



Skolformens komplexitet

– elevers erfarenheter av skolvardag och tillhörighet
i gymnasiesärskolan

av

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Akademisk avhandling

Avhandling för filosofie doktorsexamen i handikappvetenskap,
som kommer att försvaras offentligt
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Opponent: Professor Helena Hemmingsson,
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Abstract

Therése Mineur (2013): The complexity of a special type of school - pupils' experiences of everyday life and sense of belonging in upper secondary schools for pupils with intellectual disability. Studies from the Swedish Institute for Disability Research 51, 298 pp.

The Swedish upper secondary education consists of different types of schools. One type of school is the upper secondary for pupils who have assessed as having an intellectual disability. The aim of this study is to increase the knowledge and understanding of pupils' experiences of everyday life in school, and how they perceive the significance of their sense of belonging to this type of school. An additional aim of the study is to increase the knowledge about different ways of organizing the education and teaching. The collection of data started with a national questionnaire survey which was directed to headteachers at the schools. Based on the results from the survey five schools were selected. By participant observations at the schools and repeated interviews with 14 young women and 12 young men, the first person perspective has been studied and analysed through an interpretive approach.

The analysis showed that knowledge about the schools different ways of organizing the teaching are of importance, to understand pupils' diverse experiences of school life. As an example it has an impact on how the pupils evaluate different types of knowledge, but also how they view their future opportunities. Any clear connection between the schools different ways of organizing the education and teaching and pupils' experiences of their sense of belonging to this type of school has not emerged. Instead pupils' awareness, confidence, uncertainty, dejection and determination are to be seen as a framework of understanding, telling us about their experiences of their school affiliation. Together they demonstrate a complexity surrounding pupils' situation, associated to both advantages and disadvantages in school, but also their thoughts about identity and how they perceive being categorized as deviant by others. The analysis also showed that expectations on the pupils, and their possibilities in the school context, are related to a special school culture and to gender differences.

Keywords: pupils with intellectual disability, upper secondary school, special schools, school organization, categorization.

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