

CONVERSATIONS AND KEY DEBATES ON INCLUSIVE AND SPECIAL EDUCATION

Global Insights from ‘The Inclusion
Dialogue’

Joanne Banks

First published 2025

ISBN: 9781032705415 (hbk)

ISBN: 9781032711331 (pbk)

ISBN: 9781032705484 (ebk)

CHAPTER 5

THEORISING THE INCLUSIONARY– EXCLUSIONARY CONTINUUM WHILE INVESTIGATING SCHOOL SITUATIONS

Johan Malmqvist

(CC-BY) 4.0

DOI: 10.4324/9781032705484-6

Open access funding provided by Linnaeus University



 **Routledge**
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

Linnaeus University 

5

THEORISING THE INCLUSIONARY– EXCLUSIONARY CONTINUUM WHILE INVESTIGATING SCHOOL SITUATIONS

Johan Malmqvist

Introduction

This chapter begins with a brief description of the Swedish school context over the last three decades, particularly regarding compulsory education. This is followed by a detailed presentation of a theoretical model, *the Staircase Model of Inclusionary and Exclusionary Processes*, that the research team I lead is using in seven ongoing studies. The model was developed to serve as an analytical tool with which to gain insights into our collected data and to better understand the exclusionary development trajectory in Swedish schools. This is being done by investigating inclusionary and exclusionary processes, relating them forces inside and outside schools and to societal mechanisms underlying this trend.

The exclusionary development trajectory in Swedish schools

Since the 1990s, the Swedish school system has changed thoroughly, its governance is based on new public management (NPM), with an emphasis on “explicit standards and measures of performance; managing by results; value for money; and closeness to the customer” (Rhodes, 1996, p. 655). This has been combined with the introduction of incentive structures into public service, structures such as market competition, quasi-markets, and consumer choice (Rhodes, 1996). Many national reforms have also been implemented, such as decentralisation, the right to choose a school, and the establishment of independent schools (i.e. free schools) in a quasi-market developed for education. School companies are even allowed to make profits based on their tax-derived earnings (European Commission, 2022), without being required to invest these profits in schools, and this has attracted large

limited liability companies (Alexiadou & Lundahl, 2019). No other country in the world allows this profit opportunity. Concurrently, since the early 1990s, segregation and inequity have increased in schools, while student academic achievement has deteriorated. Investigation was needed, so the first National School Commission (SOU, 2017, p. 35) since 1946 was created in 2015, and its main conclusion was that the Swedish school system has several serious systemic problems.

Another development that started in Sweden in the early 1990s has been the increasing frequency of ADHD diagnoses. Since then, there has been a dramatic increase in the number of students receiving medical diagnoses, especially of ADHD according to the National Board of Health and Welfare (Socialstyrelsen, 2023). Furthermore, Sweden has an extremely high proportion of students aged 5–19 years who receive medication for their ADHD, putting it in third place after the USA and Canada according to a recent study of 64 countries (Chan et al., 2023). Importantly, scholars have emphasised the connection between how schools function and the prevalence of ADHD diagnoses (Hinshaw & Scheffler, 2014).

Student misbehaviour and social order in schools are currently heavily debated in Sweden. The large proportion of students receiving diagnoses, for example, of ADHD, reveals the popularity of medical explanations and treatments to address these issues. The current Swedish national policy of increasing the number of special education classes, pupil referral units (PRUs), and emergency schools (Ministry of Education, 2023),¹ and thereby “fixing” students’ “deficits” with exclusionary measures, seems to be the preferred way to address problems in the school system. Exclusionary measures are also increasingly being used for other student groups, as an increased number of students have been placed in schools for students with intellectual impairments (Skolverket, 2023a) and in special schools for students with physical impairments (Skolverket, 2023b). According to Gren Landell (2021), there are no official national data on attendance in Swedish schools; therefore, our knowledge about the problem of school absenteeism, particularly self-exclusion, is poor.

Paradoxically, the January Agreement² (Social Democratic Party, 2019) among the four political parties forming the government stated that inclusion had gone too far, but did not define what it meant by inclusion. This political agreement, which was a kind of statement of national policy, articulated nine broad goals in the educational sector. Goal 52 contains the specific sub-goals of enabling more special education classes and that PRUs should be made more available. The Agreement seemed to reflect a placement-based definition of inclusion corresponding to mainstreaming in schools rather than inclusive education (SOU, 2020, p. 42). The alternative to mainstreaming or exclusion, which would be to improve the schools’ ability to offer inclusive education, was left out of the agreement.

Since my interview on the Inclusion Dialogue podcast in October 2021, when I expressed my concerns regarding this development trajectory in Sweden, the

path away from inclusionary ambitions has become even more reified in a new party-political agreement (Tidö Agreement, 2022). This trajectory is not in accordance with the signing of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 4 to “ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (United Nations, 2015). The present government seems to have prioritised homogeneous classes and counteracting disruptive behaviour in class. The main idea underlying these priorities seems to be the development of a school system better able to compete in OECD’s PISA race.

This interesting exclusionary development trajectory in Swedish schools is currently being investigated by a research team I lead. The Swedish part of the team consists of ten colleagues from Linnaeus University, i.e. Tobias Björklund, Kristina Hellberg, Sofie Hammarqvist, Christina Linderos, Johanna Lüddeckens, Anette Mathisson, Corrado Matta, Henrik Nilsson, Josef Qaderi and Daniel Sundberg along with Gunvie Möllås from Jönköping University. Our international collaborators are Richard Rose of Northampton University and Michael Shevlin of Trinity College, University of Dublin. We have named our research programme Inclusive Research on Equity and Segregation in Schools (IRESS). It represents a shift away from our previous research interest in inclusion in Swedish schools and is informed by the large-scale project, Inclusive Research in Irish Schools (Rose et al., 2015). Now, we are focusing more on the opposite of inclusion: segregation and exclusion in Swedish schools.

A theoretical model with which to investigate inclusionary versus exclusionary development

This redirection of research focus called for a new theoretical framework, and work on a new model started in 2020. An early version, *The Segregation Staircase* theoretical model, was briefly described in the previously mentioned podcast. This model has been modified during our ongoing research work. Sofie Hammarqvist, a doctoral student, has made significant contributions to this model. We have recently renamed the model *The Staircase Model of Inclusionary and Exclusionary Processes* (Figure 5.1).

It should be noted that we are mainly conducting case studies in the current research programme. This is an advantage when it comes to theory development, according to Nilholm (2021), as case studies allow different levels to be analysed, from the classroom to system levels. Nilholm also emphasised the importance of longitudinal approaches. As our model focuses on processes, six of the seven studies include an attempt to collect longitudinal data by asking questions about interviewees’ previous experiences. In one study, four students were followed over a three-year period. In three studies, school documentation has been collected and observations conducted in several different school settings. In three of the studies, in particular, rich mainly qualitative data have already been collected.

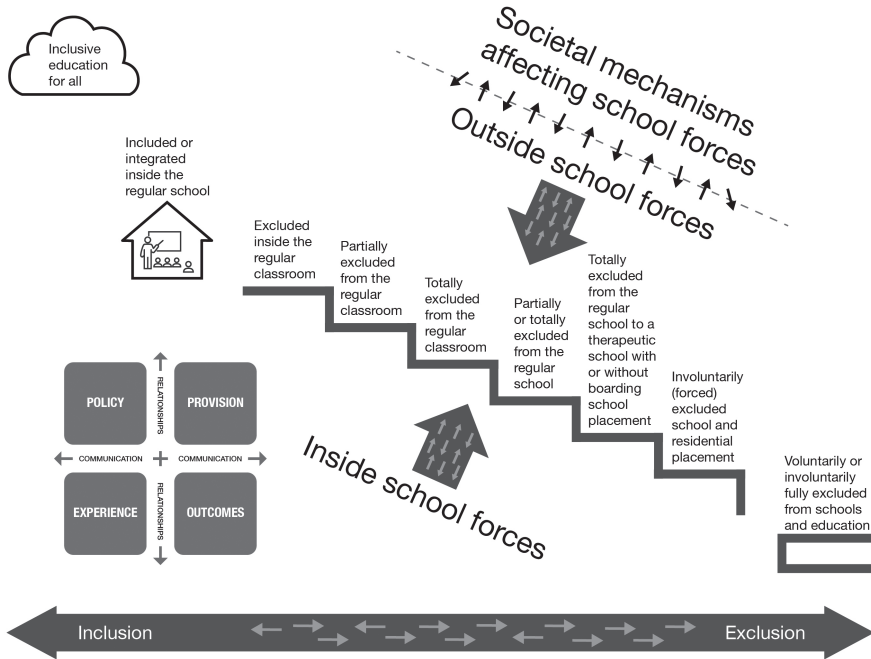


FIGURE 5.1 The Staircase Model of Inclusionary and Exclusionary Processes.

The staircase in the centre of the model

At the top of the staircase is a “cloud” representing a vision to strive for – “Inclusive education for all” – which corresponds to full inclusion. We view this as a vision, based on a definition of inclusion as containing all students, without any exclusion taking place. The centre of the model presents situations frequently encountered in most school systems and not specific to Sweden’s. An image to the right of the cloud depicts a classroom situation in which students are “Included or integrated inside the regular school”. This image of the classroom represents what we believe is possible in Sweden and other countries today. Note that the picture contains three students representing those who are largely included in the classroom situation, whereas the fourth represents a student in a mainstream or integrated³ school situation.

It should also be noted that the model necessarily contains several simplifications. For example, when the four students continue to their next lesson, these four students’ school situations may change. In another subject and perhaps under other conditions, such as having a different teacher who teaches in a different way, all four students may be included rather than being integrated, and feeling included, pointing to a contextual dimension. These four students’ school situations may also change over time, pointing to a temporal dimension. Both these dimensions are

present throughout the model, illustrating the importance of understanding processes rather than fixed states when trying to understand why schools are moving towards inclusive or exclusive education. Furthermore, inclusionary and exclusionary processes are occurring simultaneously in all schools, which means that both types of processes need to be investigated (Hedegaard Hansen, 2012). Such processes often lead to particular measures in school, which are focused on and described in the staircase model (Figure 5.1).

To the right of the classroom image is the “upper landing” of the staircase. It is the starting point of several exclusionary measures instituted as the staircase descends, resulting in increasingly exclusionary school situations. The first step is “Excluded inside the regular classroom”, representing a school situation in which a student is excluded inside the classroom to some extent. Even though the student is physically present in the classroom, the degree of exclusion may be severe. This may be the case when, for example, a student is inside the classroom but is not allowed to participate in the same curricular activities as the other students or to interact socially with them. Specifically, the teacher may have stated that he/she does not want to teach this student, and the other students may socially exclude the student.

The next step down and to the right, “Partially excluded from the regular classroom”, indicates a physical manifestation of exclusion, in which a student is not allowed to stay in the regular classroom during all lessons. Alternatively, the student is only given the opportunity for special needs support in a segregated setting, which leads to a similar segregated educational situation. For most students, this step is more exclusive than the previous step in the staircase. This may also be the case with the student in the example above whose excluded situation was severe inside the regular classroom. More precisely, that student may have a worse school situation if he/she is still being excluded in the classroom and an additional measure is to “push” the student out of the classroom for some lessons or activities during the week. However, this also depends on what kind of situation the student is being “pushed” into. Again, and as emphasised above, these examples indicate that the school situations in the staircase simplify conditions for certain students and that more dimensions must be incorporated to thoroughly understand a given school situation.

The main difference in the next step down the staircase, “Totally excluded from the regular classroom”, is that that student is no longer part of education in the regular classroom. The student may still have relationships with students in the former class, meeting them on breaks and field days when there is no curricular content. The student may experience a totally excluded school situation alone with a teacher assistant or student assistant, or with a teacher in one-to-one teaching or in another group with other students who have left the regular classrooms. The students, however, still attend the regular school, but the quality of teaching as well as other dimensions of education may vary. Even if the teaching is of high quality and the social climate is good, the students are still part of an exclusionary

situation as student placement is important in definitions of inclusion and exclusion (cf. Göransson & Nilholm, 2014).

The fourth step down towards more exclusion is “Partially or totally excluded from the regular school”. This means that a student is placed in another school or school setting for several hours, subjects, or days every week for a period of weeks, months, or years, or even full time, with no planning for this student’s return to the regular school setting. This type of school is often an organisational and educational solution when it has been established that the regular school cannot adequately address the student’s needs, pedagogically or socially (Malmqvist, 2021). These schools may specialise in working with students perceived to have specific behavioural issues and/or specific diagnoses in which, for example, PRUs have specialised (Malmqvist, 2018; Malmqvist & Nilholm, 2016).

The next step is “Totally excluded from the regular school and sent to a therapeutic school, with or without boarding placement”. In this penultimate step, with placement in a “therapeutic” school, the students are perceived to need psychological and/or medical treatment and/or to need a different social situation. Such school placement may include the student living in a boarding school arrangement.

In the last step of this staircase model, “Involuntarily (forced) excluded school and residential placement”, students are subject to mandatory placement. In Sweden, these boarding schools, called residential homes, are governed by the Swedish National Board of Institutional Care (SiS). They provide individually tailored care, treatment, and education for young people perceived to have psychosocial problems, criminal behaviour, and substance abuse (or a combination). At some units, there are young people who have committed serious criminal offences. SiS’s residential homes have the legal right to detain individuals by force.

Note that there are overlapping aspects among schools positioned on the three last steps. The use of psychological therapies, for example, may be common in schools on these three steps but are more frequently used in schools on the two lowest steps.

Intentionally, there is no lower landing in the staircase model. Below the staircase, to the right, are different groups of students who are no longer in education – as the label says: “Voluntarily or involuntarily fully excluded from schools and education”. One group consists of young people who refuse to attend school; another group consists of young people who want to attend school but find it impossible. The reasons for self-exclusion may vary in both these groups. It should be noted that in Sweden, schools may only refuse to admit a student to school for a maximum of two periods/weeks a year, for a maximum of one week at a time. Home schooling is only permitted by Swedish legislation when teachers from a school visit a home to give lessons, as a support measure.

Interestingly, according to the same educational legislation, disciplinary measures partly overlap with measures for special needs support. For example, placement in a special class for a period is a disciplinary measure but is also described as a support measure. Such measures are sometimes described as forming a staircase of disciplinary measures based on educational legislation (Hulthén, 2014).

In sum, the theoretical model incorporates inclusive or integrated education for most Swedish students, some exclusionary measures, and even examples of “deep exclusion” when students refuse to attend school (“self-exclusion”). There is no indication of anything approaching the vision of “Inclusive education for all”. This is no surprise, as the Swedish school system includes various types of schools for students with, for example, intellectual impairments or various disabilities (e.g. blindness, hearing impairments, and severe speech disorders). As the staircase model is poorly suited to these latter groups, we have also been working on parallel staircase models with steps differing from those in the above model. The model described here contains measures used in Sweden to address behavioural issues.

Characteristics of the staircase model and its central parts

The idea of describing a certain order of different types of schools, as in the above model, is not new. In his pyramidal model, which he called “a hierarchy”, Reynold (1962) focused on ten types of school situations within special education for handicapped children.

Our idea with this theoretical model is to go further than just presenting different school situations in a certain order, as in Reynold’s model. It represents an attempt to better understand processes, conditions, measures, forces, and mechanisms, which are categories we have found to be workable and informative. The model’s simplification of the reality in schools is based on our present understanding, which obviously corresponds to our assumptions about how things work regarding inclusionary and exclusionary processes along the staircase. The model presented here is not meant to be the final version, but remains in ongoing development. The model builds to a large extent on other researchers’ work and is informed by their proposed theoretical contributions. These are described under five headings:

- A dynamic continuum understanding of inclusion and exclusion
- Understanding the dynamics (with the subheadings “Inside school forces” and “Outside school forces”)
- Societal mechanisms affecting the school forces
- Policy–provision–experiences–outcomes
- Transactional theory

A dynamic continuum understanding of inclusion and exclusion

In a review, Göransson and Nilholm (2014) investigated various definitions of inclusion used in research, but all their reported definitions seemed to represent a static understanding. We have instead been inspired by Hedegaard Hansen (2012), who stated that “we cannot investigate inclusion without investigating exclusion” (p. 89). Our main interest, considering the situation in Sweden, is in understanding the development trajectory in schools, but not with inclusion as the main focus. An

analytical “flip-flop” strategy was used in which “one looks at an opposite or extreme range of a concept to bring out its significant properties” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 16). Consequently, the focus was directed towards the opposite of what the concept of inclusion stands for, and we ended up investigating exclusion. As the large arrow at the bottom of the model shows, our main interest in investigating exclusionary processes also encompasses an interest in inclusionary processes (Figure 5.1). We understand these processes as always being present along a continuum with two endpoints: full inclusion and, what has been termed “deep exclusion” by Daniels and Cole (2010). Intentionally, within the large, dark arrow at the bottom of Figure 5.1, more smaller arrows are pointing towards exclusion rather than to inclusion. This is in accordance with how we view the present development trajectory in the Swedish school system.

Understanding the dynamics

We need to understand the forces underlying exclusionary processes. In endeavouring to do so, we are especially focusing on students’ experiences along the continuum, as well as on their legal guardians’ perspectives. Our studies are accordingly designed to provide empirical findings, especially related to inside school forces, as they are understood by students and their legal guardians, as well as by school staff. At the same time, we will to some extent be able to refer to external school forces and, at a theoretical level, to the mechanisms underlying such internal and external school forces. To do this, we apply transactional theory.

Inside school forces

The “push” factor in the push–pull factor theory (Myklebust, 2002) has been used to better understand what students experience in their school situations and when moving along the staircase as well as how schools handle students considered challenging. According to Myklebust (2002), the theory has been used in educational research, for example, regarding the transitional patterns of groups of special-needs students during their time in school. It has also been used in studies of early school leavers (Nikou & Luukkonen, 2024). Nes et al. (2018) used the terms “pull out” and “push out” to refer to all forms of classroom leaving, especially when students leave the regular classroom and learn in settings separated from their peers.

In our studies, we have used the term “push-out factors” to refer to forces that appear to contribute to social, educational, and physical exclusion inside or outside a classroom or school. We have found several push-out factors, such as teachers who do not want to have certain students in their classrooms or students who are bullied by other students and, consequently, do not want to attend school. We have also found factors that seem to counteract such push-out factors, for example, teachers who socially and educationally provide the same students with a supportive learning environment where they can thrive. We call these “stay-in factors” (cf. Demo et al., 2023).

Outside school forces

In our model, outside school forces refer to forces outside the school contributing to students leaving their classrooms and/or schools. In our studies exploring pull-out factors related to outside school forces, we have found examples such as local teachers' union actions encouraging schoolteachers to report school incidents to the police (cf. Allan, 2006). Although such incidents may involve only very young children in their early school years, they may make other teachers reluctant to teach these young children. Another example is parent groups that demand that the school move a student or students of middle school away from the school; these young students are only 10–12 years old.

Societal mechanisms affecting school forces

Underlying the inside and outside school forces in our model are what we call societal mechanisms. One such mechanism is the governance of schools by educational legislation that may be more inclined towards inclusion or exclusion.

The following example is based on a School Commission report (SOU, 2020, p. 42) in which one municipality is regarded as a stakeholder. Several stakeholders were involved, one being the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, which supported the municipality. In 2014, the School Inspectorate decided that the municipality was contravening educational legislation with their PRUs. The municipality objected, arguing that as independent schools had the legal right to administer PRUs for students with special needs, diagnoses, or disabilities, municipalities should be able to compete with the companies that administer independent schools specialising in students needing special support. In 2017, the Supreme Administrative Court established that municipally run PRUs are legal, which led to a national increase in the number of PRUs, a development not aligned with the policy of the 2014–2018 government. This may also be viewed as an example of understanding governance according to governance network theory, in which one municipality and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions, as stakeholders, were influential when they opposed the national policy (Ansell et al., 2023).

Policy–provision–experiences–outcomes

In the bottom left-hand corner of Figure 5.1 is a model developed in Project IRIS (Rose et al., 2015) to assess progress towards inclusive education in Ireland. At the core of this model are four interrelated components seen as critical for developing the effective delivery of a more equitable and inclusive education system. These four components – policy, provision, experiences, and outcomes – were seen to affect the ability of schools and other agencies in their efforts to become more inclusive. Each component can be identified as affecting the steps of the staircase

model presented here when school situations and transitions between them are investigated. This model is used to advance our knowledge of transitions in both exclusionary and inclusionary directions.

Transactional theory

Our understanding of processes is based on transactional developmental theory (Sameroff & Fiese, 2008), which is indicated in Figure 5.1 by the small arrows pointing in opposite directions inside the two arrows representing the inside and outside school forces and on the demarcation line separating the societal mechanisms from the school forces. Transactional theory, originating from developmental psychology focusing on child development, has also been used to understand interactional processes and the development of societal systems (Lorion, 2011) and seems to be compatible with governance network theory (Ansell et al., 2023). The development trajectory of schools, and of the school system as we understand it, seems to be dependent on negotiations at several societal levels from the classroom to the government. There also seem to be multiple alliances among stakeholders, such as researchers, interest groups, the teachers' union, national school authorities, school companies, and municipalities. We have found that even small Facebook groups can affect decision-making by national school authorities. For example, a Facebook group⁴ of legal guardians strongly criticised the National Agency for Education's in-service teacher training in 2018. In conjunction with a public debate in one of Sweden's national daily newspapers,⁵ there was a parallel debate in social media. The representatives of the Facebook group were eventually invited to a dialogue, which later led to changes in the in-service training regarding what teachers should know about neuropsychiatric diagnoses.⁶ Before these changes, the government listened to the Facebook group, and the National Agency of Education was required by the government to participate in a dialogue with the group. The Facebook group's homepage contains many posts strongly criticising inclusion, claiming that the Swedish National Agency for Education lacks scientific competence regarding neuropsychiatric diagnoses. Hence, the top-down straightforward steering from the government via the national school authorities to the classroom does not seem to be the only direction of influence. Rather, there seems to be bidirectional influence with a dynamic in which many stakeholders participate in a process that fosters multiple changes over time. This example – one of many – reflects developmental changes in which a transactional understanding seems to be a valuable part of the analysis of the development trajectory in schools.

Concluding thoughts

The development trajectory in Swedish schools has raised concerns among many educational researchers in the country. The movement towards inclusive education seems to have weakened, while the movement towards exclusion in the school

system seems to be growing stronger. This is a development that should be worrying for the Swedish government as well. Sweden has, as previously mentioned, agreed to work towards inclusive education (United Nations, 2015). Sweden is also a Member State in the Council of Europe, an organisation that, in a position paper, has declared segregation to be

... one of the worst forms of discrimination and a serious violation of the rights of the children concerned, as their learning opportunities are seriously harmed by isolation and lack of inclusion in mainstream schools.

(Council of Europe, 2017, p. 5)

The described development trajectory is probably not unique to Sweden, as we are living in a globalised world where many societal trends have become common in many countries. For example, NPM is a strong movement in many countries, and there has been a worldwide trend towards the increased medicalisation of young students' behaviour. However, it is difficult to determine whether there has been a similar trend towards exclusion in other countries. Organisations such as the European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (EASIE) report on developments in their member countries. According to EASIE's most recent report (EASIE, 2024), several of its 31 member countries offer inclusive education to nearly 100 per cent of their school students, whereas Sweden is in last place regarding such education for students at both the primary and lower secondary school levels. This may be interpreted as indicating that the trend towards exclusion in schools is particularly characteristic of Sweden. As every country uses its own definition of inclusive education, however, comparisons across countries are difficult to make and potentially misleading. In England, for example, which according to the reported data has a much higher proportion of students in inclusive education than does Sweden, recent reports have shown an ongoing increase in suspensions and permanent exclusions from school (Department for Education, 2023). This background calls for research investigating not only the present state of inclusion and exclusion in schools, but also the development trajectory, when appropriate theoretical tools are available. As development is based on processes, research based on a static idea of inclusive education seems unproductive. Additionally, controversies over definitions of what constitutes inclusive education are based on static ideas that seem to lead only to dug-in stakeholder positions, but "it seems feasible to reach agreement about what (e.g. attitudes) is in favour of and what is against inclusion" (Malmqvist, 2016).

To summarise and conclude this chapter, in Sweden, and probably in other countries, there is an urgent need to better understand the trend towards exclusion in school systems and the processes that lead towards inclusion versus exclusion. Understanding these processes calls for a better understanding of the forces inside and outside schools that have influenced these processes and how they function.

These processes are affected and steered by a number of societal mechanisms. *The Staircase Model of Inclusionary and Exclusionary Processes* has been developed to provide researchers with a theoretical tool for more thoroughly understanding developments favouring inclusion versus exclusion in schools. The findings from a retroductive study (Malmqvist, 2016), mentioned in the *Inclusion Dialogue* podcast in October 2021, indicate that educational quality in addressing behavioural issues is crucial for students at risk for exclusion. We hope that research based on this model, which fosters a deeper understanding of inclusionary and exclusionary processes in schools, will also lead to actions that benefit students, particularly those who need high-quality educational support.

Notes

- 1 Placement in an emergency school is a time-restricted (four weeks) measure when disciplinary measures such as placement in a special class within a regular school have not worked. <https://www.skolverket.se/skolutveckling/inspiration-och-stod-i-arbetet/stod-i-arbetet/starta-och-bedriva-akutskola>
- 2 The election in September 2018 ushered in a period of no national government. The January Agreement, reached in January 2019, was a political pact among four political parties to establish a new Swedish government; the Agreement ended during a governmental crisis in 2021.
- 3 In Sweden, the word “integration” is used to describe mainstreaming based on the Latin root “bring parts together”, i.e., segregation is not a precondition for this.
- 4 <https://www.facebook.com/barnibehov>
- 5 *Svenska Dagbladet* (a Swedish daily newspaper): debate articles from 2018-01-01 (<https://www.svd.se/a/p6p6dE/skolverket-blundar-for-det-vi-vet-om-npf>) to 2021-03-01 (<https://www.svd.se/a/yRmvEx/skolverket-dribblar-bort-fragan-om-npf>).
- 6 The term “*neuropsykiatriska funktionsnedsättningar*” (neuropsychiatric disabilities) is widely used in Sweden instead of the correct translation of “neurodevelopmental disorders” from DSM5.

References

- Alexiadou, N., & Lundahl, L. (2019). The boundaries of policy learning and the role of ideas: Sweden, as a reluctant policy learner? In U. Stadler-Altman & B. Gross (Eds.), *Beyond erziehungswissenschaftlicher grenzen: Diskurse zu entgrenzungen der disziplin* (pp. 63–77). Berliner Wissenschafts-Verlag GmbH.
- Allan, J. (2006). The repetition of exclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 10(2–3), 121–133. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603110500221511>
- Ansell, C., Sørensen, E., & Torfing, J. (2023). Public administration and politics meet turbulence: The search for robust governance responses. *Public Administration*, 101(1), 3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1111/padm.12874>
- Chan, A. Y. L., Ma, T.-T., Lau, W. C. Y., Ip, P., Coghill, D., Gao, L., Jani, Y. H., Hsia, Y., Wei, L., Taxis, K., Simonoff, E., Taylor, D., Lum, T. Y., Man, K. K. C., & Wong, I. C. K. (2023). Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder medication consumption in 64 countries and regions from 2015 to 2019: A longitudinal study, *eClinicalMedicine*, 58, 101780, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eclinm.2022.101780>
- Corbin, J., & Strauss, A. (2008). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (3rd ed.). SAGE. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452230153>

- Council of Europe (2017). *Fighting school segregation in Europe through inclusive education: A position paper*. The Council of Europe, Commissioner for Human Rights.
- Daniels, H., & Cole, T. (2010). Exclusion from school: Short-term setback or a long term of difficulties? *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 25(2), 115–130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856251003658652>
- Demo, H., Nes, K., Somy, H. M., Frizzarin, A., & Zovo, S. D. (2023). In and out of class – What is the meaning for inclusive schools? Teachers’ opinions on push-and pull-out in Italy and Norway. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 27(14), 1592–1610. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2021.1904017>
- Department for Education (2023). *Suspension and permanent exclusions in England* [online]. GOV.UK. <https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/suspensions-and-permanent-exclusions-in-england/2022-23-autumn-term>
- European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education (2024). In P. Drál, A. Lenárt and A. Lecehval (Eds.), *European Agency Statistics on Inclusive Education: 2020/2021 school year dataset cross-country report*. Odense: EASNIE.
- European Commission, Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport, & Culture (2022). *Education and training monitor 2022: Sweden*. Publications Office of the European Union. <https://doi.org/10.2766/80995>
- Göransson, K., & Nilholm, C. (2014). Conceptual diversities and empirical shortcomings: A critical analysis of research on inclusive education. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 29(3), 265–280.
- Gren Landell, M. (2021). Introduction. In M. Gren Landell (Ed.), *School attendance problems: A research update and where to go* (pp. 19–38). Jerringfonden.
- Hedegaard Hansen, J. (2012). Limits to inclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 16(1), 89–98. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13603111003671632>
- Hinshaw, S., & Scheffler, R. (2014). *The ADHD explosion: Myths, medication, money and today's push for performance*. Oxford University Press.
- Hulthén, E.-L. (2014). Uptrappade åtgärder mot stök i skolan. [Escalated measures against disruptions in school]. *Pedagogiska Magasinet*, 19(2).
- Lorion, R. P. (2011). Understanding Sarason’s concepts of school cultures and change: Joining a community in school improvement efforts. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 48(3–4), 147–156.
- Malmqvist, J. (2016). Working successfully towards inclusion—or excluding pupils? A comparative retroductive study of three similar schools in their work with EBD. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 21(4), 344–360. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2016.1201637>
- Malmqvist, J. (2018). Has schooling of ADHD students reached a crossroads? *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 23(4), 389–409. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2018.1462974>
- Malmqvist, J. (2021). The PRU: The solution for whom? *Education Sciences*, 11(9), 545. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11090545>
- Malmqvist, J., & Nilholm, C. (2016). The antithesis of inclusion? The emergence and functioning of ADHD special education classes in the Swedish school system. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, 21(3), 287–300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13632752.2016.1165978>
- Ministry of Education (2023). Förordning (2023:117) om statsbidrag för personalkostnader för akutskolor, speciallärare och elevhälsan [Regulation (2023:117) on state subsidies for personnel costs for emergency schools, special education teachers, and student health]. Ministry of Education. https://www.riksdagen.se/sv/dokument-och-lagar/dokument/svensk-forfattningssamling/forordning-2023117-om-statsbidrag-for_sfs-2023-117/
- Myklebust, J. O. (2002). Inclusion or exclusion? Transitions among special needs students in upper secondary education in Norway. *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 17(3), 251–263. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856250210162158>

- Nes, K., Demo, H., & Inanes, D. (2018). Inclusion at risk? Push- and pull-out phenomena in inclusive school systems: The Italian and Norwegian experiences. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 22(2), 111–129. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13663116.2017.1362045>
- Nikou, S., & Luukkonen, M. (2024). The push-pull factor model and its implications for the retention of international students in the host country. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 14(1), 76–94. <https://doi.org/10.1108/HESWBL-04-2023-0084>
- Nilholm, C. (2021). Research about inclusive education in 2020: How can we improve our theories in order to change practice? *European Journal of Special Needs Education*, 36(3), 358–370. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08856257.2020.1754547>
- Reynold, M. D. (1962). A framework for considering some issues in special education. *Exceptional Children*, 28(7), 367–370.
- Rhodes, R. A. W. (1996). The new governance: Governing without government. *Political Studies*, 4(4), 652–667. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9248.1996.tb01747.x>
- Rose, R., Shevlin, M., Winter, E., & O’Raw, P. (2015). *Project IRIS: Inclusive research in Irish schools* (National Council for Special Education Research Report 20). NCSE.
- Sameroff, A. J., & Fiese, B. H. (2008). Transactional regulation: The developmental ecology of early intervention. In J. P. Shonkoff & S. J. Meisels (Eds.), *Handbook of early childhood intervention* (pp. 135–159). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511529320.009>
- Skolverket [Swedish National Agency for Education] (2023a). *Elever i grundsärskolan: Läsåret 2022/23* [Students in compulsory school for pupils with learning disabilities: Academic year 2022/23].
- Skolverket [Swedish National Agency for Education] (2023b). *Elever i specialskolan: Läsåret 2022/23* [Students in special schools: Academic year 2022/23].
- Social Democratic Party (2019). *January Agreement*. <https://www.socialdemokraterna.se/download/18.1f5c787116e356cdd25a4c/1573213453963/Januariavtalet.pdf>
- Socialstyrelsen. [National Board of Health and Welfare] (2023). *Diagnostik och läkemedelsbehandling vid adhd. Förekomst, trend och könsskillnader. [Diagnostics and Pharmacological Treatment of ADHD. Prevalence, Trends, and Gender Differences.]*
- SOU 2017:35 [Swedish Government Official Reports 2017:35] (2017). *Samling för skolan: Nationell strategi för kunskap och likvärdighet: Utbildningsdepartementet* [Gathering for school: National strategy for knowledge and equity]. Ministry of Education. <https://www.regeringen.se/contentassets/e94a1c61289142bfbcfd54a44377507/samling-for-skolan—nationell-strategi-for-kunskap-och-likvardighet-sou-201735.pdf>
- SOU 2020:42 [Swedish Government Official Reports 2020:42] (2020). *En annan möjlighet till särskilt stöd: Reglering av kommunala resurskolor* [Another special provision alternative: Regulation of municipal pupil referral units]. Ministry of Education. <https://www.regeringen.se/49ec22/contentassets/0966298832c643809905412ddc67414a/en-annan-mojlighet-till-sarskilt-stod—reglering-av-kommunala-resursskolor-sou-202042>
- Tidö Agreement (2022). *Agreement for Sweden: The Tidö Agreement*. <https://via.tt.se/data/attachments/00551/04f31218-dccc-4e58-a129-09952cae07e7.pdf>
- United Nations (2015). *The 2030 agenda for sustainable development*. <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>