

The study is built on focus group conversations with a total of 16 Art and Music School leaders from municipalities in northern, central and southern Sweden.

Concepts from Educational Policy Theories and from Discourse Theories are applied in the analysis.

The Articles

Article 1 – Focus: leadership perspectives on Art and Music Schools and on the national policy process.

Main result: an Art and Music School discourse constituted within and through ten tension fields.

Article 2 – Focus: collaboration with the compulsory school system for inclusion.

Article 3 – Focus: including children in need of special support.

Article 4 – Focus: including refugee children.