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The Assessment and Processes of Inclusion and Exclusion in the Context of ‘Emergency Remote Teaching’ as Part of Vocational Education During Covid-19

During the spring of 2020, pupils taking part in vocational education and training (VET) in Denmark were offered what was called ‘emergency remote teaching’ as a result of the national lockdown from March during the Covid-19 crisis. Although this changed the pedagogical context of their education, their educational assessment and exams remained unchanged.

The aim of this paper is to provide research on students’ reflections, feelings and practices in the context of ‘emergency remote teaching’, with a focus on assessment and its role in inclusion and exclusion processes.

Therefore, this research topic is an assessment of VET and its influence on how pupils perceive activities, as well as how they act in educational situations. Teachers and students had to find new ways of handling the requirements of mandatory assessments.

The theoretical framework of the analysis draws upon sociological theory, addressing assessments and their role within social reproduction, as well as processes of inclusion and exclusion (e.g., Bourdieu & Passeron, 2006). We also draw on sociological theory concerning everyday life and what happens when routines are changed (Bech-Jørgensen, 1994).

The research design is based on six focus group interviews with 24 pupils. These were conducted in August 2020. The pupils were attending a vocational basic course at a vocational college in the western part of Denmark. The semi-structured interviews did not directly address assessments but the inductive analyses provided further clarification on the topic.

The findings of the analyses showed that the new context established by remote teaching influenced and changed pupils’ reflections on assessments and how they acted accordingly. This change involved processes of inclusion and exclusion in the pedagogical context. It posed a problem to some pupils and we have several empirical examples to demonstrate this.

The Covid-19 crisis has influenced schooling and teaching in all Nordic countries. The impact this has for youth education in a future perspective is **relevant to Nordic educational research**.

References

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