Index of Inclusion: How can it Support the Inclusive Education and Education for Sustainable Development

Kari Nes

Hedmark University College, Norway, Teacher training department,
Postbox 400, 2418 Elverum, Norway, kari.nes@hihm.no

Summary. In this article I will bring together two perspectives on education, inclusive education and education for sustainable development. Both perspectives have been paid much attention over the last decades, mostly on separate arenas. By exploring the link between inclusion and sustainability in education, I will argue that developing this bond is both useful and necessary in today’s world. Examples will be shown by referring to The Index for Inclusion which offers an approach to how inclusive practice goes hand in hand with sustainability education, in and beyond schools.

Keywords: inclusion, exclusion, inclusive education, education for sustainable development, index for inclusion.

Introduction

Inclusion as an ideal was put on the global educational agenda first and foremost through a statement from the UNESCO world conference on special education in Salamanca in 1994. It was declared that ordinary schools should accommodate all children, regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions (UNESCO, 1994). The notion sustainable development originates from a concern for threatened nature. A much cited definition is that sustainable development “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their
own needs.” This was the proposal of the Brundtland commission, led by the former Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland (UN, 1987).

At first glance the inclusion issue may seem to be about the social organisation of education and the sustainability issue mainly about the natural environment of the planet, but as we shall see, in both cases such understandings are limited. Let us start by taking a look at education for sustainable development.

**Aim of the article:** To analyse how Idex of inclusion can serve for inclusive education and sustainable development.

**Major goals of the article:**
1. To discuss the concepts of index of inclusion, inclusive education, education for sustainable development and their relationship.
2. To present some examples of the development of inclusive education in Norway schools, development.

**Methods:** review of research sources; documentary analyses.

## Education for sustainable development

We can state that since the time of the Brundtland commission, most people have experienced worrying developments, not least the accelerating signs of manmade climate change. This has revealed even more clearly the necessity of taking action even in education to help saving the earth. Hence, the decade 2005 to 2014 is United Nations’ decade of “Education for sustainable development” which

- means including key sustainable development issues into teaching and learning; for example, climate change, disaster risk reduction, biodiversity, poverty reduction, and sustainable consumption.
- consequently promotes competencies like critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way.
- It also requires participatory teaching and learning methods that motivate and empower learners to change their behavior and take action for sustainable development (UNESCO, 2013).

Since this decade of education for sustainable development is ending now, questions are asked if real changes can be traced in curricula, teaching and learning as well as in policies around the world, for instance is the Nordic Educational Research Association’s main question for this year’s congress the following: “Education for sustainable development – only big words for politicians or a responsibility for education workers?” (NERA, 2014). Before looking into an example of how such changes may come about, we will explore the concept of inclusion a bit more.
Inclusion and exclusion

The Salamanca statement referred to all children when talking about inclusion in education, as do Norwegian policy documents. Official rhetoric in other societal areas like employment and immigration also propagates inclusion as an overarching aim. But very often inclusion in education is seen as a concern only with disabled students and others categorised as having special educational needs, or being vulnerable in other ways. This view can be placed within a psycho-medical paradigm (Clark et al., 1995).

To approach a wider understanding of inclusion, we will first stop by its opposite, exclusions in schools and society. Exclusions in society are conceived as quite ordinary; some exclusions are even seen as natural (Slee, 2011). For instance, Roma people are being harassed in Norwegian cities, even if Norway signed a convention about respecting national minorities. ‘Surplus people’ <…> are evacuated to the social margins as a consequence of their redundant labour. Paradoxically, amidst an official communitarian discourse of iversity and inclusion individual competition, estrangement, disengagement, fear and prejudice are intensified (Slee, 2013, p. 901).

According to Zygmunt Bauman (Slee, 2011) all societies produce strangers; but each kind of society produces its own kind of strangers, and produces them in its own inimitable way. An example from recent Norwegian history is how in the nation building process in the 20th century – seemingly leading to more liberty and democracy – the Norwegifying assimilation policies implied exclusion of minorities and their rights. This policy particularly hit the indigenous Sámi population. Sámi learners were not allowed to use their first language in schools until the end of the 1960s (Engen, 2010). In many countries similar examples can be found.

Many authors in the field of inclusive education are less optimistic than before about the prospects of realising the inclusive school; Slee (2011), for example, finds exclusionary practices ‘resilient’, as he puts it. As early as 1999 in a study of inclusive education in 8 Western countries, OECD found that the countries were <…> creating, first, a regular system which does not feel it has to adapt to the needs of all children, and second a special system which collects the rejects and with considerable additional resources, often in segregated settings, attempts to remedy the failings of the first (OECD, 1999, p. 47).

In the article “The irresistible rise of the SEN industry” the sociologist Sally Tomlinson (2012) points out how governments in the four European countries she studied, fund special education in order to deal with surplus groups in the ‘knowledge economies’. The authorities seem to accept that some, like those with identified special educational needs (SEN), have to be ‘put away’. An increase in segregated facilities for children with SEN and with behavioral difficulties is part of this picture and is observed in many countries,
including Norway (Jahnsen et al., 2011; Nes, 2013). Tomlinson also shows how the middle classes now increasingly claim resourcing for children who are unlikely to achieve in a competitive market-driven school system, for instance due to diagnoses like ADHD, categories that do not suggest parent deficit. Previously the slow and troublesome children mainly came from the working class.

Another force that may contribute to maintaining exclusionary practices in schools is pressure from the professions to maintain separate special educational facilities. Tomlinson (2012) and others have identified this tendency.

What is inclusive education?

Ainscow et al. (2006) list a ‘typology of inclusions’ in this way:

a) Inclusion – limited to students with ‘special needs’.

b) Inclusion as a response to disciplinary exclusion.

c) Inclusion in relation to all groups seen as being vulnerable to exclusion.

d) Inclusion as developing the school for all / ‘Education for All’.

e) Inclusion as a principled approach to education and society.

It is the last definition that is advocated by the authors. Seeing inclusion as a principled approach to education and society means putting values into action, since values are fundamental guides to the actions and aims chosen, for instance by the teacher. To move inclusion forward requires a coherent value base; then one will be able to avoid a set of just disconnected changes (Booth and Ainscow, 2011). So which values are we talking about? Here is a suggestion:

![Fig. 1. Inclusive values](image.png)
In a given context like a school the values in question should be chosen and shared by the participants. If I were to pick a few, I would choose respect for diversity as one crucial value, since inclusion means seeing diversity as a challenge and enrichment in the learning environment, rather than a problem. Which diversity are we talking about? Even if listing diversities is hardly the point, issues like culture, language, (dis-)ability, religion, gender and socio-economic status are frequently put forward (Council of Europe, 2009; OECD, 2010). In the Scottish Code of Practice the following are mentioned as potentially experiencing barriers that require additional support for learning: those with identified impairments or learning difficulties, those who are bullied, talented, have English as an additional language, are on a child protection register, have experienced a bereavement, have emotional or social problems, have parents abusing substances, are young carers etc. (Scottish Government, 2010). This suggests that explanations of failure to learn may exist outside as well as inside the child, thereby moving beyond a psycho-medical towards a socio-political or relational paradigm (Dyson et al., 1995).

Inclusion is about how to transform education systems in order to respond to this diversity. It is not limited to integrating certain groups of learners into the mainstream, but is about all (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). While transformations on the system level are needed, what happens in the classrooms naturally matters tremendously. Differentiating teaching by modifying content and methods etc is essential, in other words, giving the diverse group of learner’s opportunities to utilize their learning potential in a supportive environment.

In Norwegian policy documents the notion of inclusion is also closely linked to the value of equity in education. On the system level equity is about an overriding legislation, regulations and syllabuses, and on the individual level adapting the education to individual abilities and aptitudes. To ensure equity in education for all, positive discrimination is required, not equal treatment (Norwegian Ministry of Education, 2008). Being there on the same premises is not in itself necessarily inclusive, unless there is a climate of overcoming barriers to learning as well as participation for all (Booth and Ainscow, 2011).

What is inclusive education for sustainable development?

Keith Ballard from New Zealand is one of those who have been including the planet in the way he thinks about inclusion in education. He points out that for instance climate change is an issue including the whole earth, therefore the solution must be inclusive too (Ballard, 2013). Besides, “there is no away”, he says, not in nature, not for people: 

We cannot put people away from ourselves any more than, as environmentalists have shown, we cannot throw something away. There is no away.

We live in complex interdependencies with the planet we inhabit. Whatever we do, whatever is done, includes us all, no matter what stra-
strategies we may use in attempt to distance and isolate ourselves. Actions that exclude and diminish others exclude and diminish ourselves (Ballard, 1997, p. 254).

Inclusive education for sustainable development then is respecting diversity – human diversity and diversity in nature – even for future generations. Education in the 21st century must reflect global awareness and environmental literacy as interdisciplinary themes in education, according to the Partnership for 21st century skills (2013). In the Index for Inclusion (Booth and Ainscow, 2011) goes even further in presenting a complete alternative to how and what children and young persons should learn in school. Inclusive education in a sustainability perspective represents an alternative to the traditional view of how to learn, a view which is based in learning psychology. An inclusive curriculum is also an alternative to a traditional encyclopedic approach to what to learn, i.e. many isolated school subjects rooted in traditional academic disciplines, cf Støfring (2010). In the left column below an alternative organisation of curricula is suggested.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inclusive curricula for all</th>
<th>A traditional curriculum for schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Food</td>
<td>• Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Water</td>
<td>• Language and Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clothing and body decoration</td>
<td>• Foreign languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Housing/built environment</td>
<td>• Physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mobility/transport</td>
<td>• Chemistry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Health/relationships</td>
<td>• Biology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Earth, solar system, universe</td>
<td>• Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Life on earth</td>
<td>• History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Energy</td>
<td>• Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication/technology</td>
<td>• Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Literature/arts/music</td>
<td>• Religious education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Work/activity</td>
<td>• Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ethics, power and government</td>
<td>• Personal, health and social education</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is the Index for Inclusion, and how can it be used to support education for sustainable development?

Fig. 2. Inclusive vs. traditional curriculum (Booth and Ainscow, 2011, p. 36)
To illustrate how an inclusive education for sustainable development may be realised, I have already referred to the Index for Inclusion, so what is it? This book (and DVD) is a resource to support the inclusive development of schools, originating in the UK in 2000.

It is now translated to more than 30 languages. The Index can be used in other organisations than schools as well, and it has an own edition for kindergarten. In 2011 a revised version including new materials to support education for sustainable development in schools appeared.

The Index rests on the understanding of inclusion presented above. It urges the readers to inquire what barriers to learning and participation that arise within the school and its communities and who experiences them, but, importantly, without restricting it to certain diagnoses or barriers. An assumption is that adults and children already possess detailed knowledge about what might be changed in their schools, and that the concept of barriers to learning and participation will help them exploring this knowledge. Important to ask is of course also how barriers to learning and participation can be minimised, and what resources and support are available to do that. How additional resources can be mobilised is another important issue.

The content of the Index includes review framework and review material to support the examination of the school or setting one wants to develop. Sets of indicators, each with many questions, make up the comprehensive review material, divided into three dimensions, cultures, policies and practices, as seen in this figure:
An example of indicator of an inclusive school in the cultures dimension is: *Everyone is made to feel welcome.* One of the questions intended to reflect on this indicator is: *Is the first contact that people have with the school friendly and welcoming?*

To evolve more inclusive and sustainable practices, a whole new curriculum is set forth in the Index, of figure 2. For example, to deal with the topic *water*, a question is if the school has adopted a local stream or river that can be investigated and conserved and through which children can understand ecosystems and water cycles. Some of the questions for reflection in each subject matter are meant for *Linking locally and globally*, like the following one concerning using a finite resource: *Do children learn how water is essential for the life of plants, animals and people?* When it comes to water and health, one of the questions is: *Do children learn about the importance of water for hygiene?* For all themes even questions to help schools *Linking past, present and future* are in the book.

**Concluding remarks**

To achieve more inclusive and sustainable development in education, collaboration and making alliances with organisations, initiatives and persons outside school is nearly a must, for instance within health, environment, bullying prevention, anti-discrimination, to name a few. This is also recommended by the Index. With whom and in what way has to be decided nationally and locally. There are international initiatives that might be helpful connections, for instance LOLA – Looking for Likely Alternatives – a didactic process for approaching sustainability by investigating social innovation.

In the following model the authors of the Index for Inclusion sum up how their material, along with others, can be used to take action:
Fig. 4. Supporting inclusive development with the Index for Inclusion
(Booth and Ainscow, 2011, p. 51)

In this work new paths have to be found by “critical thinking, imagining future scenarios and making decisions in a collaborative way”, as put in the decade of education for sustainable development (UNESCO, 2013).

References


Įtraukties indeksas: kaip jis gali skatinti įtraukūjį ugdymą ir ugdymą darniai raidai

Kari Nes

Hedmarko universiteto koleža, Mokytojų rengimo fakultetas,
PO 400, 2418 Elverum, Norvegija, kari.nes@hihm.no

Santrauka

Straipsnyje ugdymas analizuojamas įtraukiojo ugdymo ir ugdymo darniai raidai požiūriais, kurie yra ypač aktualūs šiandieniame globalizacijos kontekste, akcentuojant, kad iki šiol abu požiūriai dažniausiai analizuojami nesijęt jų tarpusavyje. Autorė, remdamasi savo ir kitų tyrėjų įtaka, įtraukius į darbą ir praktiniu lygiu. Aptariamas įtraukties indeksas yra viena iš tokių paieškos galimybių.

Aptariant įtraukiojo ugdymo sampratą, principus ir jų įgyvendinimą, remiamasi ne tik Norvėgijos patirtimi, bet ir Europos šalių mokslininkų darbų analize. Autorė pristato ir vėliau savo darbe remiasi M. Ainscow ir kt. (2006) įtraukties tipologiją, nusakančia, kad įtrauktis – tai: 1) kas susiję su vaikais, turinčiais specialiųjų poreikių; 2) atsakas į atskirtį, nulemtą dėstomųjų dalykų; 3) kas susiję su pažeidžiamomis grupėmis; 4) kryptis, vedanti link „mokyklos visiems“; 5) esminis požiūris į ugdymą ir visuomenę.

 страipsnyje išsamiai pristatomas ir analizuojamas įtraukties indeksas kaip viena įtraukiojo ugdymo ir ugdymo darniai raidai jungiamųjų grandžių. Šis indeksas skatina tyrinėti, kokios kliūtys mokymuisi ir aktyviai besiugdančio dalyvaujant mokyklos bendruomenėje ir už jos ribų. Daroma prielaida, kad suaugusieji, žinodami apie galimus trikdo, iš anksto gali juos minimalizuoti, ieškotami tam išteklių ir galimos pagalbos. Autorės nuomone, indekso rodikliai gali būti kuriu iš kryptimi: kuriant įtraukiojo ugdymo politiką, plėtojant įtraukiojo ugdymo praktiką ir stiprinant įtraukiojo ugdymo kultūrą. Pateikiamas vienas iš įtraukiojo ugdymo kultūros rodiklių pavyzdžių: „Mokykloje kiekvienas jaučiasi laukiamas.“ Be to, išvados vaizdąiai parodė tradicinio ir įtraukiojo ugdymo turinio skirtumai.

Išvados akcentuojama, kad siekti įgyvendinti įtraukiojo ugdymo principus, būtina glaudžiai bendradarbiauti su įvairiomis organizacijomis ir iniciatyviais asmenimis, veikiančiais už mokyklos ribų sveikatos, aplinkosaugos, patyčių prevencijos, antikrinkuminacijos ir kitose srityse. Taip pat siūloma skatinti tarptautinę iniciatyvą LOLA (didaktinė metodika, padedanti mokiniam ugdytis darnų požiūrį, tiriant socialines inovacijas).
kiama iliustratyvi išvada, jog plėtojant įtraukiojo ugdymo idėjas būtinas suaugusiųjų ir vaikų bendradarbiavimas ir bendros veiklos refleksija.

**Esimiai žodžiai:** įtrauktis, atskirtis, įtraukusis ugdymas, ugdymas darniai raidai, įtraukties indeksas.

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