IJREE

Issue 1 2020

International Journal for **Research** on **Extended Education**

General Contributions

Kristina Jonsson • Principals' Perspective on Pupils' Social Learning in Swedish School-Age Educare

Karin Lager • Possibilities and Impossibilities for Everyday Life: Institutional Spaces in School-Age Educare

Peter Carlman, Maria Hjalmarsson, Carina Vikström • Let the Right One in: Sports Leaders' Shared Experiences of Including Refugee Girls and Boys in Sports Clubs

Ishmael A. Miller • Passing the Mic: Toward Culturally Responsive Out of School Time Leadership

Lena Glaés-Coutts • University-supported Networks as Professional Development for Teachers in School-Age Educare

Patricia J. Allen, Zoe Brown, Gil G. Noam • STEM Learning Ecosystems: Building from Theory Toward a Common Evidence Base

Developments in the Field of Extended Education

Gerald Tritremmel • The Professional Life of Leisure Pedagogues at Austrian All-Day Schools

ISSN 2196-3673

Verlag **Barbara Budrich**

IJREE – International Journal for Research on Extended Education
Volume 8, Issue 1/2020
ISSN: 2196-3673, ISSN Online: 2196-7423

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Publisher
Verlag Barbara Budrich GmbH, Stauffenbergstr. 7, D-51379 Leverkusen-Opladen, Germany, phone +49 (0)2171 79491 -50, fax +49 (0)2171 79491-69,
e-mail: info@budrich-journals.com

Subscription
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International Journal for Research on Extended Education, Volume 8/2020

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Editor's Preface

The COVID 19 pandemic has had a significant impact on education. Most schools have been forced to close. Billions of students have been in lockdown and inevitably participated in remote learning. Extended education has also faced shutdown, while a great number of professionals in this area has suffered from unemployment under the coronavirus crisis. From a research perspective, it is urgent to reveal what negative effects the COVID 19 outbreak has caused to the education systems and children's growth and development, particularly in the field of extended education which seems to be more vulnerable than regular programs of public schools.

Although the COVID 19 outbreak reduced educational activities to the minimum, research in extended education has not been daunted. In a 1/2020 issue, we have six articles in the general contribution section and one report in the development in the field of extended education section.

The first article written by *Kristina Jonsson* investigated 'social learning' of children in the Swedish school-age educare from the principal perspective. This study suggests three themes—the core aim of the work, approach of the staff, and democratic learning of children. A great number of studies has been conducted about the Swedish school-aged educare programs, while a topic of social learning is new to this area and therefore deserves greater attention.

The second article deals with results of an ethnographical study about possibilities and impossibilities for everyday life of children in school-age educare centers in Sweden. In this research, *Karin Lager* suggests the importance of academically educated staff, stability of staff teams, dedicated rooms, availability of materials, and time to plan and prepare for work to promote everyday life experiences of children.

The third paper examined the relationships between gender and sports capital in sports for young children with a refugee background. Conducting focus group interviews with sport leaders, three researchers, *Peter Carlman*, *Maria Hjalmarsson*, *Carina Vikström*, found that differences in girls come from sports culture of their countries which affects the degree of engagement of girls in sports, whereas differences in boys were found to be related to their bodies and mentalities.

The fourth article explored the application of culturally responsive school leadership in an out of school time (OST) organization. In his study, *Ishmael Miller*, suggests that OST leaders should become more connected to their community understanding of longstanding inequities, interrogate their own worldviews, and work in tandem with minoritized youth and community members to address the youth development needs of minoritized youth.

The fifth examined how university-based learning networks support the professional development needs of teachers in School-Age educare in Sweden. *Lena Glaés-Coutts* found that university-supported networks help teachers in school-age educare build connections with other teachers in the field. The network further provides participants with opportunities to become an active part of research which is performed at the university and a platform for developing a collective agency.

Finally, the US based researchers, *Patricia Allen*, *Zoe Brown*, *Gil Noam*, introduced an innovative system-building initiative known as the STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice. They found that it contributes to transforming STEM education in the US through cross-sector partnerships between schools, afterschool and summer programs, libraries, museums, and businesses, among others. Their research also found that most STEM Learning Ecosystems were supported by the extended education sector and encouraged to conduct evaluation and assessment works in this field.

This issue includes one report in the section of *Development in Extended Education*. In this report, *Gerald Tritremmel*, provide an information about professional life of leisure pedagogies in all-day schools in Austria. This paper is of great importance in describing some aspects of all-day schools in Austria which has seldom been known to the extended education research community. We hope that more studies are conducted about extended education in various parts of the world.

We thank all authors for submitting their phenomenal research works. We are also very grateful for anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and supports for development of IJREE.

Sang Hoon Bae

Principals' Perspectives on Pupils' Social Learning in Swedish School-Age Educare

Kristina Jonsson

Abstract: This article aims to investigate social learning in the Swedish school-age educare (SAEC) from a number of principals' perspectives. An abductive approach has been adopted to analyse the data from individual interviews with seven principals in school-age educare. The results are understood through an interactionist perspective, with Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological system theory as a raster, which gives a didactic view on the principals' governing of the SAEC. Three themes were identified in the principals' perspectives, which are *the core aim of the work in the SAEC*, *the staff's approach* and *pupils' democratic learning*. The results suggest that the perspective of the principals is characterized by having the pupil in focus.

Keywords: school-age educare, social learning, principals, system theory

Introduction

The aim of this article is to investigate social learning in the Swedish School-Age Educare (SAEC) from the perspective of principals. In Sweden, the SAEC is integrated with compulsory schools, it is regulated by the same legislation, The Education Act (SFS 2010:800), and the activities are guided by the same curriculum (Swedish National Agency for Education [SNAE], 2019). SAEC centres also share premises with schools and the same principal most often leads them. The Swedish Education Act (2010:800) states, that to become a principal, it is required to have pedagogical insight, gained from both education and experience. Also, the principal must attend The National School Leadership Training Programme as soon as possible, and the programme must be completed within four years from entry into possession of service.

The core content of the SAEC activities is specified in the curriculum (SNAE, 2019). The activities are termed *educational programme*, with a pronounced role to complement pupil's learning in school. This indicates a knowledge-based focus, which has grown in recent decades (Haglund, 2009; Hjalmarsson, Löfdahl Hultman & Warin, 2017; Närvänen & Elvstrand, 2014). Nevertheless, the curriculum emphasises a practice with focus on social learning, such as group-related activities and pupils' sense of security and wellbeing. In the section of the

SAEC, the work to enhance pupils' peer relations is further emphasized. However, the curriculum does not entirely clarify the assignment, that states that care, development and teaching should constitute a whole (SNAE, 2019). Thus, there is room for interpretation in the curriculum, which may cause uncertainty in implementing the practice. The SAEC teachers are on the one hand required to supplement pupils' knowledge-based learning in school, and on the other hand required to work according to a curriculum that highlights social knowledge. Thereby, according to Lager, Sheridan and Gustafsson (2016), a tension between an individualised quality discourse and the social pedagogical approach is revealed.

Additionally, there is an organizational expectation on SAEC teachers to participate during the school day, which Andersson (2014) describes as a grey area in their work, as well as a structural difficulty. When SAEC teachers participate in school, their main responsibility to manage after-school care and activities is affected. This is an obstacle in the assignment, for which, according to Andersson (2014), management has a lack of understanding. Concerning the management, Jonsson and Lillvist (2019) express the importance of the principal as a pedagogical leader, especially regarding the guidance of the staff in developing the work in the SAEC. Alongside with the above described uncertainty in the assignment, this can be a conceivable problem, since a certain amount of understanding may be required to be able to organize and guide the staff to develop the work with social learning in the SAEC. This places the focus on the principal's perspectives of the work in the SAEC, since it is the basis both for how to organize the SAEC and how to be a pedagogical leader.

Although the research on the SAEC has increased in recent years, there is a gap in terms of the principals' perspectives. Therefore, according to the aim of this article, a number of principals' views of social learning in the SAEC are investigated. The research question is as follows: *What characterizes the principals' perspectives of social learning in School-Age Educare?*

Social Learning

Social learning can be considered as the process, in which a pupil is provided the opportunity to develop social competencies, by the interaction with others. As explained by Fallis (2002), social learning means to acquire social skills and social knowledge, by communicating and by taking active part in the current context. Social skills comprise abilities that are necessary to participate in functional, social interaction, such as to understand rules, and to relate to moral and values. Further considered to be parts of social skills, are behaviors related to relational making, for instance impulse control and problem-solving ability (Saracho & Spodek, 2007b). Also included in social learning, is socially acceptable attitudes, which Saracho and Spodek (2007c) explain as to have a friendly approach to others. Similarly, Bronfenbrenner and Evans (2000) highlight outcomes of social learning, as the long-range commitment to the well-being of others, extending from social settings, such as child-care settings, to the well-being of the society as a whole. Additionally, guidance and feedback on their acts, help pupils to learn and understand their surrounding environment and their relation to it, as well as they learn to understand themselves (Saracho & Spodek, 2007a, 2007b).

International Perspectives on School-Age Care

Many countries provide school-age-care (SAC), and yet there are big differences between what is offered, as well as differences concerning the aim of SAC. Like the Swedish one, the international research field is growing. However, what is discernible is that social learning is in focus to various degrees in SAC practices outside Sweden.

Haglund and Anderson (2009) compare the American after-school programs (ASP) to the Swedish SAEC. They highlight both differences and similarities, though the two contexts are both established to enhance children's development and to be a societal support to families. Thereby the ASP can be said to aim at both educating and developing children's social skills (e.g. Durlak, Weissberg & Pachan, 2010; Wade, 2014). Concerning the Australian equivalent, Cartmel and Hayes (2016) note that SAC is foremost viewed as a child-minding service. However, they underline the SAC services' potential to contribute to children's good overall health and wellbeing, for example by building social competencies. In a study by Winefield et al. (2011) it is shown that SAC have the ability through certain programmes to improve children's emotional, cognitive and social development. Further, such programmes seem to entail a positive outcome for the children and their families (Dockett et al., 2014). According to Cartmel and Hayes (2016), this points to the potential of quality SAC services to enhance the emotional, cognitive and social development of a child.

In the European setting, there is also a large variety in SAC among the 27 EU member states (Plantenga & Remery, 2017). Although the SAC services' main target is working parents, the differences in user rate depend on several factors. Plantenga and Remery (2017) point out that a low user rate is difficult to interpret, as it may indicate limited availability as well as a situation of less demand, for example for cultural reasons. The opportunity for SAC to contribute to the social, cognitive and emotional development of the child is, however, also highlighted by Plantenga and Remery (2017).

In the Nordic countries, there is an explicit pedagogical discourse in SAC (Pálsdottír, 2012) with a focus on children's overall development. Denmark and Norway, like Sweden, regulate the activities with specific documents. However, along with Finland, Denmark and Norway are more focused on recreation, play or individual competences and development (e.g. Pálsdottír, 2012; Strandell, 2013). In Iceland there is no agreement on the purpose of SAC, according to Pálsdottír and Kristjánsdóttir (2017), who still highlight the fact that the SAC centres have become a central venue for Icelandic children. Pálsdottír and Kristjánsdóttir (2017) further argue that the SAC centres play an important role, as a place where school-age children can develop their social skills.

The pedagogical discourse that Pálsdottír (2012) attributes to the Nordic context includes a broad meaning of education and care, with a social pedagogical approach. This discourse can be derived from Fröbels preschool pedagogical theories, also to be regarded as the basis for the focus on social and relational learning. The social pedagogical approach is often described in research of the Swedish SAEC, which brings us further to the next section, concerning the Swedish School-Age Educare.

Social Learning in the Swedish School-Age Educare

The Swedish SAEC practice is grounded on a social pedagogical tradition (e.g. Ackesjö, Nordänger & Lindqvist, 2016; Lager, 2019; Rohlin, 2000). As initially outlined, the SAEC traditionally is a place for pupils' social learning, based on group-related learning and development.

Research has shown that SAEC teachers believe social learning to be an overall goal for the activity, although the understanding of social learning in implementation and planning differs. For example, Pálsdottír (2014) highlights SAEC teachers' stressing the importance of social learning in SAEC activities but explaining the peer group to be the most important for developing social capabilities. For that reason, the SAEC teachers do not take part in children's interaction and play but mainly plan for children's social activities.

In Haglund's (2015) study, SAEC teachers focus on pupils' wellbeing and their opportunity to participate in free play. In the same way as highlighted by Pálsdottír (2014), the SAEC teachers in Haglund's (2015) study stay in the periphery of the pupils. Furthermore, they express themselves as not being very important to pupils' learning (Haglund, 2015). Dahl (2014) points out that SAEC teachers, who further describe social learning primarily as working with children's relations, emphasize the SAEC centres' suitability for children's social learning. Moreover, relations are considered unpredictable and difficult to include in a specific subject; hence the focus of the SAEC teachers in Dahl's (2014) study seems to be directed on the individual and not the environment or the peer group. According to Lager (2015), the work with children's social learning is focused on the opportunity to make new friends. Therefore, the SAEC teachers plan activities with a starting point in stimulating social and relational abilities. However, despite the teachers' intention to support children in making friends, social understanding and understanding of group related issues is, as described by Lager (2015), expected to occur without teacher interference, in the daily interaction between the children.

To sum up, the research indicates that social learning in the SAEC seems to be somehow put to one side in planning and conducting the SAEC activities. Although it is not disregarded, social learning does not appear consciously with the activities. The explanation for this can be found in various factors in the conditions of the SAEC activities, which will be further explored in the next section.

Conducting the Work with Social Learning in the SAEC

There are challenges in the SAEC, related to the organizational and structural basis. The structural conditions in the SAEC centres are described as problematic in several studies. There are issues described which may contribute to the fact that certain activities for social learning are not conducted. Pálsdottír (2014) for example, points out the lack of facilities and the workload as obstacles in the SAEC centres. Further highlighted is the idea of the SAEC centre being a place for recreation, thereby a place where children's free play and free choices ought to be encouraged, which becomes an opposition to controlling the activities. Andishmand (2017) underlines the SAEC centre as an important arena for social learning, yet at the same time highlights how large groups of children constitute an obstacle for creating a good learning environment. Partly in contrast to this, Lager (2019) suggests that

group size, limited time for planning and unclear tasks are contributing factors to the SAEC teachers' focus on working only with social relations. However, the challenges due to the conditions are prominent and Lager provides the interpretation that the conditional factors entail SAEC teachers not being able to cope with further content from the curriculum.

Collegial discussions can contribute to positive outcome, concerning the SAEC activities (Närvänen & Elvstrand, 2014). However, as Dahl (2014) makes visible, owing to the lack of collegial discussions on the contents of the SAEC activities, it becomes evident that there are shortcomings in describing, analysing and developing knowledge of children's relations. Dahl (2014) implies that this is an effect of the absence of a professional language, and further, that a professional language about children's relations seems to be missing among SAEC teachers. Regarding the SAEC teachers' visions, Närvänen and Elvstrand (2014) stress collegial discussions for making progress, arguing that the visions are crucial for how learning will be enabled in the SAEC. They further claim that continuous collegial reflection on the activities contributes to awareness and development of the working environment. However, as highlighted by Jonsson and Lillvist (2019), the collegial discussions most often have a practical content. They also found that SAEC teachers did not consider social learning as a necessary topic in their collegial discussions. Nevertheless, the SAEC teachers expressed social learning as being the purpose of the activities and articulated that their work was based on common beliefs. This indicates an implicit understanding of what is imbuing their work with social learning. Further suggested by Jonsson and Lillvist (2019) is that the content of the SAEC staff's collegial discussions depends on whether the principal is participating or not.

Haglund (2018) highlights difficulties in the working situation of an SAEC teacher not reaching the goals. The ambition, both of the teacher and of the curriculum, is a high quality pedagogical activity, but the SAEC remains predominantly a care-giving institution. Owing to the fact that the responsibility of what is prioritized in the SAEC centres has been transferred from the state to the municipality, points at the socio-political agenda as being superior to the educational agenda, according to Haglund (2018). Additionally, Haglund (2018) highlights that the teachers' work is accentuated as a result of how the principal leads and follows up the work of the SAEC teachers. Along with the above, this turns the focus to the principal's role as the manager of the SAEC.

The Principal's Role in SAEC

The teachers' ideas are noted to have significance for their work, but besides their visions, the school's vision is also noteworthy. According to Hemmings (2012), school success is closely related to a distinct vision. Clearly articulated visions contribute to good opportunities to promote learning, based on the curriculum, to reach the set goals. A vision can also counteract confusion concerning the work with learning activities. Further, Hemmings highlights the connection between the quality of a vision and the school's organizational structure.

Both a school's vision and organizational structure can be derived from the management and the management's work with the staff group. In both schools and SAEC, management is connected to the principal's leadership. Löwstedt (2018) claims that supportive learning cultures as well as high quality teaching is shaped through the pedagogical leader-

ship of a school leader. Pedagogical leadership is defined by Ståhle and Eriksson (2018) as direct or indirect, whereas the latter relates to how principals make teaching and learning possible, through the organizational structure. The direct leadership includes the principal's engagement in and feedback on the core processes of school (Ståhle & Eriksson, 2018), which is consistent with leading the SAEC as well. The principal's participation and views will colour the contents of the collegial discussions in the SAEC centre, thereby contributing to the staff's visions of the SAEC activities and consequently to the conditions for pupils' social learning. Thus, to understand the work with social learning in the SAEC, the perspective of principals needs to be observed.

Theoretical Point of Departure

This study takes an interactionist perspective, with the theoretical point of departure in Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 2005) bioecological system theory. For this study, the bioecological system theory gives the opportunity to view social learning in the SAEC didactically, from a number of principals' perspectives. Their views will influence how they control the SAEC, which in turn will influence how the practice is carried out by the staff. Accordingly, the principals' views will affect the conditions for pupils' social learning, which contributes with a didactic perspective on the school leadership.

In the bioecological model, interrelated levels of both close and more distant factors affect learning and development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2005). The microsystem, including teachers and peers in the SAEC group, the teachers' collegial group or the principal and teachers, can be seen as a pattern of roles, relations and activities between those included in the context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). *Roles* are behaviours and expectations, connected to an individual's role in society, which affect actions as well as thoughts and feelings, based on how one is being treated by others. This further entails the development of *relations*, involving other individuals. To increase complexity in relations, reciprocity is significant, and children especially benefit from the guidance of adults. What can be considered as *activities* involves behaviour in processes with a specific goal and with a time continuum. The microenvironment's characteristics can lead to both adaptive and maladaptive outcomes.

The *mesosystem* contains the relations between different microsystems, for example the relation between pupils and staff in the SAEC centre. The *exosystem* gives an indirect effect on the individuals, with no room for direct mutual influence. For the SAEC centre this may consist of the staffing and the working conditions, as well as the local school's economy. The *macrosystem* is the most distant level, affecting the individuals indirectly through laws, culture and the societal climate. This includes how social skills are described and valued in the SAEC curriculum, and thereby mirrors how social skills are valued in society, guiding the focus of the SAEC practice. Surrounding these four systems is the *chronosystem* (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), with the aspect of time, influencing all the other systems over both the short and the long term.

In this article the principals' perspectives are understood as an expression of the macrosystem. However, their perspectives may consist of various parts of the bioecological model, thus, regarded to construct the basis for leading the work with social learning in the SAEC.

Methods

This qualitative study is based on individual interviews with principals in the Swedish SAEC centres. The principals have various teacher educations, such as compulsory school teacher, upper secondary school teacher, special needs education teacher and SAEC pedagogue. Their occupational backgrounds comprise work as special needs education teachers, compulsory school teachers and SAEC pedagogues. All have completed, or is currently participating in, the National School Leadership Training Programme. The professional experience includes several years as school leaders, of which 1-4 years in the current service, as principal or assistant principal in primary school. To answer the research question, an abductive approach (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009) was adopted. That is, there were no predetermined concepts to investigate their perspectives on social learning. In order to gain deeper insights into Swedish SAEC principals' views on social learning, individual interviews were conducted with seven principals. Initially 47 principals in a mid-Swedish region were contacted by email. The initial selection was based on their role of being the principal of leisure time centres for pupils aged 6-9 years. Of the 47 contacted principals, seven agreed to participate. The sample can thus be viewed as a convenience sample (Bryman, 2016) because those being available, based on their interest, were those who participated. The principals worked in four different communities in a mid-Swedish region. Their professional backgrounds vary, from SAEC teachers and primary school teachers to high school teachers and special educational needs teachers. Their professional experience encompassed 2-9 years as a principal or school leader, with 1-4 years in the current assignment. All principals were informed about the purpose of the study and their rights as participants, and they all gave their written consent before participating.

The interviews were conducted at each principal's workplace, and ranged from 55 to 60 minutes each, except for one shorter interview of 35 minutes. The interviews were recorded with a Dictaphone and parallel notes were taken to support the opportunity to follow up with in-depth questions. The interviews followed a semi-structured approach, with an interview guide (Bryman, 2016) as the basis for the dialogues. The interview guide was used with the intention to ensure that the issue was addressed.

The interviews were transcribed verbatim, and analysed with an abductive approach (Bryman, 2016). The analysis was thereby carried out as an exchange between the data, the theoretical perspective and previous research. At first the transcripts were read thoroughly to identify elements related to the purpose and research question of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). These elements then were sorted together in groups and coded, based on similarities and differences. The codes were not defined in advance but emerged from the data material (Gibson & Brown, 2009). In further readings the codes were categorized into the three themes, *the core aim of the work in the SAEC centre*, *the staff's approach* and the *pupils' democratic learning*, concerning what appeared to characterize the principals' perspectives on social learning in the SAEC centre. Throughout the analysis process, the data and the emerging codes were considered based on the bioecological model, to develop the theoretical understanding of the principals' perspectives. The codes and the elements of the codes, were continuously compared to the meaning of the concepts micro-, meso-, exo-, macro- and chronosystem, also to the meaning of the concepts roles, relations and activities, to determine which part of the model they belong to.

In this study the ethical principles of the Swedish Research Council (2017) were followed. All principals were informed about the aim of the study, in writing and orally, and they all gave their written consent to participate, before the interviews took place. They were also informed that participation was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw their participation, without any explanation or followed by any negative consequence for them. Further, they were informed that their identities would be confidential, and that all data would be anonymized in the forthcoming presentation of the research results. Also, they were informed that the data would only be used for research and handled with care.

Results

In this section the results are presented, based on the themes produced in the analysis, to answer the research question of what characterizes the principals' views on social learning in school-age educare. The results display the principals' common view of social learning, in which three themes appear. The themes apprehend the principals' views on the general purpose of the educational programme in the SAEC, their views on how to accomplish the work with social learning and their views on what the pupils can achieve thereby.

Social Learning as the Core Aim of the SAEC

The results imply that the principals express mutual descriptions of social learning to be the core aim of the educational programme in school-age educare. The overall purpose is stressed to be educating community citizens, which is highlighted in the following quotation:

> *… our assignment in school is to create social human beings, who function in society. (Principal 7)*

One part of being functioning is explained as the pupils' ability to adapt to others in the group. The group is accordingly declared to be the basis for the work with social learning in the educational programme. In this work, social interaction and group dynamics are highlighted. The pupils' groups are described as representing society in smaller formats, in which the work should aim to promote individual wellbeing and group security. The reciprocity between the individual and the group is illuminated in the following quotation:

> *… to enable social learning is about seeing the needs of each individual and trying to develop it, based on the group. (Principal 6)*

The work with social learning should, according to the principals, be consistently ongoing and comprise all pupils, all the time. The all-encompassing perspective is further revealed in the principals' descriptions of how they consider the work to be done, which brings us to the next section and the second theme.

The Work on Social Learning should be Based on the Staff's Approach

With reference to the principals' views, the results give the considerations of how to work to promote pupils' social learning. The principals express that the work should be based on the staff's approaches, above mentioned as an all-encompassing perspective, which is illustrated in the following quotation.

> *Somehow, I think, everything you do and everything you say to the pupils is social learning in some way. (Principal 5)*

The principals' descriptions reveal two subtopics that they regard as the basis of the professional approach in SAEC. These subtopics indicate the principals' view of the staff's expected general approach to the pupils, along with the view of the staff's leadership approach. The subtopics will be presented below.

The General Approach

The principals' expression of the general approach accentuates a democratic way of conducting the work with social learning in SAEC, that is, explained by the principals as the staff taking a common point of departure in fundamental values. Differences between humans are highlighted as a basic starting point, which the staff are expected to consider by communicating the equal value of all people. This is exemplified in the quotation below:

> *… the equal value of all people, that is the fundamental value of our society […] it is really important to discuss that we are all humans with equal value. […] We look different, we believe different, that does not matter, we are all humans. (Principal 5)*

As a result of the right to be different, the freedom of opinion is mutually expressed. The respect for freedom of opinion is defined as important, which is highlighted in the following quotation:

> *…we live in a democratic society and we are allowed to have different opinions, which is okay. Your opinion is as important as mine is, even if we do not think the same. (Principal 3)*

With this democratic starting point, the group's common development is prominent in the principals' perspectives of how to accomplish the work with social learning. The principals articulate the importance of creating a sense of community among the pupils in the group, thereby enabling a team spirit. To accomplish that, good relations appear to be considered as a useful tool. The principals put emphasis on the staff's relational work in the pupils' group, in order to increase the wellbeing of each pupil. The relational work is expressed with the staff showing care, by looking after the individual with a genuine interest.

A prerequisite for staff to create good relations, according to the principals, is communication, which is illustrated in the quotation below:

> *… I have to start talking, to have a dialogue with the children, in order to create a relation. (Principal 2)*

Not only do the principals give prominence to talking to the children, the quotation above also shows that the work is expected to incorporate the reciprocity of a relation, by having a dialogue. In the descriptions of the dialogue, the staff being responsive in communication is stated. Moreover, what is emphasized concerning communication is that the staff need to communicate with clarity, which leads us to the subtopic of the next section, where the leadership approach is presented.

The Leadership Approach

This theme, which includes the staff's approach, depicts an approach that is defined to be concerning how the staff are expected to apply their pedagogical leadership. The results show

that the principals assume the staff to be guiding role models, in the work with pupils' social learning. In order to be a guiding role model, the principals give prominence for the staff to be actively participating with the pupils. This is illustrated in the following quotation:

> *By being active yourself, as a pedagogue, and for example showing the pupils how to talk to one another […] that you are simply involved. […] Being present as an adult is that you simply show yourself. Additionally, control a little. (Principal 4)*

It is suggested by the principals that the staff control the pupils with a gentle hand yet set boundaries and are consistent in their way of guiding them. Thereby mental presence on behalf of the staff is necessitated, expressed to enable the possibility of working preventively. The principals advocate the staff's ability to have an overview, along with the power to act.

The principals' descriptions of how to work additionally suggest the idea of what the work can be expected to lead to, regarding pupils' social learning, which is the topic of the next section, bringing us further.

Pupils' Democratic Learning in Focus of the Work on Social Learning

With the group and the social interaction as the basis of all the work in SAEC, the results indicate what the expected social learning could lead to, owing to the staff's general approach.

The principals give prominence to democratic values among pupils and express that pupils need to develop respect for differences among people, along with an understanding and respect concerning the equal value of all people. In the following quotation, the democratic perspective is indicated.

> *… to understand that we may have different opinions. […] … we do not necessarily like each other, but we respect each other. We have the right to be different from each other. (Principal 2)*

Along with the understanding of the equal value of all people, the results indicate that the pupils' social learning should encompass the understanding that "differences can actually enrich" (Principal 5).

The results also show that the principals value pupils' communicative abilities in social learning. These abilities include knowledge of how to speak to and about each other, how to take turns in conversations and how to listen to other people's opinions. The principals underline mutuality in communication, which is clarified in the following quotation:

> *… to listen to each other, which is not to be quiet, but to give something instead, to ask questions and to be interested in each other. (Principal 1)*

Moreover, the expectance to listen to each other is pronounced as a way of training empathetic ability, also stressed to be important for the pupils to function in the group. According to the principals, empathy includes good behaviour, which is to take other people into consideration and to respect the integrity of others. A generally held standpoint is that good behaviour includes not offending peers or adults. It is also stressed by the principals that it is important for pupils to be aware of the limit of what is perceived as fun or not, by peers, in other words to know the boundaries of coexistence.

The principals also underline the importance of reasoning about different views. This can be taken to suggest that they understand conflicts as a possible good, as well as an expression of the democratic aspect of staying in SAEC.

> *Somehow, we need to teach the children that a conflict is not something of evil, it does not necessarily imply something… bad. It is just a way of actually relating to the social context. (Principal 7)*

The quotation above reveals the view of conflicts as a natural part of social interaction. The results suggest that the principals find it important for pupils not to be afraid of trying to solve conflicts themselves.

The principals propose pupils' good self-esteem, their impulse control and their sense of security as the basis for developing a functional group climate. These results demonstrate the principals' shared view of the pupils' self-knowledge related to the work with social learning.

> *Acquiring social skills is… to learn to believe in yourself. That is central! […] And having the courage to express your thoughts. […] Simply to dare to be you. (Principal 6)*

The quotation above illustrates the principals' beliefs that social skills are based on positive self-esteem. That is further on suggested to contribute to the common wellbeing in the SAEC group. Concerning pupils' self-knowledge, the principals highlight that the ability to reflect contributes to pupils' increased knowledge about themselves. Reflection is also pointed out as developing pupils' understanding of what consequences their responses to others will have and thereby how they will affect others, in words and actions.

Summary of the Results

In summary, the results of this study show three themes as the principals' perspectives on social learning in the SAEC. The first theme encompasses the principals' expression, that social learning should be the core aim of the SAEC, and that the work with social learning should comprise all pupils in a consistently ongoing process. Secondly, the staff's approach should be the base for the work on social learning. In this, the general approach is accentuated with a democratic way of working, and the leadership approach is expressed with the basis in the staff as guiding role models. The third theme shows the pupils' expected learning, with an emphasis on democratic values, with a starting point in the SAEC pupils' group.

Discussion

This study investigates seven principals' views on social learning in the SAEC. The perspectives that characterize the principals' views represent the macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), which is what can be assumed to be expressed in practice in leading the work in SAEC. At the same time, various parts of the bioecological systems are evident in what constitutes the principals' macrosystem.

Social Learning as the Overarching Aspect of the SAEC Practice

The results show the principals' views on social learning to be an overarching aspect of all the activities. Through a bioecological perspective, this can be understood as an illustration of the macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), where fundamental values are anchored and

function as a cultural blueprint of SAEC. The principals' descriptions of social learning as the core aim of SAEC suggest the purpose of the educational programme to be value based. They also suggest the work with social learning to be consistently ongoing, which shows the aspect of time, the chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Further, the results can be understood as an expression of the social pedagogical tradition described in previous research (e.g. Ackesjö, Nordänger & Lindqvist, 2016; Lager, 2019; Rohlin, 2000), likewise a place for pupils' social learning.

Actively Participating Staff to Guide the Pupils' Social Learning

Though the staff's approach can be referred to the macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2005), the principals' descriptions of how to work relate to the microsystem, consisting of pupils and staff in the SAEC group. The results from this study show that social learning is expected to take place in the environment closest to the pupils, in their daily activities, which is similar to previous research (Dahl, 2014; Haglund, 2015; Pálsdottír, 2014). However, the principals in this study expect the staff to participate actively among the pupils as well, which contrasts with how SAEC staff have expressed their role, related to pupils' learning (Haglund, 2015; Lager, 2015; Pálsdottír, 2014). The principals' expectation on staff to actively participate can also be regarded as a promotion of social learning in terms of being role models, which is not reasonable without participating. Consequently, the principals explain the staff's approach to direct the work.

The principals highlight the work with social learning to be done with the basis in fundamental values, which are deduced from the macrosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). The fundamental values are anticipated by the principals to be expressed in the microsystem through the continuous processes of work on the pupils' social learning. This work can be described as the *activities* in the microsystem, in the bioecological system highlighted as processes involving behaviour. Therefore, what must also be considered is the importance of both continuity and a specific goal, concerning these processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 2005), to optimize the pupils' social learning. One way of addressing this could be to clarify and put into words what the intention of the work in SAEC is, which also could be regarded as a didactic reflection upon the practice.

The results of this study give an indication of the principals' opinion of the importance of the staff to take part in pupils' social learning. This differs from previous research (Haglund, 2015; Lager, 2015; Pálsdottír, 2014), which implies that staff above all consider social learning to emerge among the pupils. The results of this study show an expectation on the staff to prioritize interaction with the pupils, which with the bioecological theory as a raster can be explained as an expression of the microsystem's *roles*, as an expected behaviour in the context of SAEC. However, the results have no conformity with previous research (Haglund, 2015, Pálsdottír, 2014) on the staff's perspectives, which highlights the staff's beliefs that they are less important to pupils' learning, which may cause them to interact less extensively. According to my interpretation, this difference, between the staff's perspectives and the principals' perspectives, points to the importance of the fact that principals need to ensure to be aware of what the SAEC staff's views are, concerning the work on social learning. The communication, the mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), between different microsystems is necessary to illuminate what is forming the basis of the work in the SAEC.

Further, the principals' relational considerations concerning the staff's work with social learning is prominent, and can be viewed as the relations, described as a part of the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Relations have a great impact on learning, above all through the reciprocity between those participating in interaction. Deeper relations will develop through the interaction, according to the bioecological theory (Bronfenbrenner, 2005), which also stresses that children benefit from adult guidance. This is suggested in the results of this study, in the principals' endorsing the idea of the staff as guiding role models. In this work, the principals put forward democratic values, relational work and communication to promote the pupils' individual and common social learning and development.

Based on the above, it may be understandable that the principals do not express an expectation on the staff to organize specific activities, to promote social learning. Instead, social learning itself can be viewed as a continuously ongoing activity in SAEC. Thus, the necessity to declare what social learning should embrace and to communicate it, between the microsystem's school leader and staff group, is again evident.

The results do not illustrate any standpoints concerning the conditions of SAEC. This is not necessarily an implication of the principals' disregard concerning the conditions or their lack of understanding concerning the obstacles in the SAEC assignment (Andersson, 2014), when leading the work on social learning. The conditions of SAEC are related to the exosystem in the bioecological model, in research (Haglund, 2018; Jonsson & Lillvist, 2019; Lager, 2019) often described as challenges. However, the results could be explained with the focus of this study, which is to highlight what characterizes principals' perspectives on social learning in SAEC. Thus, the somehow problematic conditions are not in focus in the principals' perspectives, but instead the opportunities in the relations between the staff and the pupils, as well as the pupils' potential learning. Thereby it may also be understood that the expectations on the staff are high, which in turn can be interpreted as the principals' confidence in the staff's abilities to work with pupils' social learning.

The Work and Learning as an Interaction

The results propose education of community citizens as the aim of the work in SAEC, which was earlier outlined as being expected to address all pupils all the time. The principals expect the work to be based on social learning, as the overarching goal as well as the starting point in the educational programme. The staff's approach is, stressed by the principals as what should govern how they relate to pupils; through active participation, the staff are expected to be guiding role models in the daily activities. Thereby the interplay between the staff's expected work approach and the pupils' expected learning outcome seems to be something that goes hand in hand; what the pupils may become can be viewed as a reflection of the staff's work.

The results illustrate that the various systems of the bioecological model (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) are interrelated in a continuous interaction. The principals' perspectives on social learning in the SAEC centre, with emphasis on relations and communication in active participation with the pupils, can be interpreted to illustrate an interactionist thinking. Consequently, the roles, relations and activities in the SAEC pupils' microsystem, can be interpreted as expected to contribute towards developing the pupils' macrosystem, where their fundamental values function as the societal blueprint (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

The principals' views on social learning make visible the interplay between roles, relations and activities, which have the greatest impact on pupils' learning and development (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Admittedly, the results show the principals' focus on the expected work, with an emphasis on what the staff are expected to do in the SAEC practice, as well as what the work should be based on. In this, social learning is both an overarching aspect, the starting point and the consistently ongoing activity. However, according to the perspective that the work with social learning should continuously encompass all pupils, it also places the pupils in focus. Therefore, to sum up, the answer to the research question is that the principals' perspectives on social learning in SAEC is characterized by a focus on the pupil throughout the daily work in SAEC.

Concluding Remarks and Future Research

This study contributes knowledge about a number of principals' views on social learning in SAEC. However, the results are derived from a small sample, and there is no intention to generalize.

Additionally, the results from this study differ from previous research, which can be understood from the fact that previous studies have studied SAEC from the staff's perspectives, while in this study the focus is on describing the perspectives of a number of principals. Nevertheless, this is a noteworthy difference, since the principal is the one who leads the work in SAEC. Thus, the difference between the perspectives of the principals and the staff raises the question about how principals communicate with the staff group, and to what extent the principals participate in the staff group discussions. Hence, the results may be a starting point for practitioners' reflections upon the didactic intentions of the SAEC, followingly also to discuss different perspectives, to promote consensus on the assignment. The results also contribute theoretical understanding of the SAEC as a system, and the reciprocity between the elements that guide the work in the SAEC. Thereby, the theory contributes a holistic perspective on the SAEC, which gives the opportunity to identify areas for improvement, at different system levels.

Regarding the work in SAEC as a result of how the SAEC centres are directed by the principal (Haglund, 2018), the principal's actual opportunity to shape supportive learning cultures (Löwstedt, 2018) through the leadership (Ståhle & Eriksson, 2018), can give reason to be further explored.

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Possibilities and Impossibilities for Everyday Life: Institutional Spaces in School-Age Educare

Karin Lager

Abstract: This project aimed to investigate through empirical analysis the possibilities and impossibilities for everyday life in the institutional spaces of school-age educare. The data consists of twelve weeks of fieldwork in twelve settings and group interviews with staff teams in each setting. Through empirical analysis of the variation in institutional spaces, the results highlight the importance of academically educated staff, stable staff teams, dedicated rooms, available material, and time to plan and prepare their work as the distinctive features that co-construct possibilities and impossibilities for children's everyday lives.

Keywords: school-age educare, fritidshem, everyday life, institutional space, multi-sited ethnography

Introduction

This project aimed to investigate possibilities and impossibilities for everyday life in institutional spaces in Swedish School-Age EduCare (SAEC). Institutional spaces are co-constructed by the socio-material aspects in an institution where human to human relations and materiality are co-working (Alvesson & Empson, 2007, Massey, 1994). SAEC settings are co-constructed by the people who work there, the children, rooms, material to engage the children, by time and by the relationships within the setting as well as the relationships to other institutions such as the school and the children's families. Depending on how these aspects are co-constructed, different institutional spaces for everyday life are offered. My interest is the empirical variation in institutional spaces (Alvesson & Empson, 2007) and how distinctive features co-construct possibilities and impossibilities in relation to children's agency and the identity of a SAEC setting.

In the Swedish Education Act (SFS 2010:800), children's everyday lives in Swedish SAEC are articulated as meaningful leisure beside education and teaching. The interest in investigating institutional spaces in SAEC is grounded in several steps taken to strengthen policy for SAEC in the last 20 years. In line with educational reforms of children's learning and development, SAEC was integrated with compulsory school in 1996 and after that the national curriculum has been revised several times to encompass SAEC (The Swedish National Agency for Education, 2016). These steps have all increased the intended learning outcomes

for SAEC with an emphasis on learning and teaching. At the same time, during these 20 years there have been numerous economic cuts made to structural conditions for SAEC. Different reports have presented statistics on growing child groups, dropping teacher/child ratios, fewer teachers with academic degrees, poorer conditions in rooms and of material (The Swedish School Inspectorate, 2018). This article contributes an empirical analysis of the way today's greatly changing SAEC are constructing children's everyday life.

Even though research in this field is increasing, there is still limited knowledge and empirical evidence of the everyday lives of children in SAEC today, where almost 500,000 children between the ages of 6-13 years are in attendance. Consequently, the intention is to investigate possibilities and impossibilities for everyday life in institutional spaces in Swedish SAEC through empirical analysis. The following research questions are posed:

- What distinctive features co-construct everyday lives in SAEC?
- How are children's agency and the SAEC identity constructed in SAEC?

Previous Research

Place and space regarding children in pedagogical settings has been investigated from different perspectives. Ellis (2004) and Green and Turner (2017) use the term place to describe when children add meaning to spaces. Moss and Petrie (2002) use instead space to highlight the complexity in child services and how these spaces are filled with social relations, perspectives, intentions, and power relations. In line with Moss and Petri, Clark (2010) argues that pedagogical institutions for children are rich in symbols, routines and rituals, where children are engaged in everyday tasks.

Smith and Barker (2000) report how children attach meaning to spaces and resist the adult domination by adding their own meaning to spaces and using them in un-intended ways, which impacts children's everyday life. Evaldsson and Corsaro (1998) highlighted children's collective processes in terms of relations in everyday life when they investigated children's play and disputes. In line with them, Hurst (2019) argues for giving space for waiting to promote children's relational work in SAEC.

Research in Swedish SAEC indicates the shifting focus on education in policy and the poor conditions in practice. Andishmand (2017), in her ethnographical study of three different socioeconomic areas, reports inequality in SAEC and big differences in children's leisure, due to large groups of children and poor staff conditions. Haglund (2018) reports, using a narrative approach, how poor conditions for personnel and insufficient time for planning are limiting children's possibilities in their everyday lives. Elvstrand and Lago (2019) examined the recurrent activity of choosing what to do in the afternoons and indicate that choices are more limiting than free, based on what teachers value as important activities for children. Lago and Elvstrand (2019) report that children are neglected in SAEC free spaces, which makes SAEC a space for exclusion and even bullying, depending upon whether teachers participate in activities. Haglund (2016) discusses the fact that the tradition in SAEC work takes a peripheral position to children's play. He questions whether the teachers are resisting educational trends by highlighting children's social play and development of relations. Johnsson and Lillvist (2019) examined social learning in SAEC

through group interviews with staff. They report that dialogue and social learning is taken for granted and with limited time for the teachers to reflect on their work, social learning is limited by structural conditions.

Conceptualizing Institutional Spaces

This project is based upon theories which interrelate human agency with structural conditions. Qvortrup, Cosaro, and Honig (2005) emphasise the importance of the interrelatedness of structure and agency and state that studying social life in childhood should comprise them both. The concept 'institutional space' is used to highlight the fact that services, rooms, localities, and facilities are filled with social relations in which power relations are culturally embedded (Moss & Petrie, 2002). Agency is constructed in relation to structural conditions in institutional spaces meant for everyday life, and this relationship makes it possible to analyse the identity of a SAEC setting. Its identity is contained in the social relations in that specific setting and is constructed in relation to other surrounding institutions, schools and families, in stretched-out relations (Massey, 1994). Using the concept of institutional space makes it possible to analyse how rooms, time, relations, and material resources co-construct both possibilities and restraints in everyday lives.

Alvesson and Empson (2007) argue that institutional identity is represented by an institution's members as a social group in relation to the external environment. Certain distinctive features make one institutional space differ from another. My interest is the empirical variation in institutional spaces and how distinctive features co-construct the identity of a SAEC setting. Alvesson and Empson find it valuable to analyse the empirical variation in organizations because each space is a complex product of shifting social relations. The institutional spaces studied are consequently interesting because they offer different possibilities for agency in everyday lives.

Ethnographical Fieldwork

This article is part of a larger research project about children's leisure in SAEC, where I spent one week in twelve different SAEC settings each, employing a multi-sited and compressed ethnographical approach (Jefferey & Troman, 2004, Pierides, 2010). Ethnographical research is an accurate process that involves observing, analysing, and theorizing empirical situations. Jeffrey and Troman discuss time in the field and see shorter compressed fieldwork as an alternative. Pierides (2010) argues for the benefits of a multi-sited approach in educational ethnography by comparing different local sites. It allows connections and patterns of relations, differences, and boundaries, which support exploring the empirical variation.

The 12 studied settings represent a variation of smaller and larger cities, municipal and private schools, rural and urban areas, large schools and small schools. Fieldwork was completed during the spring semester of 2019. I spent one week in each setting. Every week in the field was structured in the same way with observations and interviews. I spent around 18 hours in each setting, at the end of the school day, 4-5 days a week, and one morning be-

fore school began, of each week. I followed the children, making observations the first days of the week. The latter part of the week I interviewed the staff in groups. To summarize, the data used in this article consist of fieldnotes taken down over a period of twelve weeks and group interviews with twelve staff teams, including 53 staff, only 23 of whom have degrees and are trained for work in SAEC. They were of mixed ages and genders. Ethical considerations reflect a responsive and attentive approach to fieldwork. No names of children, staff, schools, or cities are used. All have fictive names and everyone who participated did so voluntarily.

Analysis

Fieldnotes and interviews from the twelve settings were transcribed. During fieldwork and transcription, I made memos with sensitizing concepts, questions, and memos from reading literature. These memos have, in line with grounded theory, functioned as guidance when I was initially sorting my data and relating codes to each other (Charmaz, 2014). While reading through my data several times, searching for similarities and differences, I found that the sorting of empirical variation led me to discern three institutional spaces. These spaces are co-constructed by content, activities, material and personnel resources, time, rooms, and are inspired by Alvesson and Empson (2007) (Table 1). The SAEC's content and activities were listed, along with personnel resources (who works there) and material resources (what can children play/engage in). Rooms and time were investigated in the transcriptions, and relations between people, as well as the relations between people and material were searched for (Alvesson & Empson, 2007, Massey, 1994).

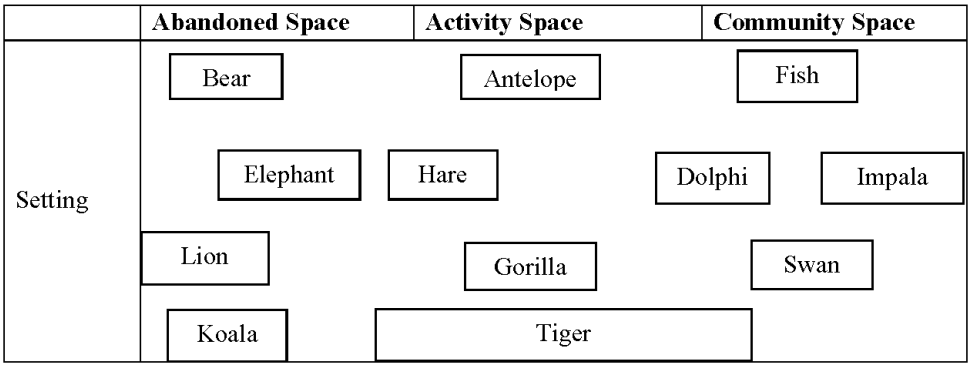
The three institutional spaces of SAEC contain aspects generated by the empirical analysis. The spaces are called Abandoned Space, Activity Space and Community Space (Table 1). The aspects are listed in the right-hand column in the table horizontally. The vertical spaces are linked to the aspects. It is important to notice that the spaces are fluent and not consistent and can change over time when the aspects are shifting (Figure 1).

Two of the analysed SAEC settings were more challenging to place in one of these three spaces, Dolphin and Tiger. Dolphin tends to be both like Activity Space and Community Space in terms of Dolphin having no dedicated rooms and not much SAEC work, but when talking to children and staff I could hear a spirit of community. In Tiger, there were several teachers who had education degrees, everyone was engaged to their work, but with very poor conditions for doing a good job. Tiger had low priority in school and poor conditions regarding time to plan and develop their work, and there were no stretched-out relations like the others in Community Space. Actually, there is sometimes a thin line between the institutional spaces indicating that they are fluent and not consistent.

Table 1. Framework for Institutional Spaces and Aspects

	Abandoned Space	**Activity Space**	**Community Space**
Content	Self-selected, not common	Curriculum content	Self-selected, common, and long-term
Activities	Self-selected, not planned	Teacher-led and teacher-planned, children can influence	A mix of teacher-led and child-initiated activities
Personnel resources	No academic degree, except for a few. Most staff members work as assistants in schools and after that in SAEC.	A mix of teachers with and without degrees, several assistants.	Mostly teachers with academic degrees
Material resources	Shabby and worn-out material in cupboards. Not easy to see or use, not labelled. Children use copy paper and pens, to colour pictures. Some building and creative material. Creative material is not for self-use.	Material for teacher-led activities. Constructive and creative material has to be retrieved and removed for school day. Child-initiated creative work is not possible because they should not make a mess.	A lot of material to stimulate and improve children's interest and initiatives. Variation for progression and different levels of difficulty. Different techniques for creative painting as example.
Time to prepare and plan	Insufficient time for planning, both individual and common. No time between school-day and working in SAEC. Sometimes the staff comes to SAEC after it has started.	Variation in time for the staff depending on if they teach during school-day or are assistants. Those who are trained often have individual and common time for planning. Assistants are not part of planning.	Time for planning, individual and common. Always time between duties during school-day and when SAEC starts.
Rooms	If SAEC has their own rooms, they are often spartan, worn, or not inviting.	No dedicated place for SAEC, have access to a lot of rooms in the school. No room is suitable for large groups of children. The rooms are furnished for school teaching and chairs are on desks.	Own rooms for SAEC work where children's buildings and creations can be left over time. Rooms with sink for painting, kitchen for baking and experimenting.
Relations	Staff can be exchanged whenever and replaced without regard to relations or continuity. Children can choose who they want to play with.	The personnel with educational degrees interact with each other and with children. The untrained personnel do not interact the same way with children. Staff divides children into groups.	Staff teams with continuity and care. Interplay and relations are a content. Children can choose who to play with but are challenged and inspired to play with new friends and try new experiences.
Teacher's role	Passive and protective.	Instructive and challenging teacher-led activities.	Active, supporting, challenging and interactive.
What children are offered	Free choice of activity and friends. Poor material and untrained personnel.	Free choice of content in teacher-led activities and rooms. Limited choice in who to play with, varied support and material.	A mix of self-initiated activities and teacher-initiated activities. Children con choose who to play with and can influence. Community is offered.
Stretched-out relations	None, subordinated to both school and parents.	A struggle over rooms with schoolteachers, nothing is required of parents.	Collaboration with both school and families based on good relations and cooperation.
Identity	Weak	Invisible and activity based	Strong and relation based

Figure 1. Settings and Spaces[1]



Abandoned Space

The content in *Abandoned Space* is not easily observed and in dialogue with staff and children there is no common content found. The children choose their own content as well as activities. Most of the time, the activities are self-organized play and the selection of staff-led activities is limited. In these Abandoned Spaces, personnel resources are poor in many ways, the staff do not have teaching degrees, except for a few, and they are not guided by a leader (headmaster or academically educated teacher). In Abandoned Space material resources vary a lot, sometimes these SAEC settings have some suitable rooms, equipment and material. Sometimes they are located in the same classrooms as during the school day, sometimes abandoned in a leftover storage place. Play and creative material was hidden in closets or was not in good shape. It was not easy for the children to see or use the material, it was not introduced by staff and not labelled. Usually the children were drawing with pens on copy paper and colouring in ready-made pictures, or they were playing with construction material and spent a lot of time outdoors in the schoolyard.

The staff have insufficient time for planning and preparing activities. Some of the staff were in school all day and arrived just in time for SAEC to start, or sometimes even after it had started. Nor could they influence their work during the school day. Lars tells us about the poor conditions in Lion, where it is difficult to create meaningful leisure time for the children:

> Lars—Of course, you can let them go out so they can run off their energy a bit but to really understand meaningful leisure time in depth […] But we could have planned for an excursion today, prepare a snack to bring, but you can't do that when you start half past one and you are supposed to leave at a quarter to two. You need time to check who is present, you need to go to the canteen to prepare, you could have aimed to be the best in all levels. […] instead of being in class from eight o'clock to half past one, but you are sort of exhausted when the work starts with what you actually are here for, but you can't do it, it is very wrong. (Interview with staff team at Lion, Lars, Youth Recreation Leader)

1 All of the studied settings have fictive names. In a Swedish context, SAEC-settings usually have the names of animals, flowers, or other nature-inspired nomenclature. The interviewed teachers are connected to each setting by the first letter of their name. For example, Lars in the first example works in the SAEC-setting Lion.

Lars spends all his time in school protecting pupils who cannot manage school or aiding the schoolteachers. When SAEC starts, he is not prepared and has no time and no energy to do meaningful things with/for the children.

In Abandoned Space the expectations for both staff and children are unclear, which seems to impact their relations. Below is an observation from Elephant just when SAEC starts that afternoon:

> 13.30 The school-day ends. One of the preschool classes arrives a little bit earlier and they are welcomed in the room for SAEC by a youth recreation leader. They gather on the round carpet. Of the seventeen children present five of them are sitting still, the other ones are running around, pushing one another, kicking, standing on their head in the sofa, at the same time as the other preschool class is about to end for the day. The sound level is high, and the children are running back and forth between the doors, the youth recreation leader and a substitute try to get the children's attention to lead the circle time. The substitute tries to stop the children from running in and out between the rooms but instead gets into conflict with the children. (Observation at Elephant)

In Elephant there is no continuity in the work team, people constantly change. The staff has difficulties in gathering the children even in smaller groups, to get their attention, and the expectations for the children are not clear. The unclear expectations for the children make them doubtful and worried, which sometimes leads to violations and acting out when the staff is not present.

The conditions in Abandoned Space as a whole involve opportunities for children to choose what to play with and with whom, but there are few opportunities for children to participate in teacher-led activities or use material resources. Further, the analysis shows that in Abandoned Space, with the untrained personnel and poor material conditions, children's interest and their own activities are not seen. Even if the children can be seen as agents in choosing what to do every afternoon, the staff do not interact with the children. The staff show low interest in what the children are doing, and they are uncertain about how to approach children's own activities and interests. This often leads to children being 'tidied up' and adults often interrupt the children in what they are doing.

The Abandoned Space is a vulnerable space regarding SAEC work. Below, Bengt, a student teacher, is telling us about the vulnerability in Bear and how the head teacher does not understand the SAEC work and cannot create conditions for it:

> Bengt—No it is very vulnerable. I think there is lots of space in a very limited frame […] but it is the school first and you can see that all the time. Then I think there is a school mentality about SAEC with a focus on this specific activity to be done, it becomes more of a lesson mentality which is unfamiliar for how I understand SAEC work, but I have to accept that. (Staff team interview, Bengt student teacher at Bear)

Bengt is talking about the vulnerable situation when the head teacher does not have enough knowledge of SAEC to create proper conditions. It tends to be teaching in line with school subjects, single activities that are planned instead of longer projects focusing on the whole situation. He also says that the school is always prioritized before SAEC, resulting in no time for planning. This lack of out-stretched relations to school combined with poor contact with parents is constructing a weak identity for the SAEC.

Abandoned Space is often invisible in the school; there is no space, no signs and no atmosphere indicating this is where children's everyday lives are. SAEC can be moved

around from room to room and the staff can be substituted from one day to the next if the head teacher needs them somewhere else. If there are planned activities these can easily be left out because there was not enough, or the right, staff in place.

It is my argument that the geography of the social relations in these Abandoned Spaces limits the children's agency. There is no space promoting influence and participation and no common things to be negotiated. This together constructs the weak identity of *Abandoned Space* where children's everyday lives are characterized as children who are left to themselves in the belief that children's leisure must not be controlled. The social space and the relations construct a space for holding children between school and home.

Activity Space

The content in *Activity Space* can be observed in relation to curriculum content such as painting, music, digital tools, play, physical activity, and outdoor experiences. In a dedicated timeslot during the afternoon the staff offer the children the opportunity to take part in staff-led activities of this type. In dialogue with children and staff I learned that sometimes the children can influence what activities they will do beforehand. Personnel resources are not poor but vary in these spaces. There is often staff present and prepared for planned activities, but their profession varies a lot, and this is observed in how they arrange the activities and how they interact with children. The use of personnel resources is often planned so the staff with the least training works in the early mornings and late afternoons, ensuring that the trained staff are present during the school day and for the teacher-led activities in the specific timeslot in the afternoon. In general, the staff has time for planning and preparing their work, but this varies and depends on whether they teach a subject or content during the school day or are assistants in class. Those with academic degrees usually have both individual and common time for planning, but the assistants usually do not have that time.

Contents and activities are organized in relation to what material resources are available. There is material for construction and creativity, but it always has to be retrieved and removed because the rooms are primarily intended for use during the school day. SAEC has access to a lot of rooms in the school, but no room is dedicated for use by SAEC. In Hare there is a wall in the hall, the place indicating this is for SAEC:

> In the hall is a pinboard and a small shelf for SAEC. There is some information for parents, a plan for the weekly activities, and pictures showing the planned activities. Today there will be play and crafts. There is also some documentation of their work and activities with pictures. (Observation at Hare)

This pinboard and shelf are the only things indicating this is more than a school for two first grade classes. The Hare's SAEC setting is in the same rooms as during the school-day for these children. Noteworthy for Activity Space is that the rooms are not suitable for the number of children and not for SAEC work. The rooms are not furnished for play but for school teaching and the chairs are often on desks for the (school)day and the children are hushed. This means that there cannot be any messy self-selected creative work, and no creations or buildings can be left for another day. Activities and content are organized in re-

lation to these circumstances. In Antilope we talk about the fact that there is no room for SAEC, and that the children have no place to store the things they make:

> Anders—Those who are up in X [name of group and class], there it is lessons when we have SAEC, so they can't go in there and store their things, or they can, but they don't want to.
>
> (…)
>
> Alfred—Because we have all the time, during all these years we have been forced to adjust what we do to what we can do. We know we can't do a big project that we need to store somewhere, so no then we do a small project that we can finish tomorrow instead. (Staff team interview at Antilope with Anders, teacher in SAEC and Alfred, youth recreation leader)

In this example, the staff in Antilope talk about the poor conditions when there is not a dedicated space for SAEC. They adjust to these conditions, meaning that no creative work can go on over time. The children have no place to store their things they are working on and have not finished. Instead, activities are on a daily or weekly basis doing things children do not need to store.

The work in Activity Space impacts the relations in a hierarchical way where the adult has the power and agency. In these spaces circle-time is primarily used for information and secondarily for dialogue. Most of the time, circle-time takes place in a classroom or during snack-time when the children sit down, and a member of staff stands up and informs the children about the activities in the afternoon and also checks who is present. There is no dialogue or opportunity for the children to offer in-put, but they are allowed to ask questions in this situation. In SAEC Gorilla, Gerd speaks about their activities during a week:

> Gerd—Every section [has circle-time] on their own and they differ in length, some days they are about thirty minutes, sometimes a short one for ten minutes, so we won't be in the canteen all at the same time, so it varies. And I don't know, I guess our circle-times look the same, you check who is present, inform them about the activities for the day, sing some songs and so on, maybe the children have something to tell. Yes, a classic circle-time and then a snack, afterwards we always go outside.

Gerd explains what the children are offered during a week. The circle-time is a space to check who is present and maybe do something together if they cannot go directly to have a snack. Then Gerd continues:

> Gerd—[…] A child came to me and said a couple of days ago 'Gerd, I like Wednesdays the most because then at first we are outside and we can play what we want to and then inside and play what we want to, that is my best day'. The day we structured the least. (Staff team interview at Gorilla, Gerd teacher in SAEC)

Here Gerd tells us about one child having told her that he/she likes it the best when there is nothing planned, and the children can choose what to do by themselves. Maybe the child is questioning the staff-led and organised activities because they are not based upon the children's perspective.

Taken together the social relations in Activity Space can be understood in several ways. One explanation is that the revised curriculum with an increased emphasis on teaching has generated staff-led activities to make sure the children are offered opportunities to develop certain abilities in line with the curriculum. Another explanation is connected to

the large groups of children, where in order to structure the afternoon the staff who is present has to arrange one activity each to separate the children in smaller manageable groups.

The varying staff group impacts the relations between staff and children. Children are encountered differently depending on who they interact with. This is observed in how the adults approach the children and interact with them. Some staff are interested in children's perspectives and guide them, others are not able to take their perspectives. This leads to a very uncertain space for the children, where they sometimes are actors and can influence and sometimes not at all. Further, the analysis shows the Activity Space as curriculum based SAEC, where the children choose from activities that are offered. Children can be active in choosing and be actors in their everyday life. But there are actually not really opportunities or space for dialogue. In the teacher-led activities the children are offered possibilities to be challenged to do new things and encounter new material.

There is a strained dialogue with parents and with the school. SAEC is many times invisible in school, being everywhere and nowhere. A struggle is going on over the rooms, where SAEC work is not welcome, because it is too loud and too messy. Nor is it a space for children when they are SAEC-children; the chairs are already on desks and they are being hushed. The only legitimate SAEC activities are the planned staff-led activities. This makes Activity Space visible in relation to what mostly looks like school. The geography of the social relations in Activity Space promotes children's agency in choosing staff-led, curriculum-based activities. In Activity Space children's everyday lives are characterized by the children as consumers of staff-led and staff-initiated curriculum activities.

Community Space

The content in Community space is linked to the common life and democratic issues where different activities are used to practice this content. As an example, circle-time in these spaces is used as a meeting space where teachers and children in dialogue can discuss their common situation and their everyday lives here and now:

> 13.30. the children arrive in the SAEC room for third graders and sit down on the round carpet. Ilse leads the circle-time and checks who is present. There are 19 children present. The children take part in the conversation. Last week's responsible children are evaluated together, new ones are chosen, new tasks are decided, things you can do to make someone happy with words and actions. On the wall behind is a wishing tree, every child has written an activity on a leaf that has been put on the tree. Every Monday they take a leaf off the tree which decides what is happening on Wednesday, every child is supposed to take part in that activity. Drawing with charcoal became the activity of the week. After that three girls do a skit with hobby horses about horses, homework, and friendship. (Observation at Impala)

When the children arrive at SAEC, they know what is expected of them. There is continuing interplay and dialogue between Ilse and the children. The children are invited to participate and have influence. Ilse works alone in Impala. She is a teacher in SAEC for the children in third grade, she has worked with this group since first grade. The content in circle-time is the common activity for the group and it is about responsibility and taking care of each other. In Community Space, circle-time is a well-known space where everybody sits

down together in a circle and sees each other, and the teachers participate according to the same rules. This is also a space for prevention work, where areas of the community are discussed, they talk about rules and possibilities, where the children are engaged and participate as actors equal to the teachers.

The activities offered to the children are varied, they are created in common and support a shared life, but the children's individual expressions are possible and arranged for. Personnel resources are a distinctive feature here, meaning the staff is academically trained for work in SAEC. The staff is a team with common time for planning, reflection and evaluation. I learned from the dialogues that the staff in some ways can control their time during the school-day and they always have changeover time between duties during the school-day and when SAEC starts. Sven works in Swan and he explains:

> Sven—On Tuesdays I am responsible for one of the fourth-grade classes, so I have planning time for that on Mondays for 40 or 50 minutes. Tuesdays I am responsible for one of the fourth grades before lunch, Wednesdays and Thursdays I do some handcrafts with the fifth graders and fourth graders and Fridays I work on developing the SAEC during the morning and I also have recess duty Monday to Thursday at lunch break. So, it is very, I experience my days are optimized, so I can do my best at SAEC, and the lunch breaks. (Staff team interview at Swan, Sven teacher in SAEC)

Sven tells us about his working days and how he has the opportunity to influence his work during the school day and how that creates good conditions for his work in the afternoons and that he can concentrate on that work. He has changeover time before SAEC starts and can have a calm start in the afternoon together with the children.

Material resources are also a distinctive feature in Community Space, meaning there are dedicated rooms and materials supporting SAEC work. The rooms are their own and consist of several rooms with for example a room with a sink for painting and a kitchen for baking and experimenting. Constructions and creations can be left for another day and projects can be worked with over time for longer periods. There is lots of material for the children to play with and be engaged in, to be creative and to inspire others. Material is available for children to use:

> Ilse—It is about really listening, what are they asking for and then we need material and facilities to make it work and to quickly be able to say 'Yes, then we'll get this for you'. To have resources and possibilities to that are plentiful, because that is our function as teachers, not the doing but the teaching and the questions 'How can you do this?' (Staff team interview at Impala, Ilse teacher in SAEC)

Ilse tells me about how they create conditions for children to develop abilities such as problem solving, exploring, and creativity, which Ilse says, are in line with the curriculum. She emphasises that she bases what she does on the children's interests, bringing out plenty of material in functional rooms and teaching the children by asking them questions.

Viewed together, the conditions in Community Space can be understood as the team know each other well, are stable, have time together and can focus on SAEC. The space can also be understood as rooms and materials supporting children's leisure, with a dedicated space for children to work, create and where things can be worked with over time, which creates space for project work without a specific goal, but using an important process. In

Community Space camaraderie among the staff, between the children and between children and staff creates wellbeing and support for the children. The staff have an academic education and know the purpose of their work; they can use their personnel resources as well as the material resources in intended ways and with the interest of the children.

In Community Space children can be the ones who lead the group, power is distributed among the relations, thus making the children actors. The staff have modelled and if the children have ideas for activities, they can choose to have an activity with their friends, where the staff participate and support if needed. In Fish, Fredrik tells us about how they work with longer projects:

> Fredrik—but what I think of is a project like this Talent. It is a social project actually; it is not just this. Then there is cooperation from them, they have to cooperate on different programs and so on. But it is the same with recreational sport, it is just the same, we are practicing how we behave toward each other, but it is recreational sport. (Staff team interview Fish, Fredrik teacher in SAEC)

Fredrik talks about how all their activities are parts of a long-term social project on how they together should behave toward each other. The circle-time is used to discuss common issues and to strengthen some of the children in relation to others by highlighting some ideas. Children's everyday lives are seen as important and as valuable.

In Community Space the staff is comfortable with working with different things side by side, supporting different groups of children. Topics that need to be discussed in the whole group are discussed during circle-time; otherwise the teachers walk around, talking to children in smaller groups. The social relations of Community Space are stretched outside SAEC with relations to school and to parents and families. The relation to schools and to families is based on cooperation, which strengthens their identity when meeting with others. There is a dialogue with parents about the children's hours in SAEC. Moreover, the content is different from school, which also strengthens their identity. There is also a strong value-based approach in the Community Space which offers children more agency, children are listened to and they are creators of their everyday lives with support from the staff. In Community Space children's everyday lives are characterized by the children as active participants in the creation of content, activities and routines.

Findings

In investigating possibilities and impossibilities for everyday life in institutional spaces, the empirical analyses highlight substantial differences in how the three spaces are constructed. Staff with degrees in education, stable staff teams, dedicated rooms, available material and (changeover)-time are the distinctive features that co-construct social relations in the different spaces for everyday lives. The three different social spaces propose different affordances of meaningful leisure time, pedagogical activities, possibilities and impossibilities for children's agency. In terms of agency it is presented how power relations between staff and children construct limitations in agency. The identity of SAEC as weak, or invisible and activity based, or as strong and relation-based constructs different subjects as well as affordances.

In *Abandoned Space* children can choose an activity as well as friends, but the relations in the space as well as relations to others, do not construct a space for participation or community, nor are they offered new experiences. Activity Space, I argue, is a result of strengthened policy where activities are planned for and offered to children in the afternoon, but only in dedicated timeslots. The main difference from Abandoned Space is a more academically educated staff, even if it varies, and for children to be part of new experiences depending on how they choose. The *Community Space*, I argue, is a space for children to act and participate and where their leisure and everyday lives are valuable, which differs from both the other two spaces. The social relations in Community Space construct a space for sharing and offer possibilities to experience new material, activities and friends, to be inspired and learn from each other. The work is grounded on relations not only among children and staff but to parents and other persons meeting the child, like schoolteachers. When the social relations in space and time are stretched-out the community space is constructed (Massey, 1994). In summarizing differences and similarities, it is obvious that different possibilities for agency, activities, and wellbeing in everyday life are constructed. As highlighted by Hurst (2019) and Evaldsson and Corsaro (1998), it is important to create space for children's relations and what children themselves seem to think is important in their everyday life. But it is also important to ensure closeness to the teachers, to support the work with relations (Elvstrand & Lago, 2019). Balancing planned activities with children's own work with their relations requires a responsive and attentive teacher.

Community Space contains a context for children to be involved in societal arrangement, democratic processes, to grow as persons and prepare for life outside institutions. The other two spaces do not seem to offer the same. The stretched-out relations to school and families construct these possibilities. What makes the spaces differ from each other is what can be offered to the children in terms of available rooms and material as well as their teachers' possibilities to plan, prepare and reflect upon their work. These findings correspond to Andishmand's (2017) study of inequality in Swedish SAEC. In addition, Haglund (2018) as well as Johnsson and Lillvist (2019), report the way structural demands on SAEC affect daily practice.

Conclusions

To conclude, a stable staff team, dedicated rooms, several available materials, teachers with degrees in education and time for teachers to plan and prepare seem to be the distinctive features in constructing social relations with the possibilities for agency in everyday life. The compressed and multi-sited ethnographical method provided the opportunity to empirically analyse how certain aspects co-construct variation in institutional spaces. The study has some limitations in that the twelve studied SAEC do not represent a national cluster. However, ethnographical research with closeness to the field has the aim of producing rich empirical analyses and in the SAEC settings that were studied there is variety in terms of the size of the schools and municipalities, which were in both rural and urban areas. The extensive documentation from the twelve SAEC settings contributes to the building of empirical evidence about children's possibilities and impossibilities in Swedish SAEC. In ad-

dition, this study contributes knowledge about how social relations construct possibilities for children's agency in everyday life, which has implications for policy makers. It is evident, considering the distinctive features I found, that social relations and structural aspects together co-construct the SAEC.

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Let the Right One in: Sports Leaders' Shared Experiences of Including Refugee Girls and Boys in Sports Clubs

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Abstract: This study investigated how gender and sports capital are expressed in sports leaders' talk about sports for young people with a refugee background. Empirical data were derived from four focus group interviews representing 21 sports club leaders in Sweden. The leaders defined boys and girls as distinct groups but also as groups within which there are differences. Compared with the boys, the girls were presented with lesser possibilities to participate in sports. According to the leaders, the differences in the group of girls rested on that the sports culture in the girls' country of origin, which may be more or less permissive for girls to be engaged in sports, whereas differences within the group of boys were understood in terms of bodies and mentalities.

Keywords: gender, sports capital, sports leaders, migration

Introduction

In the last few years, the Swedish government has increased the funding for sport initiatives directed towards children and youngsters. Some of these initiatives have been aimed at providing these target groups possibilities for more sports within the school context by using external actors from the sport movement (Regeringskansliet, 2017). Other initiatives have served the purpose of integrating the new arrivals in Swedish society through their participation in sports (Riksidrottsförbundet, 2016). The present study focused on one of these state-funded integration efforts that has received extra grants to create opportunities for new arrivals to be introduced to sports clubs (Socialdepartementet, 2015).

Politicians in Europe seem to share a strong belief in sports as an integration arena (Agergaard, 2018). This trend was evident in Sweden in 2015 when the great refugee wave reached the country, and around 160 000 people came to seek shelter. Among them were 70 000 children and young people, half of whom were unaccompanied individuals (Migrationsverket, 2016a). The increasing migration induced the government to investigate how society could contribute to integration, and civil society was seen as a potential site. The Swedish Sports Confederation/Riksidrottsförbundet (RF) thus received an increased grant in the same year to create opportunities for new arrivals to engage in sports club activities (Socialdepartementet, 2015), which implicitly target sport leaders as central integration ac-

 https://doi.org/10.3224/ijree.v8i1.04

tors. The RF (2016) commented that 'the Government recognises the power of sports and has allocated grants to enable the sports movement to integrate the new arrivals'.

Often, sport is viewed as something positive for all children and youngsters, for both the individuals and the society, and the specific efforts described hold a strong normative notion of sport as an almost unquestionable means for supporting the holistic development of all children and young people. Nonetheless, research has emphasised the historical connection between sports and masculinity, which has led to the dominance of sports role models, thereby negatively contributing to a lack of female role models (Meier, 2015). As Szto (2015) puts it, 'sport itself is a product of power relations' (905). In a study of girls' debuts in alternative sports programmes organised in collaboration between the school and the sports movement (Carlman & Hjalmarsson, 2018), the girls described that the leaders normalise gender oppression and thereby uphold gender stereotypes. The boys were described as acting as if they are superior in relation to the girls and ascribing certain physical and personality characteristics to the girls. Other studies have discussed sports as an arena on which young participants might suffer emotional harm (Stafford, Alexander, & Fry, 2015) and on which destructive leadership might develop (Jacobs, Smits, & Knoppers, 2017). The idea of the almost emancipatory potential of sports was shown through a sports projects aimed at supporting certain groups, primarily girls, in different aspects (Hayhurst, Giles, Radforth, & The Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre Society, 2015). Although such efforts are probably based on the best intentions, they also hold notions of boys and girls as distinct groups, which contradicts our understanding of femininities and masculinities as being created, recreated, and challenged in talk and other actions. Furthermore, we argue that the valuation of children and youngsters'sports capital is crucial for their comprehension of sport as a context accessible for them and for their willingness to participate. This study investigated how gender and sports capital are expressed in sports leaders' talk about sports for young people with a refugee background in the context of sports clubs which recently have received extra government grants to create opportunities for new arrivals to be introduced to sports clubs. Informed by Smith, Spaaij, and McDonald (2018), we state that sports leaders are very important for creating structures enabling the integration of participants with a refugee background.

The Swedish Government's grant was primarily aimed at integrating new arrivals, but based on the experience gained in the study, the project also came to include children and young people who had been here longer than 2-3 years, that is, individuals no longer targeted by integration efforts or included in the definition of new arrivals (Migrationsverket, 2016b). Therefore, the term refugee or refugee background is used in this study. It refers to 'a person who has fled a country, because of a well-founded fear of persecution on the grounds of race, religion, social belonging to a specific group or political persuasion, of which he/she is a citizen, and who cannot or will not return to the said country because of the fears mentioned above' (UNHCR, 2018). A refugee background functions as an umbrella term and encompasses all children and adults who have been forced to leave their country of origin irrespective of how long they have been in Sweden. From the start, the project was called an integration project. Later, the initiative came to be called the inclusion project instead. Therefore, in this article, the term inclusion will henceforth be used when talking about the project. Nevertheless, when the text handles processes of how young peo-

ple with a refugee background be a part of sports clubs, the concept integration is used. Integration is conceptualised as 'multidimensional social-relational processes that are bound up in power asymmetries, and evolve as changing trajectories' (Agergaard, 2018, p. 25). To see sports integration as a social-relational process marked by power asymmetries puts focus on the dynamic between who the individual is (e.g. willingness and previous experience to play sport) in relation to the condition they encounter in Swedish sports clubs (e.g. sports leaders' attitude) (Agergaard, 2018).

Review of Literature

For a relatively long time, research has questioned how inclusive sports are because girls with immigrant backgrounds[1] are underrepresented in Western sports (Thul, LaVoi, Hazelwood, & Hussein, 2016; Walseth & Fasting, 2004). Elling and Knoppers (2005) claim that sports not only function as a site of integration but also can lead to exclusion and discrimination as access to sports is influenced by normative conceptions of gender and ethnicity. The interplay between norms of gender and ethnicity can influence young individuals' choice of physical activity negatively as well as positively.

A Norwegian study (Strandbu, Bakken, & Aaboen Sletten, 2017) found no difference in sports activity between 'immigrant boys' and 'Norwegian boys' and that both groups were generally more active than girls. In addition, girls with an immigrant background participated to a lesser extent in sports activities than 'Norwegian girls'. The authors concluded that girls with an immigrant background has a considerably lower probability to partake in sports than boys with an immigrant background and Norwegian young people in general.

Cultural or religious reasons have aggravated girls' opportunities to engage in sports. According to Anderson et al. (2019), sports activities are not adapted to girls with certain religions or cultural backgrounds. Walseth and Strandbu (2014) studied Pakistani girls' sports activities in Norway and found that some girls had parents or siblings or other people in their social circle that thought that sports were not suitable for girls. Cultural or religious norms forced girls to choose between sports and their faith. Agergaard (2016b), in her Danish study of Muslim girls, found that it was not religion per se that prevented girls from sports and physical activities. Instead, there seemed to be different cultural interpretations of the religion between families and geographical areas. At the same time, the girls had to relate to more overriding gender structures. Certain individuals in the family or the local community generally opposed the idea that girls should play football more than the idea that Muslim girls should not engage in sports.

Similarly, Thul et al. (2016) observed that even if research has highlighted specific obstacles for girls engaging in sports, there is variation within this group and the opportunity to practise sports is influenced by factors such as religious practice, socio-economic status, age, and place of residence. There is reason, then, not to generalise research results regarding the group girls with an 'immigrant background'. However, Strandbu et al. (2017) showed that even when parents' educational level, family's financial situation, and religious affiliation are considered, the probability that 'immigrant girls' would partake in sports was considerably lower than that for Norwegian youth in general and for 'immigrant boys'. The

authors claim that explaining the differences between 'immigrant girls' and other youth groups requires deeper knowledge.

Agergaard et al. (2016a) emphasised that when certain groups are singled out as problematic, structural factors such as barriers to physical activity are neglected. For example, Fundberg (2017) argued that 'immigrant girls' do not feel welcome or comfortable in the Swedish sports world and suggested that changes be made in the sports world to accommodate them.

Sports Leaders and Integration

Individual leaders play an essential role in including participants with different cultural backgrounds. Jeanes, O'Connor, and Alfrey (2015) found in their Australian study that leaders tend to maintain old club structures, which makes it difficult to develop new and inclusive environments for young people with a refugee background. The study also revealed that some leaders encountered barriers to integration but still tried to integrate the young sports practitioners in the old structures. Similar results were found in the Canadian study by Tirone, Livingston, Miller, and Smith (2010), showing that leaders had problems in adapting activities to suit individuals with an 'immigrant background' and that the leaders did not know how to proceed.

On the basis of a Danish context, Agergaard (2011) discussed how public initiatives, similar to the Swedish government's resources earmarked for inclusive sports projects, result in non-profit organisations 'performing' welfare politics. Agergaard argued that public authorities deliver financial resources and guidelines that affect the running of sports club activities, and that sports clubs become actors in a welfare project that must be monitored and measured. In Agergaard (2011) and Agergaard, Michelsen la Cour, and Treumer Gregersen (2016), sports leaders were described as balancing between the role as the local leader, catering to the interests of the local members, and the role of integrating and fulfilling political goals.

In Sweden, non-profit sports clubs organise sports for children as well as for adults, and participation is voluntary for practitioners and leaders. The leader has a great influence on how the sport is practised in the local clubs (Redelius, 2016). Leaders and their convictions, conceptions, and ideas of integration impact the integration efforts concerning young people with a refugee background, not least when it comes to assessing their current sports skills, which were developed in their countrie of origin.

Theoretical Frame of Reference

The theoretical frame of reference for this study was informed by Bourdieu's concept of capital. Bourdieu viewed society as built of different social fields with their own history and logic. A social field is a relatively autonomous social arena with its own discourse and within which a struggle for resources is ongoing (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). For Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), the specific logic and practice of the field determine

the capital required. This means that an individual's position in the field depends on the volume and structure of the capital that the individual can mobilise. The present study approached Swedish sports clubs as a social field.

Smith et al. (2018) used Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital as a tool of analysis to study migration and participation in sports and physical activities. Cultural capital involves language, education, and understanding of social norms in the new country. The authors highlight that the relationship, or the clash, between the cultural capital that 'immigrants' bring to the new country and the capital highly valued in Western world sports can create barriers to participation and negative experiences for participants. In the fields, there is also field-specific capital. Bourdieu (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992), for instance, studied education, research, and physical capitals to describe the importance of the body in society and how the size and form of the body are attributed different values in different fields.

We used the concept of sports capital to describe the field-specific capital in force in Swedish sports clubs with the understanding that the organisation and practice of sports among young people are, to a great extent, governed by historical traditions of what is recognised as valuable in athletics—a form of sports capital. Sports capital was used in this study to analyse the types of capital that emerge when leaders talk about including young refugees in their clubs. The resources the refugee children bring are thus not universal, but vary in strength depending on the resources they bring to the club, which create different barriers and possibilities to be included in the sport. Young refugees' opportunities to practise sports in Sweden depend on how their capital is valued by, for instance, leaders.

Smith et al. (2018) emphasised the importance of being able to understand how the accessibility varies between social orders such as generation, education, and gender, through the Bourdieuesian concept of capital. The present study focused on the gender aspects displayed in the leaders' descriptions of young refugees. We used the concepts of femininity and masculinity to understand the sports leader's gendered expressions of boys and girls involved in the sports activities. Connell (1987) argued that the pattern of relations between men and women on a societal level is to be described in terms of the gender order, which is defined as 'a historically constructed pattern of power relations between men and women and definitions of femininity and masculinity' (p. 98). To uphold the gender order, it is crucial to uphold the dichotomy and the making difference between women and men. Yet, Connell (1999) claimed the need of not focusing on the differences and instead focusing on the social relations between and within the groups of women and men. There are several positions of femininities and masculinities. The dominant masculine position is the hegemony of masculinity, which is based on what is seen as normal and desirable at a certain time and might be viewed as notions about ideal skills and characteristics, which both women and men have to relate to. The masculinity 'which is most honoured, which is most associated with authority and power and which—in the long run—guarantees the collective privilege of men' (Connell, 2008, p. 133) is attributed a higher value than other masculinities. Connell (1987) articulately emphasised femininity as the female similarity to the hegemony position. Because of that, emphasised femininity is defined on the basis of subordination and adjustment to men's interests; it cannot be regarded as hegemonic. Still, in line with the argument about the hierarchical order of several masculinity positions, the emphasised femininity functions as a norm-making ideal that other femininities have to relate to.

The theoretical starting point described above enabled us to analyse leaders' how gender and sports capital are expressed in sports leaders' talk about sports for young people with a refugee background. We used the gender concept to analyse conceptions of masculinity and femininity.

Our intention was not to analyse what Agergaard (2018) described as integration through sports in terms of how young refugees can create various forms of capital in sports, which can contribute to integration. Rather, our study focused on the intersection between the leaders' ideas and convictions about sports and how they assess the opportunities for boys and girls with a refugee background to be included in Swedish sports clubs on the basis of the sports capital they had on arrival. The concept of capital was thus central to the analysis of how the new arrivals' resources are recognised and valued as well as for the structures they encounter in Swedish sports clubs

Empirical Data and Analysis

This article is part of a project aiming to study how the government's extra funding to the sports movement to integrate new arrivals was realised in sports clubs. The main study is based on analyses of sport project applications, focus group interviews with club leaders, and individual interviews with young refugees. This sub-study was based on four focus group interviews with 21 sports club leaders (2 x 6, 1 x 5, 1 x 4) from 18 clubs. Three clubs requested having two representatives. According to Dahlin-Ivanoff and Holmgren (2017), a common recommendation for focus groups is 6-12 interviewees, but they suggest that 4-8 interviewees is a more suitable group size and that participant engagement is more valuable to the result than the number of participants. Contact information of sports leaders/sports clubs was provided by the regional sports confederation. The 18 clubs shared the common denominator of having received extra financial support to work with the inclusion project. This made it possible to invite participants with relevant experience of integration efforts. The sample represented several sports and different types of clubs (small and big, urban and rural, team and individual sports). Of the 21 respondents, six were women and fifteen were men (see Table 1). The leaders first received a written letter of information via post and email and were then contacted by phone.

Focus groups contribute information based on the collective experience that gradually develops in the group interactions (Dahlin-Ivanhoff & Holmgren, 2017). Nevertheless, presentation of data from complex discussions can become over-simplistic. According to Barbour (2008), a primary challenge in analysing focus group data involves reflecting upon and utilizing the interactions between participants while considering group dynamics. Focus groups can overemphasize consensus over individual voices in the group. On the other hand, we do not assume that all members necessarily share these views outside of the specific situation created by the focus group discussion. We see the interviewing as a way to identify general discursive repertoires in speech within particular social settings (Tanggaard, 2009). As respondents in the focus groups, the leaders was in a social setting there they represented foremost their sports club and but also the Swedish sport federation. When conducting research interviews, it is possible for the researcher to learn from the negotia-

tions in the discourses and between different voices generated in a particular interview setting. In other words, rather than simply seeking to identify the views of the various participants, attention must be paid to the context in which the comments are made (Barbour, 2008). Thus, the analysis identified patterns in the data and variations in the discourses, and explored their complexities. An example of a result that emerged from the negotiations between different voices and discourses was that the leaders defined boys and girls not only as distinct groups, but also as groups within which differences exist.

However, we are aware of that the result can be explained by referencing the shared characteristics of the sample (Barbour, 2008). One important aspect is gender. First, the groups contain more men than women. However, that is not, per se, problematic when analysing the result, because they talk in a context as representatives for their respective clubs and sport. Therefore, it is more important to shed light on the fact that the sample is dominated by masculine-coded sports. The discussions in the groups could perhaps have revealed other patterns and variations in the discourses, such as those regarding more feminine-coded sports (e.g. gymnastics and dance) (Wright, 2018). Feminine-coded sports are historically perceived as sports that not are assumed to require strength, power and speed, namely traits that are associated with masculinity (Coakley, 2014).

All interviews were conducted at the university by the first author and started with the leaders being briefed on project purpose and design and the interview procedure (Kvale & Brinkman, 2014). They gave written consent after being informed about purpose and implementation. The interviews focused on the leaders' experiences of inclusive efforts within the sport context. The role of the interviewer was primarily aimed to create a dynamic discussion and to ensure that the discussion centred on their experiences of working with the inclusion project. An interview guide was also used in case the participants needed help to stay on course. The guide included questions such as the following: Can you describe your experiences of working with children with a refugee background? What are your experiences of the young people's encounter with your sport? What were your thoughts during the inclusion project? Interaction and discussions were vibrant and intensive, so they took place with limited participation of the interviewer. Sports and integration turned out to be a highly engaging subject for the leaders. Each interview lasted for one and half hour.

The interviews were recorded on an Mp3 player and transcribed. The transcribed material was read several times while notes were taken. To get an overall understanding of the leaders' discussions and their common perspective required staying close to the transcriptions. Based on the thematic analysis (Braun & Clark, 2006), the analysis was a recursive process in which the analysis moved between raw data (recording and transcriptions) codes and themes. The analysis was horizontal and vertical throughout, that is, within each group and between the four different groups. First, all data were coded. The transcriptions contained many data, and all were not relevant to our study. Next, we searched for codes (see the examples in Table 2). These types of codes were used to interrogate the relationship between other codes and coded excerpts, to identify patterns in the data. We were careful to avoid taking sentences and opinions out of context. The example excerpt show an overall discourse that emerge in the analysis about the difficulty of including girls and assumed attitudes towards girls as not sporty subjects in their countries of origin (in this case, the attitudes of the girls' families).

Table 1. The Interviewees.

Group	Gender	Sport
Group 1	Male	Boxing
	Male	Equestrian
	Male	Soccer
	Male	Bandy
Group 2	Male	Karate
	Male	Karate
	Female	Sport for all programme
	Male	Soccer
	Male	Martial art
Group 3	Male	Handball
	Female	Soccer
	Female	Handball
	Female	Athletics
	Male	Athletics
	Male	Athletics
Group 4	Male	Soccer
	Female	Soccer
	Male	Soccer
	Male	Soccer
	Male	Soccer
	Female	Soccer

Furthermore, searching for patterns and linkages between codes revealed broad themes concerning the study purpose and research questions. The selected themes focused on overarching issues (see the selected themes in the Results section). This meant that all groups did not necessarily say the same things but that different discussions provided different aspects on a theme.

Table 2. Example of Data Extract and Codes.

Data extract	Coded for
They want to see; they really want to see that it is girls here, that girls are allowed to do sports. But, I felt a little bit that I had to be approved by the families. Because I have no unaccompanied, all the girls were with their families. And I think that was why they have to stop coming to the training.	1. Difficult to integrate girls 2. The importance of the family to integrate girls

The analysis rested on the study's theoretical frame of reference. Bourdieu's concept capital and Connell's view on femininity and masculinity were used as analytical tools to generate new knowledge based on the empirical material in the problem area (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Because the specific logic and practice of the field determine the capital required, the interview situation was viewed as conveying both subjective experiences and how broader social structures affected these experiences. Analysis of the interviewees' utterances and

what they described must consider and discern the structural background of utterances (Bourdieu, 1999). Thus, the assumption was that the themes emerging in the analysis described efforts to integrate boys and girls with a refugee background and reflected what constitutes valued sports capital and what is not valued.

The study was reviewed and approved by Karlstad University's Research Ethics Committee.

Results

The result is presented on the basis of the three main themes yielded through the analysis: 1) Acculturation into the logic of the Swedish sports system; 2) Culture-bound girls with no potentials for sport; and 3) Boys' conditional potentials for sport. The results are presented with a selection of quotations The focus group method is not a compilation of the statements of the different participants, but a comprehensive picture of a common understanding, a perspective that is more than an individual statement (Dahlin-Ivanof & Holmgren 2017). Hence, following Fielden, Sillence, & Little (2011), when excerpts from a discussion with several participants are provided, a new voice are denominated as * and starts on a new line. Individual quotations are presented partly because they reflect the opinion of the group and their discussions and not because an utterance is particularly important.

Acculturation into the Logic of the Swedish Sports System

The interview discussions addressed the relation between young refugees and organised sports club activities in Sweden. The predominant conception in these discussions was that there is a unique system for sports in Sweden to which young refugees must adapt. This was, for instance, expressed in the following terms:

> *I think that, well you could say that Sweden has a unique system for clubs and associations
>
> *Yes, that's right
>
> *And we brainwash our kids into the system from age six, sort of
>
> *Yes, three years!
>
> *Yes, but it's a natural part of the upbringing. This is how it works in a club. This club system does not exist anywhere else, it seems. So, if a fifteen-year-old person arrives in Sweden, that person is ignorant of the system

These quotations indicate that young people growing up in Sweden are acculturated into the sports system from an early age, thus learning the knowledge, norms, and cultures that harmonise with practising sports in clubs in Sweden. 'Swedish associations' or 'the sports movement' were emphasised as unique and requiring certain social and cultural resources and athletic skills to participate. In this context, it was mentioned that young refugees were not familiar with the requirements to engage in sports in Sweden. This was seen as a general challenge applying to both boys and girls. The result, however, showed that the leaders' ideas about refugee boys' and girls' possibilities to practise sports differed. The leaders thought that girls and boys come to Sweden with different social, cultural, and physical re-

sources and that these are more or less unsuitable for sports activities in Sweden. These resources or lack of resources will further be presented in the subsections *Culture-bound girls with no potentials for sport; and Boys' conditional potentials for sport*.

Culture-Bound Girls with no Potential for Sport

A pervading perception among the leaders was that considerably more boys than girls participated in the inclusion projects. This was partly because boys outnumbered girls in the target group, partly, as they said, that it had seemed more natural for the boys than for the girls to start engaging in sports in Sweden. The leaders observed that organised sports in Sweden can be perceived as unfamiliar and new, primarily to refugee girls. Generally, girls were seen as having less potential to take up sports than boys. As reflected in the quotation below, the view seemed to be that including girls required more of an attitude change than including boys.

> Yes, but of course there seems to be a difference between boys and girls. Boys are more assertive, and you notice, sort of, that where they come from they have been able to be like that. Nothing new. You'll have to approach girls in a different way. It requires extra understanding.

To a great extent, the girls were described as a group having very little experience of sports and physical activity and lacking in athletic abilities. In the leaders' descriptions, girls came across as inexperienced in and ignorant of sports. They were, for example, not very fit athletically:

> But that the girls from Afghanistan don't get much exercise is of course understandable. They're not allowed. A lap around the hall and they were exhausted. Their tongues were hanging like ties on them.

This kind of utterances were used to describe what the leaders understood as the girls' experience of physical ability and a lack of motor abilities:

> It's more uncommon, it seems to me, that the girls have been physically active in their countries of origin. If you say: "hit straight," they hit to the right and think that they have hit straight. They have practised very little, it seems, not everyone but very many. I think you can see that.

It was also highlighted that girls lacked experience and knowledge of sports in a wider sense. This did not involve whether they had practised sports, but a lack of understanding of top-level sports and famous soccer players. The girls were said to be devoid of the references that leaders and other active people have and take for granted.

> Well, you know, if you say 'Ronaldo' then you know that you are upfront. If I should say to my girls: "You're Ronaldo" sort of [...] you know, they haven't touched a ball since they came to us. 'What the heck are you talking about?' you know.

The issue of whether the girls' potential for sports varied depending on the country of origin was a topic in the interviews. The leaders seemed to subscribe to the idea that the traditions of some countries hinder girls from being physically active and practising sports.

> Because I notice that there are quite a few sports cultures where they come from. I see that those from Afghanistan and Somalia aren't familiar with sports in the same way that those Syria and Iraq are, for instance. So, the girls from Syria, Iraq, and Iran are easier to engage. They know a bit about how it works. But in Afghanistan, they are very tradition-bound, more difficult to get into contact with.

This situation was linked to religion, and Muslim girls were depicted as a problematic group posing special challenges:

> Yes, if you generalise grossly, but I sense it. I don't know if you have the same experience. In particular, Muslim girls, to generalise even more grossly.

These utterances indicate that the leaders hovered between views based on similarities within the group of Muslim girls and differences within this group due to their country of origin. According to the leaders, girls' position within sport cultures in their countries of origin affect their views of themselves as athletic subjects.

> I think that it's about that they can't see themselves as people who go to training, so we disguised it a bit at the beginning to make them feel that they dare or feel comfortable going to the hall. And then, when they get a taste of it, it's life and death. Football is enough, kind of.

In other words, the girls as well as their families have come to Sweden with experiences and norms of girls from their countries of origin.

> It's more a question of trying to patch this group of girls together who have never been in any sports context. The situation as such is pretty difficult to handle, you know. The "now I'm going to play football and go all in" and then lacking understanding at home or at school or perhaps her brother laughs at her when she says she plays football.

Taken together, the leaders described that the girls bring few sports resources to Sweden, which makes it difficult for them to take advantage of the sports offerings here. However, the analysis showed that the leaders' encounters with the girls in the inclusion project also challenged their perception of refugee girls as non-sport practitioners. There were instances in the discussions when the girls were not represented as a passive group 'holding back' but as active and resourceful. The leaders had met many refugee girls who wanted to engage in sports if someone showed them that they could partake. A leader said, 'I have seen that it's not as problematic as I thought before, actually. Most of them want to if they are asked'. Other leaders described their experiences with the girls in a similar manner:

> * We do have boys with an refugee background from an early age, but hardly any girls, until a girl, who admittedly had been to school for one or two years, made the first step and wanted to play football. Cool. And then the others dared too. […] And then it spread, and now we have quite a few little girls.
>
> * Yes, I recognise that all too well. A girl came and told her friend, who told her cousin, who told her cousin.

The discussions often centred on the importance of showing that girls can do sports and that it is not 'harmful'. Yet, there was nothing to indicate that the clubs represented had developed formal strategies in order to recruit more girls with a refugee background. When other activities were organised the long-term goal, however, was apparently that the girls should adapt and be integrated into the regular activities, and when it worked, it was seen as a successful inclusion project. Still, one of the leaders told that the club he represented had created a 'girl group' for the sole reason to integrate refugee girls in the club. This effort was successful, but when the leaders tried to integrate these girls in the regular activities that were not aimed for girls with a certain background, the girls did not participate anymore.

Boys' Conditional Potential for Sports

Unlike the girls, refugee boys were described as having experience of sports and physical activity. The leaders claimed that the boys had both technical and motor skills. Instead, the leaders discussed the boys' shortcomings regarding their understanding of the organisation of a sport. According to leaders, the boys apparently had previous experience of sports and physical activity but had'not practised sports in the way it is organised in Swedish sports clubs.

There were no indications, in the leaders' accounts, of notions that refugee boys came from countries where traditions and sports culture had hindered them from acquiring physical skills. However, the leaders discussed the boys' shortcomings in relation to their bodies and mentality; for example, certain behaviours and certain bodies were related to the boys' countries of origin.

> *But the big challenge, I thought, was to turn them into a bigger bunch. Because technique and speed and so on they have in abundance. But at the same time, they are, well 95% have very weak bodies, so they don't have, they weigh nothing. In a dogfight with the older Swedish guys they just went like this, they flew up into the air.
>
> *Yes, all, more or less, those from Somalia and Eritrea.
>
> *Yes, they use straws unlike the Afghans who sort of have dynamite heads. There's a huge difference.
>
> *They are short too.

As shown, the leaders' expressions were formed in relation to the norm of the ideal Swedish boy with certain physical and mental skills. The boys with a refugee background are, with one exception, ascribed as being weaker. One leader said, 'It seems that Afghans have more self-confidence. My impression is that they are tougher'. In other utterances, the 'toughness' was described when they talked about a boy who had broken his jaw and did not complain or a boy whose collar-bone broke and he did not show pain.

In addition, the analysis showed that conceptions of what sports are can create tensions and challenges, which can lead to conflicts between the boys' wishes and the club's activities. The leaders described how the refugee boys themselves think they are skilled football players, for instance, and were capable of playing in certain highly ranked teams while the leaders were more doubtful if they had the knowledge required. A leader said: 'And sometimes they are really good, but they are not really good every time ... but they think, I'm nearly the best'. Taken together, these findings indicated that the boys as a group were described as lacking sports capital desired in the Swedish context. Still, some of the boys, with a background in certain geographical regions, were described as having the potential to develop as athletes.

Discussion

The results showed that the leaders view the young refugees as a group lacking sports capital required for participating in sports club activities in Sweden. The findings should, however, be understood in the social and cultural context of the study, implying the possibility that other resources and assets are recognised in other cultures and types of sports. It is im-

portant not to make substantial links between the resources and abilities that the leaders described and sports participation automatically. This reflects the argument by Smith et al. (2018) that if 'immigrants' cultural sports capital does not correspond with the cultural capital valued in traditional Western sports, barriers and negative experiences are created.

The specific field logic determines the capital required (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). The field concept suggests that the leaders in the study are part of a greater social context. The leaders' discussions about refugee girls and boys are not isolated from ideas and ways of thinking of organised club sports in Sweden. Integration efforts are understood in relation to the clash between young refugees and the historically shaped Swedish structure of sports for children and young people. The results indicate the differences in how leaders value refugee young people's potential to be included in Swedish sports clubs, and that the logic of the sports field creates different conditions for their sports activities. These conditions are, to a significant degree, presented to be influenced by their experiences of sports in their countries of origin.

Boys and girls were described as distinct groups, with the boys having more potential for sports than girls. This finding reinforces a common stereotypical image of refugees as non-athletic and underrepresented in organised sports (e.g. Strandbu et al., 2017). On the other hand, the leaders described boys and girls as groups with inherent differences. The differences between girls regarding their physical skills were understood in relation to the assumed differences in attitudes towards girls as sporty subjects in their countries of origin. Girls were described in a manner that seems not responding to the emphasised femininity position, with implicitly due to the leader's reflection, hold healthy bodies and physical fitness. The differences between the boys were understood as a matter of perceived bodily and mental variations due to their geographical background. The descriptions of boys with prominent mental and physical capital harmonised with the traditionally prevailing masculinity norms in sport, such as strength, energy, and swiftness, referring to a typical male athlete (Coakley, 2014). The expectation that men should be 'masculine' according to this norm means that there is an implicit expectation that women should be 'feminine' by virtue of their 'differentness' in relation to the perceived 'masculinity' and men's bodies. Male coded abilities and qualities constituted the norm.

With reference to Connell's (1999) reasoning about different masculinity positions, we argue that in the leaders' discussions, certain boys from certain countries, who were considered as having masculine-coded qualities, have more favourable conditions for sports because they seem to fit the club sport norm of male athletes' physical and mental qualities, thus actualising the hegemonic masculinity position. This implicitly imposes a condition for other boys' and girls' sports practice and how they are perceived as sporting subjects, due to 'female' and 'male' being different, although women and men are neither opposite nor homogeneous groups (Connell & Pearse, 2015). We are aware of the risk of reinforcing stereotyped notions of gender and refugees. With the purpose to nuance such gender notions, we have consciously chosen to present data that actualize not only gender distinct ideas but also variations within the groups of boys and girls. Further, we consider the need of acknowledging the stereotyped views of refugees that the leaders express as a way of identifying aspects that might obstruct the purpose of integrating the new arrivals in Swedish society through their participation in sports.

Agergaard et al. (2016a) highlight that when public authorities provide funding and directives that influence the club's activities, sports leaders must balance their role as the local leader catering to local members' needs and the role to implement and fulfil political objectives. As Bourdieu (1991) states, 'the sport practitioners' field is an arena of struggle […] over the monopoly of determining the legitimate definition of sports practice and its legitimate function' (1991, p. 201). The leaders in this study seemed to be caught in a conflict of running the traditional and regular activities in their clubs and of meeting the government's expectations on sport as an integration arena. Research has shown that leaders and clubs tend to maintain old structures and find it difficult to develop and adapt activities to increase integration (Jeans et al., 2015). Therefore, it should be vital to invest in projects challenging leaders' conceptions of what Swedish sports are and how the organisation of sports can support the inclusion both of young people with a refugee background and young people in general.

Note

1 The cited studies define 'immigrant background' as a person born abroad or with at least one parent born abroad.

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Passing the Mic: Toward Culturally Responsive Out of School Time Leadership

Ishmael A. Miller

Abstract: The aim of this study was to explore the application of culturally responsive school leadership (CRSL) in an out of school time organization (OST). This was accomplished by analyzing how the actions of leaders both enabled and constrained CRSL. Research was conducted with Inspire Mentoring an OST organization that provides mentoring services to approximately 90-120 high school students of color from freshman through senior year. Approximately 60% of the mentors identify as people of color. The data collected for this qualitative case study occurred over 6 months and included: 6 semi-structured interviews with executive leaders and adult mentors, 5 observations of organizational meetings and community workshops, and reviewed documents from Inspire Mentoring. The leadership practices observed were analyzed using the behaviors of CRSL. This study suggest that positional OST leaders should become more connected to their community understanding longstanding inequities, interrogate their own worldviews, and work in tandem with minoritized youth and community members to address cultural youth development needs.

Keywords: out of school time, culturally responsive school leadership, youth leadership, case study

Introduction and Research Question

During my interview with the Executive Director of Inspire Mentoring (IM) Diana Bond (Asian American Woman), she claimed that the minoritized youth in her organization "have a voice and that students are primary". Minoritized youth are young people of color that have been historically marginalized by society and institutions in the United States (Khalifa, 2018). Diana's assertion piqued my interest because the minoritized youth that her mentoring organization serves have been described as the farthest from educational justice. Routinely the target of disproportionate discipline and Out of School Time (OST) organizations with deficit ideologies, these youth typically have the least voice and agency (Baldridge, 2014). As my interviews with people associated with IM continued, a more nuanced picture of Diana's statement came to light. I believe a form of Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) was occurring that engaged this community in empowering ways.

OST organizations like school clubs, summer camps, and after school programs that serve minoritized youth can be sites of youth development in the areas of cultural development, identity development, critical consciousness raising, and civic engagement that can lead to transformation of inequitable socio-political systems that effect their lives (Kwon, 2013; Ginwright and James, 2002). Youth development could be defined as a "process of growth and increasing competence" between childhood and adulthood (Larson, 2000 p. 170). However, the OST literature notes leadership practices that negatively affect youth development through leaders asserting deficit-based ideologies and trying to assimilate minoritized youth into middle class United States values (Baldridge, 2014; Halpern, 2002). Commonly, OST leadership practices have reproduced racial inequities for minoritized youth by having undertrained staff, narrowly focused programs, and a scarcity of programs located within their community (Woodland, 2008; Halpern, 2000; Weitzman, Mijanovich, Silver & Brazill, 2008). The persistent racial inequity produced by OST leaders suggest exploring culturally responsive forms of leadership to better meet the youth development of minoritized youth.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) suggests that educators should adapt their style of teaching to address the cultural learning and social needs of children (Gay, 2018). Gay (1994) found that culturally responsive development can enable ethnically/culturally diverse youth to stay connected to and build upon their values, knowledges, and ways of moving through the world. Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) derives from the concept of CRP, but instead focuses on a leader's ability to shift all aspects of educational organizations to respond to minoritized students developmental needs (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). Research on CRSL has typically focused on leadership practices of principals, instructional leaders, and teacher leaders to influence change within the contexts of K-12 schools (Khalifa, 2018; Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis; 2016; Marshall and Khalifa, 2018). CRSL's ability to understand and address the cultural needs of minoritized youth may provide a framework to transform OST leadership practice. Thus, this study explores how two OST leaders Executive Director Diana Bond and Director of Programs Alex Champion a (White Male) at Inspire Mentoring (IM) in a diverse metropolitan region of the Western United States are changing their leadership practices to become more culturally responsive. The research question is:

1. RQ1: How is this OST leadership team exhibiting behaviors of Culturally Responsiveness?

This article begins by critiquing research on leadership practice within the OST field. Assessing OST leadership practice will explicate the ways in which color-evasive values lead to dismissing the cultural needs of minoritized youth. Next, the theoretical framework will examine Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL). Subsequently, there will be a description of the organization and research methods utilized. Lastly, the article will conclude with findings and implications for practice and research. The findings from research question one suggests that positional OST leaders should become more connected to their community understanding longstanding inequities, interrogate their own worldviews, and work in tandem with minoritized youth and community members to address cultural youth development needs.

Framing Scholarship: OST Leadership

OST scholarship indicate when leaders articulate a clear vision, practice bottom-up leadership styles, promote positive team culture, ensure there is an adequate amount of program resources, and provide professional development they are more likely to obtain stated youth development outcomes (Huang and Dietel, 2011). The After-School Corporation (TASC) found that leaders performed better when they held a teaching certificate and required their staff to submit lesson or activity plans (Reisner, White, Russell, and Birmingham, 2004). Furthermore, leaders who were better able to obtain their positive youth development outcomes hired high quality staff (highly educated, trained them well, and had long term employment experience) that could play a collaborative role by building strong relationships with sponsoring organizations like school districts, community-based organizations, and governmental organizations in order to gain greater access to resources and opportunities for collaboration (Berry, Sloper, Pickar and Talbot; 2016; Jordan, Parker, Donnelly, and Rudo, 2009). When leaders implemented their programs with fidelity (in correspondence with the originally intended program) and dosage (how much the original program has been delivered) outcomes were achieved at higher levels (Durlak and DuPre, 2008). What is notably missing from these discussions of OST leadership practice is a dialogue about creating organizations that value being responsive to the youth development of minoritized youth.

Most discussions of leadership practice in OST scholarship is color evasive (Annamma, Jackson & Morrison, 2017) as there is limited discussion about race and racial dynamics. A common color evasive discussion of OST leadership practice is exemplified by a quote from Folkes and McWhorter (2018), referencing Simpkins and Riggs, (2014), "increasing racial and ethnic diversity means that ELO providers may experience population shifts and will need to develop new or improved cultural competence." (p.133). This is problematic because leaders should push themselves beyond tacit understandings of race and racism (Gooden and Dantley, 2012). These authors do not go into detail about what those new or improved cultural competencies should be. OST organizations commonly view this relevancy as representations of racialized histories and heritage practices that intersect with youth's lives and values being appreciated and celebrated within program activities (Woodland, 2008). These representations of culture may resist some deficit viewpoints and assumptions about minoritized youth, but it does not substantively affect the larger organizational processes and practices that enable cultural reproduction.

Lopez (2003) argues that educational leaders should raise questions and interrogate systems, frameworks, and theories about race and privilege. For example, studies of OST literature have not fully examined how a leader(s) might recruit, retain, and develop staff who use practices that are culturally responsive, address organizational practices that reify white normativity, change leadership practice such that youth of color play a substantive role in organizational decision-making, or how can leaders become more critically self-aware in their actions. This lack of depth and specificity about how leaders can create organizations that are culturally responsive can create the conditions for dismissing the cultural needs of minoritized youth. Utilizing CRSL offers a framework to understand the ways in which IM's leaders understand race and racial dynamics along with providing a set of practices that can lead to cultural responsiveness.

Theoretical Framework: Culturally Responsive School Leadership

There are several leadership frameworks that are attuned to the socio-cultural contexts of education and how they are prepared to meet the needs of minoritized youth including Culturally Relevant Leadership (Horsford, Grosland, & Gunn, 2011), Anti-Oppressive/Racist leadership (Gooden & Dantley, 2012), Culturally Responsive Leadership (Johnson, 2006), and Social Justice Leadership (Theoharis, 2007). All these theories provide nuanced ways to address racial inequity in education, but this study utilizes Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) because it highlights leadership practices that are informed by the expertise of minoritized youth, parents, and community members to respond to their continued oppression and marginalization (Khalifa, 2018). Multiple researchers have highlighted the expertise of minoritized youth, parents, and communities as important and additive to educational expertise and decision making (Ishimaru, 2014; Khalifa, Gooden & Davis, 2016, Santamaria & Santamaria, 2016), however OST leadership literature has not fully acknowledged this connection. In this way, CRSL views minoritized people as assets to transforming their community rather than being culturally deprived individuals in need of being fixed. Furthermore, a central recognition of CRSL is the role of positional leaders to address racial inequity, which maps onto my focus of how two positional OST leaders respond to the youth development of minoritized youth. This consideration is important because the OST literature has provided a limited understanding of how positional leaders respond to the youth development of minoritized youth.

The foundation of CRSL is Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP), which Geneva Gay influenced and developed concepts for because "educational reform proposals either ignore ethnic and cultural diversity entirely, deal with it in an extremely cursory fashion, or type-cast it as problematic" (Gay, 1994 p. 154). A crucial stance of CRP is that educators should be critically reflexive meaning they actively engage themselves in learning about the minoritized communities they work in, draw on their own experiences of race, and use these understandings to shift their teaching practice (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). When educators used CRP, they helped youth better develop their cultural identity, saw improved academic achievement, and increased motivation about their education (Gay, 2002). CRSL is an extension of CRP as leaders shift all aspect of educational organizations for example professional development, discipline systems, curriculum, and climate to meet the cultural needs of minoritized youth (Khalifa, Gooden & Davis, 2016).

CRSL has focused on the leadership practices of positional leaders like principals (Khalifa, 2018; Khalifa, Gooden & Davis, 2016) and instructional coaches (Marshall & Khalifa, 2018) because these individuals have considerable influence on student learning, promoting reform, and advocating for resources. Khalifa, Gooden & Davis (2016) conducted a literature review of 37 journal articles and eight books and determined four behaviors most associated with the CRSL approach, which include (a) critical self-awareness, (b) developing culturally responsive educators, (c) promoting a responsive and inclusive environment, and (d) engaging students and parents in community contexts. These culturally responsive leaders take an active stance to seek out and address racial inequities with an understanding of the historical and contextual factors that contributed to the challenges (Khalifa, Gooden & Davis, 2016). The most salient leadership practices at IM emphasized

the CRSL behaviors of having critical self-awareness can lead to valuing minoritized youth and community as fellow educational leaders. For this reason, the behaviors of CRSL played a major role in the deductive analysis of IM.

Setting and Participants

Inspire Mentoring (IM) is a program located in a diverse metropolitan region of the Western United States. IM's goal is to inspire and support the social, emotional, and academic development of students through mentoring, learning experiences, and a powerful community. Mentoring is IM main activity, which is seen as a critical youth development activity for minoritized youth as it can lead to improved academics and boosted prosocial behaviors (Fashola, 2002; Hirsch, Deutsch & DuBois, 2011; Woodland, 2008). IM's program is scheduled on a four-week cycle with one week off, this sequence occurs throughout the approximately 10-month academic year. The weekly programming progression typically occurs in the following fashion: one-on-one sessions, small groups in six to eight pairs, and 40 pairs participating in a learning community that has facilitated workshops. Throughout the year there are special events like a wilderness retreat, career and internship fair, and community service opportunities.

The program serves 90-120 high school students of color from freshman through senior year who are racially and ethnically diverse. Each student is paired with a young to middle aged mentor who works a professional job (ex. Education, Corporate, Tech). Approximately 60% of the mentors identify as people of color. IM's approximately annual budget is approximately $500,000. The board of directors, which helps to determine how those funds will be stewarded, is composed of 13 individuals (8 White males, 2 White females, 2 Black males, and 1 Black female). The program is small regarding salaried staff as they have one executive director, a director of programs, outreach and program manager, development and communications specialist, two AmeriCorps program liaisons, and two interns specializing in social work.

IM is an ideal organization to research because they have been trying to become culturally responsive in multiple ways, including adult recruitment (staff, mentors, board), professional development/training (for example, on issues of implicit bias, impact of trauma on learning, and social emotional learning), and instituting critical mentoring. Critical mentoring has underlying foundations of critical race theory, cultural competence and intersectionality that shift mentor program delivery to focus on the cultural needs of the youth being served (Weiston-Serdan, 2017). These shifts coincided with the current Executive Director Diana Bond taking over the organization in 2016.

Research Methods

This study was designed to develop an in-depth understanding of a bounded system, which is one entity with defined boundaries (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). IM constitutes a bounded system because it is one organization with a well-defined mission that it does not deviate from as a non-profit entity. Since this is a study of a bounded system a qualitative case study approach was chosen because it provides the opportunity to understand one thing well

(Stake, 2005). Understanding one successful case of culturally responsiveness is important because "One success . . . tells us more than a thousand failures: one success tells us what is possible" (Payne, 2008 p. 7). Furthermore, Yin (2014) suggests that a value of case study research is that it is suited for research where the context of the study and variables of research are closely connected. In this case study the context of ongoing racial inequity and the associated leadership practice is connected directly to the variable of cultural responsiveness. To separate leadership practice from cultural responsiveness would be a color evasive move that reproduces racial inequity. Thus, bringing these concepts together strengthens the design under study.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection for this study was conducted from December 2018 through May 2019. The primary data source was semi-structured interviews. Purposeful sampling was chosen to identify IM and interview participants because they would provide rich information for in-depth study as these people are enacting leadership at this organization (Patton, 2015). Interviews were conducted with the Founder Karen Peninsula, (White female); Board Member Pete Focus (White male); Current Executive Director Diana Bond (Asian American female); Director of Programs Alex Pathfinder (White male); and two mentors Thomas Taylor (Black male) and Cheryl Davis (White female).

These participants were selected because they occupied formal leadership roles across multiple organizational levels and had varying amounts of involvement with program implementation. Each participant was interviewed one time for approximately 45-60 minutes. The interviews were semi-structured because they provide researchers an ability to respond to new and emerging ideas and topics (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). The interview questions were focused on establishing the leadership practices that Diana and Alex would routinely use and determining the level of collaboration between adult leaders and minoritized youth.

Additionally, data collection included documents and artifacts because they are a ready-made source of data (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). This research specifically examined the annual report, training documents, mission/vision statements, and other key organizational documents. These documents helped to determine organizational values, the theory of action, organizational demographics, and other contextual information. Lastly, this research included observations of the following sites of leadership activity, which included a board meeting, two mentor training sessions, and two mentor-mentee events. Observations provided a contextualization of leadership practice that was discussed in interviews.

Data were analyzed using standard analytic processes, such as transcribing all audio data (interviews), organizing qualitative data in research software for analyses, iteratively developing a qualitative codebook (DeCuir-Gunby, Marshall, and McCulloch, 2011), and writing analytic memos to further develop themes and interpretations (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Codes were developed using a deductive coding scheme that focused on the four behaviors of culturally responsive school leadership outlined by Khalifa and Colleagues (2016) critical self-awareness/critical reflexivity; developing culturally responsive educators; promoting a responsive and inclusive environment; and engaging students, par-

ents, and indigenous communities in culturally appropriate ways. Additional inductive codes were developed for incidents that did not fit within established categories (Patton, 2015). Inductive codes that emerged were conflict/tension, and theory of change. Codes were tested by triangulating the data sources to illuminate patterns of CRSL and contradictions within the setting (Hebard, 2016). Analytic memos were written throughout coding to establish emerging understanding and generate higher inference claims. Member checks were conducted with Diana Bond and Alex Pathfinder at the end of coding to ensure researcher interpretations were consistent with participant understandings.

Findings

Diana Bond, Executive Director, and Alex Pathfinder, Director of Programs, at Inspire Mentoring leadership practice indicate the usage of behaviors that would be considered culturally responsive. Diana and Alex exhibited all four behaviors of CRSL including (a) critical self-awareness, (b) developing culturally responsive educators, (c) promoting a responsive and inclusive environment, and (d) engaging students and parents in community contexts. The data indicate that the behaviors of CRSL occurred in conjunction with each other and rarely stood alone. For the purposes of this paper I focus on the overlapping behaviors of critical self-awareness and engaging students and parents in community contexts for Diana and critical self-awareness and promoting a responsive and inclusive environment for Alex as those behaviors were salient themes that arose from the data. Khalifa et. al (2016) suggest that leaders with critical self-awareness must use these understandings to create a new environment for learning, which Diana and Alex both demonstrate. Diana used her critical self-awareness to understand that IM did not value the expertise and decision making of youth and made intentional decisions to better engage them in culturally appropriate ways. While Alex used his critical self-awareness to incorporate culturally responsive curriculum into IM. The findings about Diana and Alex's leadership practice will be organized into profiles about how the two leaders demonstrated being critically self-aware and then discuss how this led to them taking actions that engaged their community in culturally appropriate ways.

RQ1: How is this OST Leadership Team Exhibiting Behaviors of Culturally Responsiveness?

Diana Bond: Passing the Mic

Diana Bond is an Asian American woman that became Executive Director of IM in October of 2017. As executive Director Diana oversees board relationship/development, overseeing the budget, fundraising, grants, strategic planning, community partnerships, and other new initiatives. Diana stated that she was initially attracted to work at IM because she was "a product of [the] system" going to a high school partner of the organization. The "system" that Diana is referring to is replete with disinvestment of business and public services, un-

der resourced public schools, and the building of youth and adult jails that disproportionately impact IM's community. Diana has been addressing many community issues for the last 17 years working in the early childhood non-profit educational sector. As a parent, Diana has knowledge of the experiences that IM's minoritized youth face because her son attended one of the partner schools of IM where she was a member of the parent teacher association. Further, Diana volunteered as a mentor for a program that served youth engaged with the juvenile justice system. Between these experiences, Diana expressed she could really "sink her teeth" into being the Executive Director of IM because it was relevant to her community. These experiences are key to Diana's recognition of the inequitable structures that IM's minoritized youth navigate. For example, Diana was able to critique her role as leading an organization that helped assimilate minoritized youth. Dianna commented,

> *"Um, so one of the things, the first thing that I did when I came here was I took a look at our values and our values were like, um, sense of purpose and grace and optimism. And, um, they were really, I felt expectations or a vision of what white people thought our kids should do or these kids should do or should be like, or if only our kids have a sense of purpose and only our kids had optimism if only our kids had grace. And, and I, I felt like, um, that doesn't guide us, that doesn't guide our work as disrupting racism and doesn't guide our work [of] elevating our students to be their best."*

Diana was able to recognize that IM's underlying values pathologized minoritized youth as deficient. By being able to label IM's values as upholding racism through assimilation, Diana was able to shift her organization to think critically about how IM could value minoritized youth as people with expertise and decision-making abilities. Diana remarked,

> *"How we approach things is that students are, you know, have a voice and that students are primary. That what they want, what they say. We need to listen to, um, that, um, I, you know, I'm really opposed to this sort of we know best and we know you guys should do this and you should know this or that or every student should do. And, um, and so thinking about that like, yeah, and our students have to navigate this, you know, white supremacists society and, um, thinking about, yes, you need to navigate this and yes, you need to have a resume and yes, you need to know what's out there. Right. Um, and, and you also need to have a space where people listen to you, where you are, um, you know, very important and that you feel valued and that you see your own value, um, in this community."*

Diana has a recognition that minoritized youth may need to learn how to navigate a world that does not fully value their voice or opinion. However, Diana articulates that minoritized youth's opinions and worldviews should be fully valued to how the world and institutions should be changed. This in part means creating space and opportunity for youth to practice and become more confident in their ability to lead. A constant phrase that Diana and others at the organization used to demonstrate this new approach was Passing the Mic which was listening to minoritized youth and making them formal decision makers and experts. Passing the Mic moves away from hierarchical power dynamics positioning adults as knowing best or that organizational leaders like Diana and Alex should be the only experts and decision makers. An example, of Passing the Mic occurred when IM introduced Youth Leads as a vehicle to empower youth leadership. Youth Leads is a group of 12 minoritized youth that participate in board meetings, interview mentors and staff, and facilitate workshops and lead activities. These leadership activities are not trivial as IM's minoritized youth play an important role in shaping organizational decisions that may affect their experience.

Diana's practice of "passing the mic" emphasizes a collective leadership model that draws on the expertise and decision making of minoritized youth in recognition of the array

of cultural knowledge, skills, abilities, and contacts they possess. Diana clarified her role as Executive Director in Passing the Mic, "I mean I'm not, you don't see me leading anything cause I am not at the front of the room, but my role is to have relationships with the students and have relationships with the mentors." Passing the Mic is powerful not only because youth have a platform to lead, but because it is accompanied with relationships that support minoritized youth to feel empowered. Thomas Taylor a black male mentor at IM described Diana and her leadership style as "be[ing] present. Um, and it's not just like she's sitting there watching or observing because she actually participates in the workshops." Passing the Mic is understanding the context you are in, actively engaging in relational bonds with minoritized youth, and believing in minoritized youth as the leaders that can transform the organization.

Alex Pathfinder: Helping Minoritized Youth find their Path

Alex Pathfinder is a White male that started as Director of Programs at IM in September 2017. As Director of Programs at IM Alex has a number of duties because the organization is small including planning evidence-based activities, exploring opportunities for organizational advancement, establishing policies and procedures, conducting evaluations, and building infrastructure to support students, mentors and family. Alex grew up in a large western city like the one IM is located in. As a youth in the 1990s, a defining experience that helped Alex understand the racialized nature of U.S. society occurred when he was arrested and on trial for felony assault. Alex stated,

> *"We went through the whole process, pretrial got to trial. Um, and, um, the mother of the students that we beat up was white and she basically had a change of heart and wanting to drop the charges. Um, but only on me and one of my friends who was white and wanted to continue to press charges on my Vietnamese friend, um, because she felt that he was bad. Um, one, it was actually me who started the fight, uh, in the beginning. Um, and I didn't understand quite what was happening. Obviously, the judge let her know she could either continue to press charges on all of us or drop charges on all of us, but she couldn't pick and choose. And I remember her deliberate, you know, her taking some time to think about it, but ultimately, she ended up dropping the charges. And, um, as an adult I can look back on that and really see the impact race had in that."*

These reflections shape Alex's understanding of the added barriers of inequity like institutionalized racism, disproportionate discipline, and implicit bias that minoritized youth face. As an adult Alex sought to join an organization like IM because it would be an opportunity for him to help youth disrupt systems that continue to oppress them. Alex does not view himself as leading youth rather he stated adults like himself should be, "navigators and collaborators as young people work to their own life path."

Alex's self-awareness about the role that adults should play has manifested in him ensuring that adults at IM become aware of their own implicit bias and be provided trainings that help them better support their minoritized youth. For example, one mentor training and ongoing coaching was provided by an Asian American man working with a local education agency; his training focused on many topics including how IM's leadership and mentors could question their own assumptions and biases. Another mentor workshop was hosted by an African American woman that discussed how IM could incorporating multiple intersections of youth's identity and life in mentoring conversations. Lastly, Alex has engaged IM

in a discussion and training about how the political climate surrounding immigration is impacting their youth. Specifically, Alex has conducted advocacy-based inquiry surrounding what IM will do if Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) come to the workshop space. These conversations are leading to IM's community broadly creating tangible policies to address issues that effect their minoritized youth. Along with IM working with their supporters to speak out and advocate for change regarding immigrant rights. Alex explained that IM pursues these causes because,

> *"it's something that, um, obviously is, is real and it, and especially in our line of work and where our organization is kind of has roots, um, we really have a responsibility to have this kind of a consideration and conversation and reflection."*

Alex's racialized life experiences provided him with an understanding of the world minoritized youth must navigate, while his actions signal that IM is engaging in conversations around racial inequities that center community needs (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). These leadership practices are helping IM's community understand that the system must be disrupted and adults should walk alongside youth instead of providing a prescriptive path. By engaging in deeper conversation, training themselves, speaking out on a politically charged topic to better serve their youth, IM is crafting leadership practices that goes beyond calling out race and racism (Gooden and Dantley, 2012). IM is trying to become a meaningful support in its minoritized youth's lives demonstrating a willingness to stand with and ultimately act on the issues affecting them.

Implications for Theory and Practice: Toward Culturally Responsive OST Leadership

This qualitative case study examined the culturally responsive leadership practices of Executive Director Diana Bond and Director of Programs Alex Pathfinder. Leadership is a complex endeavor where leaders must constantly struggle with racial inequity in the world and their institutions. The leaders at IM, Diana and Alex are no different as they sought to serve their youth without reproducing deficit-based narratives. This is not to say that the leaders at IM are perfect because they would readily admit their struggles, however they do provide an example of how OST leaders can move toward cultural responsiveness. Specifically, this case study highlights how IM's positional leaders incorporated youth and community expertise and decision making into organizational leadership. This helped IM transform into an organization that values minoritized youth and community members as assets to the issues that affect their lives. The salient factors in Diana and Alex being able to shift how leadership occurs at IM was having critical self-awareness and applying this knowledge in creating an environment that was culturally inclusive and responsive for the minoritized youth they serve (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). This is evident in the leadership team's understanding of the racialized society in which they live, and how that impacts IM's youth. These findings suggest that culturally responsive OST leaders should build their critical self-awareness interrogating the historical legacy of race and how that impacts your own worldviews and the context worked in (Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). Building

critical self-awareness is an ongoing process that must be accompanied with OST leaders making changes that are responsive to the cultural needs of minoritized youth. Khalifa (2018) suggest conducting equity audits with community stakeholders like staff, youth, parents, and community members to identify themes of inequity and make actionable plans with them to address the named challenges.

Secondly, an important implication for future research into culturally responsive leadership in out of school time organizations is expanding our notions of who should be involved in leadership practice. A limitation to using a theory like CRSL is although it recognizes the importance of minoritized youth, parents, and community members as leaders it has substantively focused on how positional leaders pursue equity-based reform efforts (Khalifa, 2018, Khalifa, Gooden & Davis, 2016; Marshall & Khalifa, 2018). This case displayed the expertise and decision making of minoritized youth and community members as leaders resulting in them addressing societal injustices perpetuated against themselves and their communities. The results of this study make sense considering multiple educational researchers highlight a greater chance for equity when leadership is moved beyond individual efforts of heroic leaders (Rodela & Bertrand, 2018; Ishimaru, 2019). For researchers this suggests using theoretical frameworks and research methodologies that broaden our conception of educational leadership from positional leaders to collective efforts to address racial inequity.

Study Limitations

An important limitation is the time bound of this project. Data were collected for seven months so that may make it tough to see if certain practices are routine or one-off enactments. Conversely, certain enactments of CSL may not be seen during a singular interview or observation preventing that from being part of the data set. To counteract the length of time, member checks were used to determine if certain behaviors were consistent. Additionally, only one interview was conducted with each interviewee. That provided a snapshot of how people are making sense of what is occurring and may not highlight the changing nature and attitudes of individuals. A second limitation is that no youth or family members were interviewed as part of this process. Since an explicit focus of this research was to understand how minoritized youth culture is being sustained; by not having their voice as part of those interviewed, I missed an opportunity to empower their voice in this research. Additionally, by not including minoritized youth's voice in the project I was unable to confirm that they felt empowered or had their culture sustained by participating in IM's programs. I tried to engage these communities but was unable to obtain participation. In future studies I will allocate more time to engage diverse populations as part of the interview process. Determining more effective communication methods that might include developing and maintaining long-term relationships with the research site.

Conclusion

In Geneva Gay's (2018) update to her landmark work Culturally Responsive Teaching she states that "Culturally Responsive Teaching has gone global" meaning it is being applied to many contexts within education and other interdisciplinary fields. CRP has moved into the field of educational leadership and brings important implications for meeting the youth development needs of minoritized youth. The findings from this study contribute to the body of scholarship that is examining the application of culturally responsive leadership in OST. Additionally, this research can provide an opportunity for practitioners to better interrogate their leadership practice and center systemic equity as both process and outcome. This study suggest that positional OST leaders should become more connected to their community understanding longstanding inequities, interrogate their own worldviews, and work in tandem with minoritized youth and community members to address cultural youth development needs.

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University-Supported Networks as Professional Development for Teachers in School-Age Educare

Lena Glaés-Coutts

Abstract: One of the most valued types of professional learning for teachers are forums that allow them to share their practices with other teachers. This is paper examines how university-based learning networks support the professional development needs of teachers in School-Age educare. University-supported network provide a more informal approach to professional learning and allows the teachers in School-Age educare to connect with other teachers in their field. The network further provides the participants an opportunity to be an active part of the research that is conducted at the university and a platform for developing a collective agency.

Keywords: Network, professional learning, School-Age educare, teacher agency

Introduction

School-Age Educare in Sweden

The Swedish elementary school system is unique in that it is designed to provide a wrap-around system of both education and care. The Swedish public education system is founded on the principles of democracy, equality and equity and "The Education Act (2010: 800) stipulates that the school system aims at pupils acquiring and developing knowledge and values" (Skolverket, p. 5). In Sweden, a majority of students also attend the before- and after school section of the elementary school system known as *Fritidshem*, or School-Age educare. This section of the education system fulfills an important role of the Swedish school system by providing group and situational based learning that stimulates the growth and development of students in grades one to six. While not compulsory, School-Age educare remains an important component of Swedish schools, and its mandate to complement and support student learning has become an important pillar of the public school system. In contrast to before- and after school programs common in other countries, the teachers who work at the Swedish School-Age educare centers are required to have an undergraduate degree in teaching School-Age educare. The requirement for licensed university-educated teachers is rather unique in the world as only Sweden and Denmark requires teachers to have an undergraduate degree (Dahl, 2014). To meet this demand for university-educated

teachers, Swedish universities offer a three-year undergraduate teacher program focused on teaching how to develop the needs and interests of School-Age educare children. In the university program, the student-teachers gain an understanding of how to interpret and implement the curriculum, as well as how to teach social skills in an informal setting. Since 2012, the students who graduate from this teaching program are further qualified to teach an aesthetic subject such as music, sports or arts, in the regular elementary school program.

In 2017, almost 500 000 students between the ages of 6 and 12 were enrolled in School-Age educare in Sweden, which is more than the total enrollment of students in the secondary school system (Skolverket, 2010). This means that over 84% of Swedish School-Age children spend a significant part of their school day at School-Age educare. This has, in turn, led to an increased need for educated personnel at the School-Age educare centers. While the number of schools offering School-Age educare has virtually remained the same for the last decade or so, the number of children enrolled has increased by close to 40%. Today, as many schools attempt to fill the teaching positions, principals often have to resort to hiring staff with other qualifications in childcare and similar qualifications, resulting in a situation where only one-quarter of the staff at School-Age educare is qualified with an undergraduate degree (Skolverket, 2010). More qualified teachers are needed to fill this growing demand, as there are now more children per teacher in School-Age educare than in the past. This change in the children-teacher ratio has come about mostly due to cuts or redirection of educational funding.

The current curriculum document now include core content for the School-Age educare program, along with specific goals in the areas of Language and communication, Creative and aesthetic forms of expression, Nature and society as well as for Games, physical activities and outdoor excursions. This means that, more than ever before, there is a need for qualified staff to assure the curriculum is correctly interpreted and translated into practice. The demand for well-educated staff also places an emphasis on providing professional learning for all who work as teachers at the School-Age educare centers.

In Sweden, the term *kompetensutbildning* is used in describing teachers' professional development or professional learning. While similar in context to the English term professional development, the Swedish word puts a higher emphasis on the development of competencies, rather than the professional aspect of improving one's profession. For the purpose of this article, the term professional learning will be used to describe all types of learning associated with enhancing and developing the skills needed for the teaching profession. Although School-Age educare is an important part of the Swedish public school system, there are often fewer opportunities for teachers who work in this program to develop their professional skills and knowledge. While many school boards actively promote and support teacher professional learning, the teachers at School-Age educare can still find themselves excluded from the formal professional development opportunities that their colleagues in K-6 attend. One type of professional learning that contains elements of both formal and informal professional learning is belonging to a professional network as they are grounded in a constructivist view of how adults learn and grow professionally. We know that networks provide different types of learning and support depending on their form and function, and while research on various types of networks can be found, there is currently no information on how networks organized by universities can support profes-

sional learning for teachers in School-Age educare, or how the participants perceive participation in these networks.

The Linnaeus University Network for Teachers in School-Age Educare

Since 2015, the Linnaeus University in Växjö, Sweden has organized and coordinated network meetings targeted specifically for teachers in School-Age educare called *Nätverk för fritidshem/fritidspedagoger* (Network for School-Age educare teachers). Originally, the network was created to support teachers in the schools working with the student-teachers during their practicums. The scope has since been expanded to include all university educated, practicing teachers in School-Age educare. The network aims to promote professional learning and to support the connection between research and practice. The teachers meet three to four times per school year, and the full-day meetings take place at Linnaeus University. During the network meetings, the teachers explore various professional development subjects and are given an opportunity to learn about, and participate in, current research in the field. Researchers from the university work in close collaboration with the teachers and involve them in current research studies. The topics chosen for the network meetings are guided by the feedback given by the participants.

Review of the Literature

Professional Learning

International research on teacher professional development clearly demonstrates the importance for teachers to have access to professional learning opportunities to improve their practice (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, and Orphanos 2009; Kennedy 2016; Timperley, & Alton-Lee 2008; Van den Bergh, Ros, & Beijaard 2014). Teachers who have worked between eight and fifteen years also look to manage the tension and pressures of their work and their personal lives, thus searching for professional learning that will support both their personal and professional learning (Borko, 2004; Day, & Leitch, 2001; Hoekstra, & Korthagen, 2011; Postholm, 2012). Desimone (2009) emphasizes the importance of professional opportunities that stretch over an extended time and ongoing professional learning is also preferred by the teachers themselves. When professional learning is viewed as relevant by the participating teachers, it has shown to lead to sustainable changes in teacher learning and practice (Avalos, 2011; King, 2014; Timperley et al., 2007). While there is no agreed-upon optimal duration that is viewed as most effective and beneficial, it is clear that when teachers are given time to collaborate, dialogue and reflect over a longer period of time, they grow their personal and practical knowledge.

Teachers develop their professional knowledge both through formal learning opportunities such as courses, workshops and top-down initiatives offered by employers, as well as through informal learning opportunities. Informal learning range from reading a professional article or engaging in conversation with a colleague in the hallway, to collaborating with a critical friend or being part of a community of learners (Beck, & Kosnik, 2014). In the current educational environment of results-driven agendas for teacher professional learning

(Day, 2016), teachers' choice and their personal and professional needs have often been pushed to the background in the professional learning debate. For many teachers, the most valued type of professional learning is being able to observe colleagues, either through formal processes such as learning study or through more informally processes such as visiting their colleague's classrooms. The second most valued type of professional learning, that teachers identified as having an impact on their practice, are formats that allow them to share their practices with other teachers (Bolye et al., 2004)

Networks as Communities of Learning

Belonging to a network is participating in a community of learners where participation itself is a form of learning (Lave, & Wegner, 1991). The participants in such networks jointly negotiate and re-negotiate both the groups' purpose and format. The network community's strength lies in the relationships of *mutual engagement* that bind members together into a social entity… with a *shared repertoire* of communal that members have developed over time (Wegner, 1998). Working collectively, and having the opportunity to belong to a network of learners, not only promotes the individual teacher's learning, but it also extends supports to all teachers in the network (Webster-Wright, 2009; Zehetmeier et al., 2015). Networks can be either temporary or formed for longer-term learning and they can be organized by either purpose, function or ideological /pedagogical beliefs (Hargreaves et al., 1998; Lieberman,& Grolnick, 1996). What characterizes most networks is their strong sense of a shared purpose, while at the same time functioning as a platform for both sharing ideas and receiving support (Hofman, & Dijkstra, 2010; Snow, Martin, & Dimuke, 2015). Often, but not always, do networks include a facilitator that helps guide the group in moving beyond the expertise of the group itself (Lieberman, 2000). Successful networks are often those that balance the outside knowledge *(of the expert)* with the collective knowledge of the group (Lieberman, 2000).

The term *network* is sometimes associated with online networks that have become known *as personal learning networks* or PLN. As the use of social media for information has grown, many teachers use platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to connect with other professionals (Krutka, Carptern, & Torrey, 2016). The social media platforms provide teachers with easily accessible ways to learn from others throughout the globe. At the same time, there is a concern that the amount of information available through these platforms can be perceived as overwhelming, while the credibility of the information found in these forums can at times be hard to evaluate (Grote-Garcia, & Vasinda, 2014). The ability to meet in person thus allows teachers to sort through this information while reflecting and discussing issues of validity along with developing a collective efficacy (Moolenaar, Sleegers, & Daly, 2012).

One of the main benefits of being part of a network is grounded in the idea that we learn better in groups. By sharing and interacting around theories and ideas there is the potential for the group's participation to develop new understandings. "When community exists, learning is strengthened…everyone is smarter, more ambitious, and productive" (Paley, 1992: p. 2). In the case of teachers, belonging to a network helps to counteract the isolation that is a common reality in teaching (Beck, & Kosnick, 2014; Lieberman, 2000). Networks provide an opportunity for teachers to work with others around a shared purpose. Embedded in this sharing is the support that comes from working together with other professionals (Lieberman, 2000; Lieberman, & Grolnick, 1996). Reflection, as part of teacher

learning and growth, is an integral part of working with others in a community of learners (Dewey, 1933; Lave, & Wegner, 1991; Schön, 1987). In a network, the participants have the opportunity to reflect together in a community.

Networks can function as a vehicle for change, as they offer the participants learning opportunities fostered by the interpersonal connections and interactions (Niez, 20017). A network has the capacity to develop into a community where learning is interlinked with the sense of belonging and can facilitate the development of the teachers' professional identity and agency. By learning through shared reflection, discussing, exchanging and problem-solving, participation in the network gives teachers the opportunity to co-construct meaning of new concepts relevant for their professional practice (Lave, & Wegner, 1991). Belonging to a network can even offer a type of job-focused inquiry into student learning. As this form of professional learning is situated in the teachers' practice in school, it can provide professional learning that takes place over an extended period; one of the hallmarks of effective professional learning (DuFour, & Eaker, 1998; Nehring, & Fitzsimons, 2011). The collaboration among the teachers in a network provides the prospect of being able to build the relational trust needed to make sustainable change in teachers' professional practice (Nehring, & Fitzsimons, 2011; Opfer, & Pedder, 2011).

Theoretical Framework

The underlying framework for this study is grounded in Dewey's (1938) concept of constructivism, where the learner is an active participant in constructing new knowledge. Such learning is understood as social in nature and as well as being distributed amongst individual teachers and the people within the learning environment. Learning is seen as situated in the society where it takes place and where knowledge construction occurs through the interaction with others (Avalos, 2011; Borko, 2004; Postholm, 2012; Putham, & Borko, 2000). To view and understand this interaction, this research uses the social constructivist framework of knowledge construction known as *Communities of Practice*. This concept, developed by Jean Lave and Etienne Wenger (1991), is defined as "groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" Wegner, 1998). The teachers in this network work within different types of learning communities in their professional as School-Age educare teachers. The interlinked concepts of community, identity, and agency are used as a lens to gain an understanding of how their participation in the network is connected to their professional learning.

Research Question

This research aims to construct knowledge of how networks, and specifically university-based networks, contribute to supporting professional learning for teachers in School-Age educare. This paper explores in what ways such networks can provide an opportunity for teachers to develop their professional practice, identity and agency. The main question examined is:

- In what ways can university-based learning networks support the professional development needs of teachers in School-Age educare?

Method

The study used a qualitative research design where the information collected consisted of three sources of data from the participants in the Linnaeus university network for teachers in School-Age educare. The first data came from questionnaires filled out by the teachers after each session. The second data source were from the findings of a brainstorming session around professional learning, and the third source was from interviews with four teachers who had participated in the session were included.

The topics and activities presented in each network session differed, however, the survey questions completed were the same. The topics of the sessions covered included: collaboration with parent and guardians, children's literature and storytelling, drama as pedagogy, mathematics and outdoor education, entrepreneurial education and programming and digital learning. There were altogether 150 responses collected from six different sessions held from 2016-2020. After each session, the teachers responded in writing to what they viewed as positive, what could be improved on and what topics or areas they wish to see included in future sessions. Responses to the first two questions were read and re-read carefully and themes were identified which helped create codes for analysis.

In a collective brainstorming activity during a session in 2019, the participants discussed the different aspects of professional learning in this network (see appendix 1). The teachers worked in groups and recorded their responses, which they shared with the whole group. The written comments, without the names of the participants, were submitted at the end of the session. The responses were analyzed using the codes created from the feedback, and then re-read to find relevant information used for a re-coding of the texts.

Four of the teachers participated in semi-structured interviews conducted by the researcher. The interviews were conducted as part of another study on professional learning for teachers in School-Age educare, and the data used in this paper was focused on their participation in networks (see appendix 2). The teachers in that study had an opportunity to reflect on, and describe, what type of professional learning they view as beneficial to their own personal and professional learning. The interviews were transcribed and a hand analysis of the data was done to code and compare it with the themes that emerged from the brainstorming session as well as the participants' feedback (Creswell, 2013). The participants have been anonymized and all the quotes used in this article have been translated into English by the author.

A thematic analysis approach was used throughout the analysis process to find an emerging description of the teachers' descriptions of professional learning in the university network session. The three sources of data were used to create triangulation in order to validate that data as well as create a more complete picture of the participants' view of how university-based learning networks support their professional development needs. The theoretical framework of the community of practice was finally applied in viewing the findings through the interlinked concepts of community, identity, and agency.

Results

The responses from the teachers involved in the university-supported network for School-Age educare teachers revealed that what they valued most was being part of a larger community and being able to reflect on their practice together with others. They appreciated meeting other School-Age educare teachers, learning about each other's problems of practice, and being able to exchange ideas. By experimenting with hands-on activities and learning together in the network meetings, they build their professional identities and collectively created meaning that allowed them to connect theory and practice. These exchanges further worked to strengthen their own professional identity and sense of a professional community.

Participating in the network meetings built their professional knowledge in various ways. The main reason why the teachers appreciated the network meetings was the clear focus on the needs of teachers in School-Age educare. They saw this as especially important to their professional practice as they expressed that most other professional improvements they had participated in were usually directed towards classroom teachers in the compulsory program, or the pre-school program. While they said that there was a benefit to attending those as well, they often felt that their professional reality went ignored or was minimized. The stark reality is that many of the School-Age educare teachers are left to independently find, or actively create, their own professional learning opportunities. This meant that attending the network meetings were sometimes the only professional learning opportunity that related directly to their professional practice as School-Age educare teachers.

The teachers also emphasized how the network meetings functioned as an important forum for learning about the latest research and new literature within their field. They strengthened their professional knowledge and skills through exchanging experiences and ideas with School-Age educare teachers from other schools and school districts, thus widening their professional community. This collegial exchange allowed them to learn new ideas and gain insights; something they placed a particularly high value on as it came from their peers. The teachers appreciated the mix of sharing of research and theory with hands-on practical activities and collegial exchanges. Many of the teachers mentioned that this was also their main source for learning about new courses and professional learning opportunities. Because the meeting agendas were created based on participant feedback, many teachers felt the meetings offered them an increased sense of relevance for their professional learning and practice.

A majority of participants said they shared their new learning with their work colleagues when they returned from the network meetings. While they experienced some challenges in finding time to formally share the latest research, the teachers identified many informal ways they shared with colleagues. However, many of the teachers were searching for more formal structures of imparting what they had learned at the network meetings. To what degree this formal type of sharing was possible was largely connected to the principal's instructional leadership.

The teachers attending the network meetings can be defined as an enterprise of a community of practice for several reasons. The learning enacted within this group share many of the characteristics of a community of practice; through mutual engagement, they develop

a shared repertoire that is part of the mutual engagement of the participants. The participants are continually negotiating the learning community and its practices through interaction, and through the feedback they provide, they are also active participants in creating the learning. They build and develop professional relationships that allow them to address the issues of their daily practice. Through the discussions around theory and practice, they seek to develop a shared repertoire and vocabulary with which to define and express their professional practice (Wegner, 1998). Their learning is fluid and multifaceted and can be described in relation to their sense of community, identity and agency.

Community: Learning as Belonging

Wegner (1998) describes how communities of practice come to be developed around things that are important to people. The teachers in this study identified the opportunity to meet with other School-Age educare teachers as one of the most important reasons for belonging to the network. Their feedback indicated that they valued this opportunity for learning and that it mattered greatly to them in their professional role as School-Age educare teachers. One word that was frequently used in describing the meetings was "inspiring". The teachers explained how they left the meetings inspired to try new things in their practice. The network meetings provided a forum for them to discuss, and reflect upon, both practical and theoretical issues relevant to their profession and daily work. Within the network-meeting milieu, they were able to pose and debate questions regarding their daily practice in a way they could not do when collaborating with their colleagues teaching grades one to six. Being part of a community meant not only meeting other School-Age educare teachers but also being allowed to grow new connections to professionals who shared similar working realities. The network meetings allowed them to expand their network beyond their school or group of schools, and to build important connections to other teachers in other schools.

> You learn so much. And it is fun to share with others. I almost think that *(interacting with other teachers)* is the most important thing…to have colleagues, or rather to have colleagues at other schools.

The importance of collaboration between the teachers in the different school forms (compulsory school, preschool class and School-Age educare) is often emphasized in Swedish education as an important and necessary component in supporting student learning. However, this collaboration is an expectation that frequently fails to materialize (Ludvigsson, & Falkner, 2019). Too often, the collaboration that is expected instead emerges as a model of competition, where the School-Age educare section competes with resources, such as professional development time, with the teachers working in the compulsory school section. The network then offers to become a place where the teachers who share the same restrictions within the schools can discuss common concerns and issues. To a certain degree, this format of learning together can be seen as "levelling" the impact of the schools' policies and realities. The feedback from the teachers who attended the network sessions emphasized the need for a different kind of collaboration for the teachers in the School-Age educare system.

> I think that these School-Age educare network meetings …are very desirable *(to the teachers in School-Age educare)*. They are very sought- after… and I think there is an attraction to this kind of networking thinking: "How do we solve this? What do you do at your school?"

The network meetings provided a more informal approach to learning; a community that fosters the commitment of time and energy needed for learning and improving one's practice.

Identity: Learning as Becoming

Research tells us experienced teachers seek out learning opportunities that honour their professional knowledge, integrity and identity (Day, 1999). Belonging to the community of practice that the network formed, allowed the teachers, both experienced and new, the opportunity to form and develop their own identity as School-Age educare teachers. While identified as elementary school teachers (within the Swedish school system), their identity as teachers differs from the teacher identity that is associated with their colleagues who teach in the compulsory school classes. This division is partially based on the history of School-Age educare and how the profession has evolved over the years. The position has shifted over the years as one associated mostly with the caretaking aspect, to the more teaching-based role it is today. Although the Swedish government tried to strengthen the professional identity of the teachers who work in School-Age educare by creating a university-based teacher education program focused on School-Age educare, the status and identity of these teachers are still markedly different from that of their counter partners. (Berglund et. al, 2019). Being part of the community of the university-based network is one way to negotiate and renegotiate their identity. Some respondents said that the felt "strengthened in their professional role" through the interaction with other teachers in the same field. They could see themselves as professionals with a specialized collection of knowledge and skills.

Due to the hiring practices in the time of teacher shortage in Sweden, many of the university-educated teachers regularly find that they are the only ones who are certified, School-Age educare teachers at their workplace.

> There are many places where you are alone…and it is getting worse too. We know that there is a lack of pedagogues *(School-Age educare teachers)* everywhere…at the network you will at least get the form of support that you need.

> With so few people educated *(as School-Age educare teachers)*, it is difficult to have (professional) discussions.

As our professional identities are made of a combination of many factors, such as "personal experience, knowledge, and values; schooling practices and policies; and institutional values" (Goodnaught, 2010, p. 168), it is crucial that we have the ability to see ourselves reflected in others. Learning together with other School-Age educare teachers becomes a way out of the isolation many feel at their workplace. In interacting with others in the same profession, they form both a collective and individual professional identity. Many of the teachers wrote about passion and engagement for the profession itself and how this passion led them to seek out ways to develop their practice and skills by themselves.

> We are left very much to our devices…and rightly, or wrongly, if you have an interest *(in improving professionally)* then you spend a lot of your own time on it. But I believe, that if you don't, as a School-Age educare teacher and the way our workplace situation is today, then I think you would not develop professionally.

Professional identity can be regarded as being both hybrid and fluid; it is formed by the society in which we live and work as well as by our personal experiences. As our experiences and context changes, so does our identity. The teachers who attended the network meetings found their identity as professionals strengthened through the interaction with others work-

ing in the same field and through learning about, processing and debating over current research in their field. Seeing themselves reflected in this research, and having the opportunity to be part of research as well worked to strengthen their professional identity as School-Age educare teachers.

Agency: Learning as Acting

Just like identity, agency can be "understood as resulting from the interplay of individuals' capacities and environmental conditions" (Priestly, Biesta, & Robinson, 2018). It is not unusual for agency to be considered as an individual trait, however, agency is better understood as a created outcome of the community of practice a group, like the teachers attending the network sessions, create together. Agency resides both within the individual and in the societal context; it exists in the interplay between individual capacity and society. It is intimately linked to both the renegotiation of identity and the development of the skills needed to improve one's professional practice. While empowerment and agency are not the same things, creating and developing agency does work to empower the teachers in their professional practice. Agency can lead to action; to teachers making autonomous decisions about their learning. Teachers, who together have created and nourished agency, are conscious of how to seek out opportunities to improve their professional knowledge and often make deliberate choices in how to reach their professional learning goals (Calvert, 2016). The School-Age educare teachers expressed how their agency often gave them the encouragement to lead and share their knowledge. One teacher expressed how experience and learning from the network meetings created: "A platform for leading development and improvement at my work."

Aware of the fact that in many School-Age educare centers the teachers are not given much time to do this type of professional development work, the teachers take it upon themselves to create spaces for sharing their knowledge. The agency that these teachers express stems from their knowledge and their capacity to act (Priestly, Biesta, & Robinson, 2018). They even see themselves as catalysts in disseminating the knowledge and skills they have gained from the network meetings:

> In some places, you are not given any time at all *(to share and collaborate with others)* and then it comes down to your interest because you want *(to share with others)* and because you are passionate about your job.
>
> *(the network meetings at)* Linnaeus University has become the biggest part of our professional learning.
>
> It is difficult to find professional learning in other places.

Many of the School-Age educare teachers emphasized the value they placed on gaining access to current research in their field. School-Age educare is still an under-researched field and the teachers expressed a high interest in the research that is currently being produced. This often gave them agency to explore ways to disseminate this new information to their colleagues.

> We highlight current research at the network meetings in our school board.
>
> We search for more research through social media and other sources as well.

Conclusion

This research highlights various ways that university-based learning networks can support the professional development needs of teachers in School-Age educare. First and foremost, the network meetings supported the professional development needs of teachers in School-Age educare by providing a community of practice where the teachers create and renegotiate their identity as professionals, and by giving them the agency to work for improvement and change in their field.

To begin with, the School-Age educare teachers perceived the professional learning that the university-supported network meetings provide a highly relevant. This could partly be since there are fewer opportunities for professional learning for them, but more importantly, because the learning is grounded in their own practice at school (Boyle, While, & Boyle, 2004; DuFour, & Eaker, 1998; Nehring, & Fitzsimons, 2011 Pregner, Portman, & Handelsalz, 2018). The fact that the learning provided by the network is tailored specifically to their working reality cannot be emphasized enough. This is especially relevant at a time when the professional identity of teachers in School-Age educare is evolving; in large part due to state educational policies local governance of schools' organization, and the current shortage of teachers in Swedish schools. Networks can thus work to reverse the isolation felt by many teachers during this time of uncertainly and redefinition of their roles as teachers (Lieberman, 2000). Learning together in the community created through the university- supported network meetings promotes the learning of the individual teacher while connecting them to a larger network of School-Age teachers who share similar challenges and teaching realities. By belonging to a community of practice, they engage in the negotiation of a shared repertoire and language. Through this engagement they share and reflect together as they also gain an extended support network through the teachers they meet there (Beck, & Kosnik, 2014; Webster-Wright, 2009; Zehetmeier et al., 2015).

Furthermore, the type of professional learning that is found in the network meetings supports the dual process of negotiating their professional identity and the improvement of skills and knowledge in their workplace. Collaborating with their peers helps them negotiate the tension between their identities as caregivers and teachers, as teachers in School-Age educare, and as being part of a larger team of teachers of the obligatory form of the Swedish school system. As the School-Age educare teachers value the learning with teachers beyond their school districts and perceive it as relevant and important, this further holds the promise of leading to positive change in their daily practice that is sustainable over time (Avalos, 2011; King, 2014; Timperley et al., 2007).

Finally, the connection to research provided in the university-supported network has relevance for the development of both identity and agency. As the idea of social practice includes both tacit knowledge and documents, tools and symbols (Wegner, 1998), findings from research can be also seen as one of the tools that inform social practice. The School-Age educare teachers expressed, that partaking in current educational research, it helped inform their sense of efficacy and agency. Thus the engagement with, both passively and actively, research has the potential to assist in deepening the understanding of their professional practice. The process can add to their pedagogical knowledge and even provide avenues for solutions to inquiries. The university- supported network meetings further provided the participants an op-

portunity to be an active part of the research that was being conducted at the university. The invitation to participate in current research can be interpreted as" being treated as a professional, with one's experiences and perspectives valued, contributes to teachers' efficacy, agency, commitment, and engagement in the work of the network and the work of teaching; being treated as a professional may also help teachers construct an identity that is more rewarding and a better fit with how they see themselves (Niaz, 2007, p. 608)."

Discussion

When the Swedish National Agency for Education designated a chapter for the school-age educare program in the 2011 national curriculum, many School-Age educare teachers cheered as they had long advocated for this kind of legitimacy of their work. The interpretation of a curriculum for students in School-Age educare quickly became a topic of debate for both educators and researchers. It is necessary to understand how teachers process and decode curriculum, as this becomes a vital part of the enactment of teaching practices in schools. Professional learning is an important component in supporting teachers' work in the interpretation and implementation of the curriculum in their daily practice. Opportunities for collaborative professional learning that supports teachers' learning across school districts, and collaboration with universities, been proven beneficial in supporting the implementation of new policies and practices (Campbell, 2017, Darling-Hammond et al., 2005). This study found that the teachers who attended the university- supported network felt the support of the extended community of learning while gaining a greater sense of agency by being involved with research- both directly and indirectly- through their participation in the network meetings. This growing agency strengthened their ability to make professional decisions and to act despite outside influences. The potential for creating spaces for teacher professional learning through the support of university-supported network warrants further discussion and investigation and a larger study would be beneficial in understanding how to better support the professional profile and status of School-Age educare teachers.

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Appendix 1

Questions for the brainstorming session

- What do you feel that you get out of attending the network sessions; how do these sessions contribute to building your professional knowledge?
- Is there a space or time where you can share what you learned here with others in your workplace?
- How involved is your principal in professional learning?
- How do you talk about current research at your school-age educare?

Appendix 2

1. Can you please describe the different kinds of professional learning that you have taken over the years?
2. What kind of new knowledge, or skills, do you feel is important for you in your work?

STEM Learning Ecosystems: Building from Theory Toward a Common Evidence Base

Patricia J. Allen, Zoe Brown, Gil G. Noam

Abstract: An innovative system-building initiative known as the STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice (SLECoP) is transforming U.S. STEM education through cross-sector partnerships between schools, afterschool and summer programs, libraries, museums, and businesses, among others. Although logic models exist to describe how SLEs can make positive contributions toward youth STEM learning in theory, it is unknown how individual SLEs are motivated or equipped to collect the evidence needed to demonstrate their value or abilities to solve the problems they were formed to address. The present study describes the results of a 34-item qualitative survey—completed by leaders of 37 SLEs from four U.S. regions—designed to understand where SLEs are in their evaluation planning, implementing, and capacity-building processes. We found that most SLEs were championed by the extended education sector, and all were highly motivated to conduct evaluation and assessment. Most communities reported a willingness to create a shared vision around data collection, which will help researchers and practitioners track, understand, and improve STEM quality and outcomes in and out of school.

Keywords: STEM Learning Ecosystems, common measures, evaluation, assessment,

STEM Learning Ecosystems: Building from Theory Toward a Common Evidence Base

In everyday life, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—the subjects collectively known as STEM—capture our sense of wonder. Excitement for STEM sweeps the media during major astronomical events like an eclipse or major breakthroughs like 3-D printed human organs. Yet, inspiring that sense of excitement about STEM among young people in formal educational settings—with the hopes of developing fluency in STEM, building STEM skills, and making STEM majors and careers attractive—is a significant challenge in most countries (OECD, 2010, 2019).

International research has consistently found declining attitudes toward STEM between childhood and adolescence (Potvin & Hasni, 2014a), with fewer students electing to pursue university majors and careers in STEM areas over time (National Science Foundation, 2010). In the U.S., as well as many other industrialized countries, there are also significant

concerns about adolescent mathematics and science literacy and performance, with many students unable to achieve a baseline level of proficiency (OECD, 2019). STEM interest, motivation, and performance are connected to college and career readiness, and evidence from many countries suggests that these outcomes are diminished, at least in part, by a "negative experience of STEM at school" (Joyce & Dzoga, 2012). An international review of STEM outcomes concluded that "…the perception that students have of science might in fact be weakened or held back by the perception they have of 'school science'..." (Potvin & Hasni, 2014b, p. 99). These concerns have led to a more holistic approach to STEM education, which can be seen through the formation of systems, including the STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice (SLECoP). The SLECoP is changing the belief that STEM learning belongs to one institution by creating interconnected systems to provide diverse STEM learning opportunities (Traphagen & Traill, 2014). However, shared measures and an evidence base is necessary to show the value of such systems to solve the problems they were formed to address (Grack Nelson, Goeke, Auster, Peterman, & Lussenhop, 2019).

The present study examines how the SLECoP embeds evaluation and assessment approaches into its strategies and explores the role that the extended education sector plays in this effort. We begin with a brief review of extended STEM education in the U.S. and the SLECoP. After presenting our research questions and methodology, we summarize key results from a national survey designed to understand where SLEs are in their evaluative planning, implementing, and capacity-building processes. Our conclusions focus on how the extended education sector can be a driving force in the creation of a common evidence base that can track, understand, and improve STEM quality and youth outcomes.

Extended Education and STEM Learning Ecosystems

The importance of educational opportunities occurring outside of the formal school day has increased dramatically in the U.S. over the last decade due to shifting priorities and policies (Afterschool Alliance, 2015). These extended education contexts—which are referred to in the U.S. as out-of-school time (OST) programs—include extracurricular activities at all-day schools, afterschool activities, youth clubs, museum and library programs, and so on. OST STEM learning experiences are attended voluntarily and allow hands-on engagement with a variety of STEM activities in a fun way that sparks curiosity and excitement (Afterschool Alliance, 2015). Considering the different international approaches to extended education, STEM-focused OST programs in the U.S. are characterized by a "hybrid approach" that falls somewhere between free play—reminiscent of programs in countries like Finland and Sweden where children often direct their own leisure time activities in afterschool settings under the supervision of adults—and academic "cram schools"—similar to structured and rigorous programs found in Japan, Taiwan, and Korea that focus on academic achievement to reinforce learning from the traditional school day (Noam & Triggs, 2019).

Providing quality opportunities to explore STEM content outside of formal school settings removes the academic pressure and fear of failure that can contribute to STEM disengagement, even among bright and motivated students (Potvin & Hasni, 2014a). It also supports positive youth development—including fostering quality relationships with peers and adults among other social skills—by offering a safe place for children to learn and play

when their primary caregivers are at work or otherwise unavailable (Noam & Triggs, 2019). There is growing evidence that participation in high-quality, STEM-focused OST programs can positively change youth attitudes related to STEM engagement, identity, career interest, and career knowledge (Allen et al., 2019; Chittum, Jones, Akalin, & Schram, 2017; Dabney et al., 2012; Sahin, Ayar, & Adiguzel, 2013; Wulf et al., 2010; Young, Ortiz, & Young, 2017).

Education researchers and practitioners are now searching for ways to expand the availability of high-quality OST STEM programming to be more academically supportive without mirroring the school day or "cram schools." The STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice (SLECoP) Initiative, founded in 2015 by the STEM Funder's Network, aims to meet this need for high-quality, inspiring STEM learning opportunities by developing meaningful cross-sector partnerships (STEM Learning Ecosystems, 2020). The SLECoP engages pre-K–12 schools and school districts, afterschool and summer programs, colleges and universities, libraries, museums, businesses, and home environments in cities, states, and regions across the U.S. (Traill & Traphagen, 2015). The initiative's broad aim is to deepen STEM learning among children and youth, build capacity among educators, provide professional development and assessment tools, and create communities of practice to share experiences and promote best practices (STEM Learning Ecosystems, 2020). A recent case study described how implementation of the SLECoP's strategies has strengthened partnerships between the extended education sector (e.g., OST programs) and many other community sectors to create a "surround sound of STEM" that provides more educational and workforce opportunities and pathways into STEM (Allen, Lewis-Warner, & Noam, 2020).

The logic behind this collaborative approach is that a successful and sustainable STEM learning ecosystem (SLE) will cultivate high levels of interest and motivation that can play a significant role in building STEM skills and career aspirations (Maltese & Tai, 2011, Traphagen & Traill, 2015). STEM careers are linked to social and economic mobility of individuals, families, and communities, and having a skilled STEM workforce supports international global competitiveness (National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, and Institute of Medicine, 2007). For this reason and others, participation in the SLECoP was recently identified as a key priority in the U.S. government's five-year federal STEM strategic plan (National Science & Technology Council, 2018). There are now 89 SLEs across 35 U.S. states, and new SLEs are beginning to launch internationally (i.e., Canada, Israel, Kenya, and Mexico). As the initiative scales, there is a need for focused research and evaluation of SLECoP efforts to understand what strategies are changing, and ideally improving, youth outcomes in STEM.

Study Aims and Hypotheses

Using a qualitative survey, our first study aim was to understand whether SLE leaders are implementing evaluation and assessment in a purposeful, systematic way. Toward this goal, we mapped the assessment landscape (i.e., the methods, types, and systems of data collection) to characterize evaluation efforts across communities. Our second study aim was to explore SLE leaders' motivations for evaluation and assessment—to understand if communities were being driven by top-down requirement or bottom-up choice—and to identify

any obstacles related to evaluation and assessment. Our third study aim was to discover how SLEs prioritized the use of assessments that are common across communities (i.e., a national vision) compared with the use of assessments that address specific needs of their local community (i.e., a local vision). The survey culminated with this question because a common vision around data is an essential ingredient for the success of complex collective impact initiatives like the SLECoP: "To truly evaluate their effectiveness, collective impact leaders need to see the bigger picture…rather than attempting to isolate the effects and impact of a single intervention, collective impact partners should assess the progress and impact of the changemaking process as a whole…" (Parkhurst & Preskill, 2014, p. 17).

Given that the SLE leaders had shared experiences and received common guidance as part of the SLECoP, we hypothesized that they would report similarly high levels of interest and motivation in evaluation and assessment but have different opportunities due to different local conditions. We also expected that SLEs would be at different stages of implementation; as SLEs mature, they will have stronger partnerships, resources, and funding to support evaluation and assessment efforts in their community. Lastly, we predicted that most SLEs would be willing to adopt common assessments to measure the SLECoP's collective impact—and that some may already be using shared measures—but that some questions and issues are locally-based. We planned to examine the variety of reasons for and against common measures based on local conditions.

Method

This section describes the participants, measures, procedure, and data analyses used to examine evaluation and assessment strategies among SLE leaders from all 37 communities that joined Cohort 1 of the SLECoP, which began in 2015.

Participants

Most SLE leaders (65.7%) reported being directors/executive directors of extended education programs (e.g., city's zoo or aquarium), networks (e.g., state afterschool system-builder), or councils (e.g., technology-focused advisory board). The sample also represented responses from CEOs/vice presidents/presidents at STEM-expert institutions such as science centers (10.5%), program managers/coordinators of extended education programs (13.16%), an educational consultant (2.63%), a senior research scientist (2.63%), an educational policy advisor (2.63%), and a superintendent of a K-12 school district (2.63%).

SLEs represented a great variety of regional economies and education systems with 19 states, plus Washington, D.C., from all four U.S. regions as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau: Northeast (29.7%), including Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island; Midwest (18.9%), including Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio, and Indiana; South (18.9%), including Florida, Maryland, Oklahoma, Washington, D.C., Texas; and West (24.3%), including Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico, and Oregon. Additionally, Cohort 1 SLEs represented cities of all sizes ranging from small (e.g., Augusta, ME and Camarillo, CA), to mid-size (e.g., Providence, RI and Salem, OR), to large (e.g.,

Chicago, IL and New York City, NY) as defined by National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) classifications and criteria.

Measures

A 34-item survey was designed to understand where SLEs are in their evaluation planning, implementing, and capacity-building processes. Questions included a mixture of qualitative open-ended questions ("What do you hope to learn by using data collection tools in your ecosystem?"), discrete categorical questions (e.g., a question about an evaluation-related action or resource followed by the response options "No," "No, but considering," or "Yes"), and quantifiable Likert-type items (e.g., rating the usefulness of various data collection tools on a scale of 1-4, ranging from "Not at All Useful" to "Very Useful").

To understand the progress SLEs have made with their evaluation plans, SLE leaders were asked about actions that could advance their evaluation and assessment-related objectives ("Has your ecosystem hired an evaluator to help you measure STEM program quality or student outcomes?").

To understand resources that SLEs have at their disposal, SLE leaders were asked about data collection tools and systems potentially in use in their communities ("Please tell us the names of the data collection tool(s) you are CURRENTLY using [within the last 2 years] to evaluate STEM learning in your community.").

To understand drivers and hinderers of evaluation and assessment, SLE leaders were asked questions related to their motivations ("What are your ecosystem's goals for evaluation and assessment?"), expectations ("What do you hope to learn by using data collection tools in your ecosystem?), and obstacles ("Are there any challenges to evaluation or assessment in your community?").

To understand the disposition of SLEs to build a common evidence base for the SLECoP, leaders were asked about their communities' willingness to adopt a shared vision of evaluation and assessment ("How willing do you think your partners would be to use data collection tools that are common across ecosystem [to look at ecosystem development, program effects, and youth impacts]?").

Procedures

Survey items were drafted and revised in consultation with the Teaching Institute for Excellence in STEM (TIES), the educational consulting organization that provides leadership and technical assistance for the SLECoP. The leaders of each SLE were contacted by email and asked to voluntarily complete a survey that asks questions about evaluation and assessment in their SLE. Survey responses were collected over an eight-week period, and all SLE leaders contacted answered the survey. There were two communities where two responses were received from co-leaders of the SLE. The survey was not designed to probe attitudes or content knowledge that would require psychometric properties or normative comparisons. Instead, we designed a broad survey of the plans, practices, and procedures of SLEs to advance their evaluation and assessment agendas.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data from Likert questions were analyzed using SPSS (version 24) to determine descriptive statistics among variables. Qualitative data from open-ended responses were analyzed thematically using a recursive six-phase process (Braun, Clarke, & Rance, 2015): (1) becoming familiar with the data; (2) assigning preliminary codes; (3) searching for patterns or themes; (4) reviewing themes; (5) defining and naming themes; (6) writing up the theme.

All study procedures were reviewed and approved by the institutional review board at our home institution.

Results

Our key findings are organized around the following questions: 1) How intentional and systematic are SLE evaluation practices?; 2) What are the motivations and challenges around SLE evaluation and assessment?; and 3) Are SLEs willing to adopt a shared vision around evaluation and assessment?

Question 1: How intentional and systematic are SLE evaluation practices?

We found high levels of interest and intention among SLE leaders to pursue evaluation and assessment within and across SLEs. One indication was the 100% response rate (n=37 SLEs) to this survey about evaluation and assessment, but the context shared by SLE leadership explicitly linked evaluation and assessment with the achievement of their communities' goals. Leaders frequently reported the goal of understanding the effectiveness of different educational models and strategies within SLEs. As a northeastern school superintendent said: "As we continue to develop innovative STEM learning models that emphasize hands-on, mind-on 'project-based' learning to foster curiosity, questioning, creativity and innovation, meaningful assessments of and for learning are vital." Many SLEs were also interested in data collection to support diversity, inclusion, and equity in STEM, especially in terms of youth awareness of college and career pathways. A midwestern executive director of an OST program reported the need to use data to understand "…how to best build out STEM learning pathways in a city with diverse community assets, needs and supports." Others also expressed the importance of adopting evidence-based practices as part of their strategy, as a northeastern executive director of an OST program shared: "The degree to which we can collectively embrace evidence-based practice is dependent upon the strength of our evaluation system."

The evidence showed that there were SLEs that were collecting data in a purposeful, systematic manner, however it was clear that some SLEs were more advanced in terms of implementation than others based on specific actions reported (e.g., hiring an evaluator, partnering with other sectors to conduct evaluations, using data collection tools, adopting a data management system).

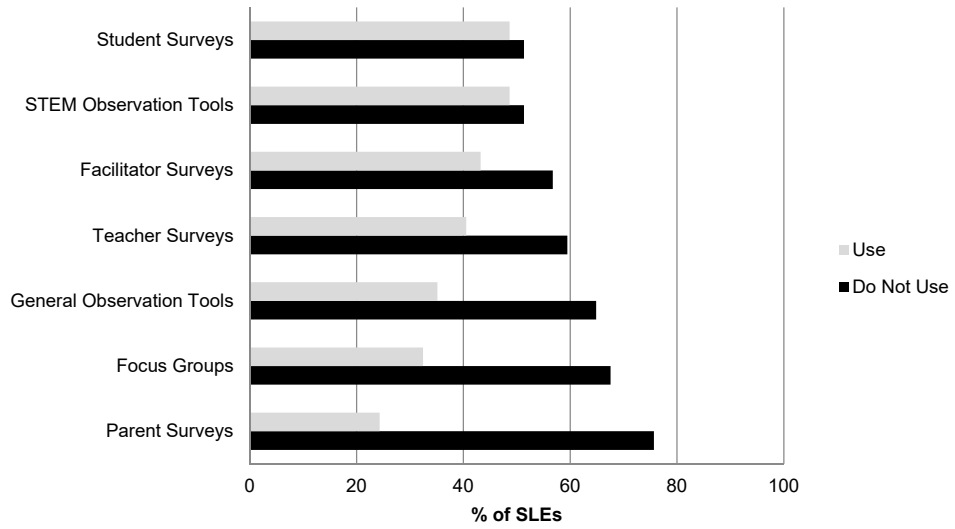
Table 2. List of Most to Least Commonly Used Assessments by Type as Reported by STEM Learning Ecosystem Leadership

General Observation	STEM Observation	Student Survey	Teacher Survey	Facilitator Survey	Parent Survey	Other
Weikart Center Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA)	PEAR Dimensions of Success (DoS)	PEAR Common Instrument Suite-Student Survey	Teaching Rubrics (e.g., Project-Based Learning, PBL/Projected Based Teaching Rubric, State Rubrics)	PEAR Common Instrument Suite-Educator Survey	Interviews of families (e.g., to find out about learning from OST STEM resources)	Student achievement data/testing (e.g., state mandated testing)
Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework	Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) for STEM	Holistic Student Assessment	ExpandED Schools Educator Survey—Collaboration among Educators	ExpandED Schools- Educator Survey—Collaboration among Educators	Homegrown/local	Network analysis
Assessment of Program Practices Tool (APT)	Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Framework	National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)	Friday Institute Teacher Efficacy and Attitudes toward STEM Survey (T-STEM)	Easy CBM (Benchmarking and Progress Monitoring System) - Fluency and Comprehension		Group and individual interview (e.g., focus groups)
University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center Observation Tool	University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center Observation Tool	Student Attitudes toward STEM Surveys (S-STEM): MISO/ North Carolina State/Friday Institute	Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes-Teacher Version (SAYO-T)	Homegrown/local		Landscape Survey—Needs and Wants of STEM Community
Onsite visits by a Program Evaluator	Homegrown/local	Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes Youth Survey (SAYO Y) State-wide knowledge-based assessments (e.g., M-STEP in Michigan)	Science Teaching Efficacy Belief Instrument (STEBI) - STELAR - EDC			District preparedness surveys (e.g., Carnegie Science Center STEM Pathways Assessment tool
Policy Studies Association, Inc. (PSA) OST Observation Instrument		STEM Readiness Self-Assessment	Federal Annual Performance Report - Teacher Survey			Pre-screen check-lists
The Danielson Group Observation Template (modified)		University of Cincinnati Evaluation Services Center - Student STEM Survey	Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) Assessment			
Homegrown/ local		Homegrown/ local	Homegrown/ Local			

We found that about 43% of SLE leaders reported they had hired a formal evaluator to coordinate and collect data on STEM program quality or student outcomes, with another 35% of SLE leaders considering evaluator options (see Table 2). Additionally, about 37% of SLE leaders reported a partnership with their local school districts to conduct evaluations of STEM learning, with about 40% actively considering this possibility. Cross-sector partnerships are another action that more advanced SLEs take to advance evaluation and assessment. A midwestern STEM coordinator noted: "We're still in the early stages of figuring out how we will work with several school districts around the state. Certainly, evaluation will be an element of those relationships, but it's too early to define what exactly those practices will be." As an example of an SLE in advanced stages of planning, a midwestern program manager offered: "All [OST] programs include evaluation elements and school partners are involved in gathering and reviewing STEM learning data, to continually strengthen and increase the impact of STEM programs."

We next mapped the assessment landscape to find out how many SLEs were collecting data from K-12 schools, OST programs, or other sectors, and if they had used observation tools, self-report survey tools, and other data collection tools within the last two years. Approximately 50% (n = 18 SLEs) reported using at least one kind of data collection tool, but the percentage of SLEs using each type of tool varied from about 24% to 48% (see Figure 1). STEM-focused program quality observation tools (48.6% of SLEs) and student self-report surveys (48.6% of SLEs) were two of the most commonly used tools across the SLEs, while parent surveys, general non-STEM observation tools, and focus groups/interviews were the least common (see Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percent of STEM Learning Ecosystems using Data Collection Tools[1]



1 The percentage of different types of data collection tools that are used and not used by ecosystems. Data are organized from most frequently used tool to least frequently used tool.

SLE leaders named more than 40 unique measures that were being used to assess either STEM program quality, student attitudes, or content knowledge. Additionally, about 40% of SLEs reported creating their own assessment tools (Table 2). The quality of the measures varied greatly; some demonstrated strong psychometric properties and were published in peer-reviewed journals, while others were developed for local evaluation purposes but were not psychometrically tested. Examples of higher-quality (vetted) observation tools include the Assessment of Afterschool Program Practices Tool (APT) (Tracy, Surr, & Richer, 2012) and the Dimensions of Success (Shah, Wylie, Gitomer, & Noam, 2018), which focus on general and STEM-specific aspects of OST quality, respectively. Examples of higher-quality (vetted) student self-report surveys that assess STEM-related attitudes include the Common Instrument Suite for Students (CIS-S) survey (Allen et al., 2019; Sneider & Noam, 2019) and the Student Attitudes toward STEM (S-STEM) survey (Unfried, Faber, Stanhope, & Wiebe, 2015). In addition to STEM attitudes, there was interest among SLEs to capture social and emotional attitudes and skills using surveys such as the Holistic Student Assessment (HSA) survey (Malti, Beelmann, Noam, & Sommer, 2018; Noam, Malti, & Guhn, 2012) and the Survey of Academic and Youth Outcomes-Youth Version (SAYO-Y) survey (Stavsky, 2015).

Table 1. Actions Taken or Considered by STEM Learning Ecosystem Leadership to Reach Evaluation and Assessment Goals

Action	No, and not considered	No, but considering	Yes
Hired an evaluator	8 (21.62%)	13 (35.14%)	16 (43.24%)
Partnered with school district(s)	8 (21.62%)	15 (40.54%)	14 (37.84%)
Developed local assessment tools	10 (27.02%)	11 (29.73%)	16 (43.24%)
Adopted a data management system	13 (35.14%)	20 (54.10%)	4 (10.81%)

When asked how useful each category of data collection tool was for informing decisions, leaders were unanimous in their beliefs that all data collection tools were useful (when combining ratings for "Somewhat Useful" and "Very Useful"). STEM-focused program quality observation tools were rated the most useful and one of the most commonly used data collection tools across SLEs (see Figure 2). When asked to elaborate on usefulness, four practices emerged: 1) ensuring STEM learning opportunities and resources were equitably distributed to reach and support for all youth; 2) measuring progress made to achieve the SLEs' specific goals around improving STEM learning outcomes for youth; 3) identifying underperforming programs so that SLE collaborators can share support, resources, and strategies; and 4) estimating the long-term impact of SLE partnerships on students' college and career readiness.

Lastly, we asked about the adoption of data management systems and found that only about one in ten SLEs (10.8%) reported a system dedicated to collecting SLE data. SLEs that reported having an existing data management system used City Span, The Connectory, or CAYEN Afterschool. SLEs that did not have a data management system but were ex-

ploring options reported interest in Pivotal Tracker, Qualtrics, and Salesforce, in addition to those previously mentioned. Although a majority of SLEs are just beginning to think about how to collect, store, and track data, several ecosystems noted that this was "not an if but when" scenario. A western policy advisor noted: "We are working on statewide tracking and monitoring of STEM outcomes and may seek additional investments. Our Legislature has funded a statewide longitudinal database project with visualizations and we will likely utilize that when complete." Among the few that reported having an established system, there was the sentiment that the system was "…not used to its full potential" and that there was not a single format for all settings and sectors within the SLE.

Question 2: What are the motivations and challenges around SLE evaluation and assessment?

When SLE leaders were asked about their motivations to develop an evaluation and assessment strategy, two common themes emerged: 1) Demonstrate value to stakeholders and prospective partners to secure increased funding, capacity, cross-sector partnerships, and improve educational strategies; 2) Inform continuous improvement and provide program- and system-level decision-makers with realistic ideas for effective interventions or gradual modifications to programs, curricula, standards to improve youth STEM-related outcomes.

The remaining motivations were: 3) Demonstrate impact and assess the effectiveness of interventions or modifications to programs, curricula, standards as well as the effectiveness of partnerships cultivated through the ecosystem. Leaders suggested that the demonstration of impact was important on both a program/sector-level and a SLE/regional-level. A southern K-12 STEM education director specified: "We would like to measure quality of programs, shifts in beliefs about STEM careers and STEM learning, and quantitative measures such as numbers of students impacted and increases in assessment scores." At the regional-level, an executive director of a STEM-focused council in a southern SLE indicated that they wanted to "…better understand the larger impacts created by the partnerships cultivated through our ecosystem…[and also] to learn how our training impacts [community service organizations'] efforts in their school and in the community." 4) Ensure high-quality student learning experiences (e.g., strong minds-on activities, exposure to STEM career options, etc.). An executive director of an OST program leading a New England SLE noted: "We have been assessing the quality of the programs using both the PQA and the DoS... We also use the SAYO T and Y to assess the practices that undergird next generation science standards." 5) Improve educator effectiveness by using data from educators and students to target professional development and resources for teachers and OST facilitators on local as and regional levels. For instance, a western executive director of an OST program is motivated "…to determine if STEM Ecosystems move the dial on improving teacher practice and students' achievement." 6) Improve access to STEM learning opportunities by increasing the number of cross-sector partnerships and STEM learning opportunities. A scientist leading a northeastern SLE performed evaluations "To characterize the ways in which the ecosystem uses partners, resources, and STEM Guides (brokers) to connect youth to out-of-school STEM opportunities."

When asked about barriers to the implementation of SLE evaluation and assessment strategies, several themes emerged. One commonly reported challenge was a lack of infrastructure, with many SLE leaders citing a need for a common, centralized data management

system to collect, store, analyze, and report data findings. Most SLE leaders were unsure or had not yet thought about what kind of infrastructure was needed because they were not yet fully established. According to a midwestern STEM coordinator: "…we're very early in figuring out what our evaluation processes will be and how the data will be collected and filed."

Another related challenge included limited resources (i.e., time and money). Many SLE leaders felt additional resources were necessary to achieve their evaluation and assessment goals. A western executive director of a museum noted that they needed "dedicated staff and resources to ensure success" whereas a northeastern director of an OST intermediary reported that "…it takes a significant amount of time and effort to achieve goals; this can obstruct the formation of partnerships and development of relationships between programs and schools." Several leaders also cited a need for affordable assessment tools that can be used from year to year that are shared across the SLEs and better access to student data (both in school and outside of school). A midwestern senior program director noted that "securing funding is difficult in and of itself..." and another had a related thought that: "Systems such as databases, portals, and dashboards are expensive to create, and even more expensive to maintain; many funders are more interested in supporting programs made directly available to students as opposed to organizational capacities." When asked what would better enable their community to advance evaluation and assessment of STEM learning, a western director of education for a science museum itemized the following solutions: "1. A pre-existing infrastructure that works for our community for data collection and sharing…2. Dedicated staff and resources to ensure success."

Another common barrier was obstacles within formal educational systems. For example, in school settings, performance-based measures can overshadow other types of assessments. An executive program director of a northeastern SLE lamented: "Within the K-12 education system, high stakes testing has soured many discussions related to assessment and evaluation…conversations can very quickly disintegrate into a debate over state assessment linked to school performance." There are also limitations with schools and programs sharing student-level data due to existing privacy and confidentiality policies. A western STEM director acknowledged that: "Data privacy issues are pervasive and recent policy makes it harder to collect student level data from districts." Challenges with data sharing/privacy, lack of a clear/shared vision for evaluation and assessment, as well as limited resources and competition for funding reduce the strength of partnerships within ecosystems. A northeastern executive director cautioned that SLEs "…need to be mindful of the time and administrative burden that we ask of teachers and program staff to invest in surveying youth…That can be an obstruction to developing partnerships/relationships between programs and schools."

Lastly, leaders indicated that there are many different tools currently in use for some organizations, which makes it difficult to compare across organizations. There is a general feeling that there is a need for shared metrics and assessment tools to perform evaluations well. For instance, a northeastern program director indicated that there was "no common data system, no commonly defined goals or metrics for STEM learning." A western director of STEM initiatives noted: "Useful assessment and evaluation always require…carefully selected instruments upon which the various constituencies agree and approve, and the development of a common language/purpose of assessment."

Question 3. Are SLEs willing to adopt a shared vision around evaluation and assessment?

The data indicate that SLEs favor a shared vision around measurement. In response to the question "How willing do you think your partners would be to use data collection tools that are common across ecosystems (to look at ecosystem development, program effects, and youth impact)?" the majority of SLE leaders (about 89%) reported that their partners would be somewhat willing (n = 21 SLEs) or very willing (n = 12 SLEs) to share data collection tools. Table 3 provides brief summaries of the common reasons for why SLE leaders believe that their partners would be willing or unwilling to use shared measures across the SLECoP. For those willing to use shared measures, the most common reasons are wanting standardized measures that can communicate between SLEs and to funders and a shared metric that will cultivate cross-sector and regional partnerships to support STEM pathways and opportunities for youth.

The data revealed a few concerns related to a shared vision among a minority of SLEs, with about 11% of SLEs reporting that their partners would be somewhat unwilling (n = 3 SLEs) or very unwilling (n = 1 SLE) to use the same tools that are used by others across the SLECoP. The most common explanations for a hesitation to adopt shared measures relate to a lack of resources, difficulty obtaining alignment among schools/programs, commitment to current tools already in use, and uncertainty about the reliability or validity of available tools (Table 3).

Table 3. Partners' Willingness to Use Data Collection Tools that are Common Across STEM Learning Ecosystems

Rating	Reasons for Willingness or Unwillingness
Very Willing	• Partners have a desire to standardize evaluation tools to better collect data and share metrics with stakeholders. • Some funders have pre-existing research requirements that may interfere with introducing a new tool.
Somewhat Willing	• Partners have a strong commitment to implementing common data collection tools. • Many partners are eager and excited to be able to track and measure progress. • Ecosystems have a vision and desire to cultivate cross-sector and regional partnerships to support youth pathways and generate opportunities for growth
Somewhat Unwilling	• There are concerns about the time and energy it takes to attain alignment across all schools. • The quality and type of tools would have to be better than the established suite of tools already being used by some ecosystems.
Very Unwilling	• Ecosystems feel it is challenging to convince people who are resistant to change to get on board. • Limited resources and a lack of information about return on investment impedes implementation

Although most leaders saw value in creating a shared vision around evaluation and assessment, they also favored collecting data that are specific to local conditions to ensure that the needs of the local community are met. For example, a southern director of a STEM alliance noted: "The Network wants to ensure that we have easily accessible and actionable data for the [SLE] that will empower the Network and its partners to meet the needs of the commu-

nity." A southern executive director of a STEM council pointed to the agenda of local foundations: "Right now most of our funders are not pushing this sort of [common] evaluation as much as what they get out of things related to their individual organization. This is however something we are internally interested in doing." The topic of a shared vision around evaluation and assessment is actively under consideration in SLEs, as one midwestern executive director of a STEM alliance shared: "Currently, the primary STEM organizations utilized a variety of evaluation tools. There have been conversations around common language for STEM learning…"

Discussion

While the formation of STEM learning ecologies began in the U.S., the SLECoP has now grown into an international movement with the recognition that the challenges to STEM are a global concern that communities must work together to solve. The approach goes beyond the boundaries of formal school settings to include afterschool and summer programs, libraries, museums, businesses, and homes, among other sectors. The present study showed that evaluation and assessment is being built into SLE strategies to support their growth, effectiveness, and sustainability, but as expected, SLEs are in different phases of their planning and have different capacities. Several SLEs with sophisticated implementation strategies have significant potential to inform the field about national trends in STEM teaching and learning. Other SLEs early in their evaluation planning show promise but need additional support from the research and evaluation communities to build infrastructure and capacity to support data collection. Importantly, a positive culture around evaluation and assessment is developing across the SLECoP; SLEs are highly motivated to collect data and most endorse a shared vision around evaluation and assessment.

There were high levels of interest and motivation among ecosystem leaders to tackle the challenge of evaluation and assessment, as evidenced by the 100% response rate and in-depth answers to open-ended questions. Some primary motivators include: demonstrating value of programming to stakeholders; using data to guide the process of implementing system- and program-level changes, assessing program impact on student outcomes; ensuring quality of student learning experiences; using data to improve teaching effectiveness; and increasing quality STEM learning opportunities. The SLE leaders' motivations translated into action, with about half of SLEs having made a commitment to data collection and actively collecting data from K-12 or OST STEM learning environments. The group of SLEs that are not yet ready to collect data still indicated that evaluation and assessment are important and useful.

Additionally, our mapping of data collection tools shows that the OST field has gone beyond the collection of simple demographic data. About half of SLEs were collecting data on STEM program quality and outcomes—with most self-report surveys focused on understanding youth STEM interest, motivation, and attitudes. There was less interest in collecting data from other informants, including educators and parents, although SLEs reported parent surveys as most useful, suggesting that interest in family engagement is rising. There was also little interest in performance measures that assess content knowledge and STEM skills. Sev-

eral SLE leaders noted negative perceptions of standardized assessments in their communities because there is a belief that overassessment is a problem in formal school settings.

Although data management platforms are becoming less expensive and more user-friendly, we found that only about 10% of SLEs are using a data management system. One way to create a common data management system across the SLECoP is to choose some measures that make it possible to have shared outcomes while allowing some customization to address questions specific to local contexts. While common measures and systems may help advance the evaluation and assessment goals the SLECoP, there is a risk for strong opposition to using common measures in favor of using measures in common. A "measures in common" approach would rely on more complicated and less precise secondary analysis strategies (e.g., meta-analysis) that require more time and statistical expertise to analyze and interpret. If the goal is to have a management tool where stakeholders can see how the whole initiative performing, then there is a need for some common instrumentation or a hybrid model. This means SLEs can only ask a limited set of questions of youth, as there is only so much time and space on a survey; therefore, a common database management system would need to include short versions of different measures so that those interested in different assessments can choose more than one.

This leads to the pivotal question of whether SLE leaders believe their partners would be willing to create a shared vision around data collection. Consistent with our hypothesis, most respondents—about 90%—reported that they believed their partners would be willing to use common data collection tools. Those reporting their SLE was in favor of a shared vision cited the need for standardized measures that can track progress and facilitate communication and learning among educational stakeholders. The 10% of SLE leaders that were hesitant about their partners' willingness to adopt shared tools and evaluation plans cited a lack of resources, resistance to changing measures already in use, difficulty obtaining alignment among schools and programs, and uncertainty about the reliability or validity of available tools. It will be important to address existing concerns so that all rally around a shared vision.

When considering SLEs' implementation approaches we found that some communities had more capacity and experience than others. The data point to three distinct clusters: 1) an advanced level—exemplified by a northeastern SLE that has an evaluator, a clear evaluation plan, established data collection tools and management system, and has performed evaluations across sectors (in school and outside of school) for several years prior to joining the SLECoP; 2) an intermediate level—exemplified by a midwestern SLE that has defined goals and evaluation plans, a collaboration with a research institute, has piloted data collection tools, and has started small scale evaluations within the last year; and 3) a beginner group—exemplified by a southern SLE that has started the early stages of planning/goal setting around evaluation and assessment, but has not used data collection tools, an evaluator, or a data system.

SLEs reported that the most common barriers to progress in this area is a lack of infrastructure and funding to support the expenses associated with evaluation and assessment. Building a common data management system that is readily available to SLEs could improve capacity to collect data from many young people and reduce expense. There would still be a need for interpretation by independent evaluation or research experts, who tend to

charge premium rates, but the costs would be substantially lower. However, SLEs need to search for opportunities to finance this critical infrastructure.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The present study of the U.S. SLECoP demonstrates the significant interest and investment of SLEs in evaluation and assessment. The extended education/OST sector will be important to consider as the growth of STEM learning opportunities outside of schools has become a phenomenon across the world. The present results suggest that the OST sector can become a champion of data collection within many of the SLEs, especially as many SLEs are led by organizations representing the OST sector and much of the data being collected is from OST programs.

There are also international implications for a shared vision around evaluation and assessment. The SLECoP now includes four international ecosystems—in Canada, Israel, Kenya, and Mexico—and the initiative is rapidly scaling. While we expect to find challenges very similar to those we described here, one important difference is that the American education system is localized. Every state has different educational standards, different data privacy/confidentiality requirements, different assessments, and different data systems, which may make evaluation more challenging in the U.S. relative to other countries that have national data collection systems.

The willingness of most SLEs in the U.S. to use common measures represents a major opportunity for the SLECoP initiative to build rich international datasets, to examine the strength of interventions and effects, and to track individual and collective progress (i.e., for children and ecosystems). If connected to the research community, this could advance the STEM education fields' understanding of effective models and approaches. The first step toward improving readiness and capacity for data collection will be to identify funding opportunities to provide needed infrastructure, including a centralized online data management system desired by SLE leadership. Time is of the essence to avoid fragmentation in approach as SLEs begin to seriously consider selecting an existing system or developing their own. A shared vision needs to maintain flexibility to balance local goals and metrics with national/international goals and metrics. One solution may be to support SLEs in conducting in-depth case studies at the local level to preserve local context and innovation, in addition to implementing shared measures for a few quantifiable outcomes that are prioritized by SLEs. Having different grain sizes of analysis will simultaneously help build the evidence base for the SLECoP and generate new hypotheses to improve and innovate STEM teaching and learning.

Acknowledgments

The authors thank the STEM Next Opportunity Fund for funding this research. We also want to express our sincere thanks to the Teaching Institute for Excellence in STEM (TIES) for its leadership in STEM education and for the opportunity to conduct research on the STEM Learning Ecosystem Community of Practice (SLECoP).

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The Professional Life of Leisure Pedagogues at Austrian All-Day Schools

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Keywords: extended education, Austrian all-day schools, leisure pedagogues, training

Introduction

Research on all-day schools in Austria is rather scarce (National Education Report, 2018). The first pilot projects of open all-day schools in Austria took place during the late 80s and early 90s and they each developed differently. Although schools were based on the same legal regulations, all-day schools developed in varied manners due to organizational forms, staff situations and school structures (Hofmeister, 2012).

The demand and necessity of all-day schools and the increasing acceptance in society has led to an expansion of all-day schools in Austria. There are many pedagogical arguments for all-day schools, yet controversial discussions still exist. The crux is how successful an all-day school is and this is determined by the fact that all-day schools can only be successful if they accommodate the pupils' needs. There is no doubt that the pedagogical personnel play an important role in reaching the high expectations of all who are involved in the system (Kohler, 2016).

Although the pedagogical staff in Austrian all-day schools is predominated by teachers, more and more non-academic experts for leisure education constitute the support staff at all-day schools. The result is that pedagogues with varied qualifications and authorizations are employed within this system. The School Organization Act (SCHOG) makes it possible for the employers to use staff in the leisure time sessions, who are more in line with subjective qualifications:

> "42 (2a) … for the leisure time the necessary teachers, educators for the learning aid or leisure pedagogues are to be appointed. For leisure time, other suitable persons may also be appointed to perform the tasks in the leisure time section on the basis of special qualifications."

An important mission of all-day schools is to offer children access to extracurricular experiences that can motivate and excite their interests; this means that all-day schools should not simply be longer school days. This demands special training for the professionals who collectively represent the skill sets needed (Vandell, & Lao, 2016).

As mentioned before, all-day schools do not have a long history in Austria, and neither does the idea of leisure education within schools. Not surprisingly, the field of work of these professionals is not well researched as the supporting staff at schools has a subordinate role within the school system. Additionally, the motivation of these pedagogues, who are responsible for a holistic education of pupils at Austria's compulsory schools, is unclear and diffuse.

For this purpose, a study was initiated with the objective to learn more about the situation of leisure pedagogues in all-day schools in Styria, one of nine federal states in Austria. In order to gain relevant information, a team of five researchers from the University College of Teacher Education Styria analyzed the current situation. The first goal of this research is to explore what characterizes these experts, who are not teachers by education. The second goal is to evaluate the training, which consists of 1500 working hours and was only recently developed. The focus is to discover more about how leisure pedagogues see themselves and what they think their job should look like.

Methodologically, this exploratory research is based on qualitative data and focuses on in-depth analysis in order to gain privileged access to the participants' everyday lives. By means of grounded theory, key themes arose from the data. Qualitative, semi-structured expert interviews were held in 2019 with 6 graduates of the leisure pedagogue training.

Focus was given to the following categories:

- job profile and job requirements
- motivation
- challenges
- training
- initiatives

Job Profile, Demands and Training

Leisure pedagogues accompany the students throughout the day. They look after students during lunchtime, animate leisure time activities and provide recreational activities primarily at the end of a school day that lasts from 8.00am to 5.00pm, as well as promote extended education (Appel, 2009). Furthermore, they help children (and teachers) by giving support whenever help with homework or learning for exams is needed, although they are legally only meant to arrange leisure programs. In this respect, leisure pedagogues also require didactics and skills concerning the organization, planning and provision of educational materials. This requires cooperation with academic staff to know about deadlines and due dates, as well as demands flexibility and multidisciplinarity (Popp, 2011).

In addition to these demands, leisure pedagogues act as contact partners whenever students need help. Students have social and emotional needs and, therefore, they desire loyal and friendly contacts, who are willing to speak about problems and concerns beyond school life. The emotional engagement with student issues is one of the most important professional criteria when asked about what it takes to be a successful leisure pedagogue (Popp, 2011).

Leisure programs add to a more intimate learning environment, to new or different learning spaces, more time, supplementary materials and experiences and to a more infor-

mal environment to explore, to grow, to get excited about learning and to gain a sense of efficacy and belonging (Vandell, & Lao, 2016).

Not surprisingly, the list of duties and responsibilities of the staff is long and includes not only pedagogical tasks like pupils' guidance but also administrative tasks and school development requirements. For a detailed analysis, see: Appel, 2009.

The compilation of duties demonstrates the need for decent qualification. Professionalism is demanded and is the key topic when talking about workforce at all-day schools. Moreover, society implicitly assumes that only qualified people work in educational institutions. Also, research and practice follow the premise that work with people demands professionalism (Böttcher, Maykus, Altermann, & Liesegang, 2014).

Up until now, the group of afterschool workforce staff has been diverse concerning not only the employment conditions but also their qualifications. A high level of pedagogical qualification to master the increasing expectations of families and related politics has become necessary. This level must be guaranteed by a systematical pedagogical training and it requires people who are willing to develop the pedagogical potential of all-day schools by fulfilling an engaged job, which includes emphasizing the daily pedagogical and practical actions and intensifying the effort of being a reflective professional (Kielblock, & Gaiser, 2017).

The organization and administration of leisure programs must be in line with the wishes and requirements of children and parents. High-quality and full pedagogical mentoring is expected, which can only be guaranteed through high-level training (Hofmeister, 2012).

In 2012, a new training program was created in Austria to educate professional pedagogues who would support teaching staff in schools with non-academic activities. Rather than being haphazard and fragmented, the training of leisure pedagogues in Austria is standardized, however not yet compulsory. A framework curriculum had been presented in 2011 as a guideline for the newly implemented training. A consistent and coherent set of expectations about the core competencies that leisure pedagogues need was made official. And so the training began at several University Colleges in Austria (Federal Ministry of Education, 2014).

The training of leisure pedagogues is currently a 2-semester program. The specific feature of this training course is that the participants do not need a university-entrance diploma. An admission procedure ensures that only candidates with the provided basic personal abilities and language skills are accepted.

The students studying to become leisure pedagogues are very diverse. Currently, they are between 18 and 55 years old, and have varied educational backgrounds. Participants of the leisure pedagogue training often have pre-existing skills or training, rather than a university entrance diploma. These skills can be as diverse as carpentry, pottering, soccer, professional musical training and drama.

The training consists of the following modules: self-development, collaboration and communication, law, diversity, leisure pedagogy, sports, music, arts and creativity and, most importantly, observation and practical studies. During the training, the students put what they have learned into practice during 80 hours of fieldwork at all-day schools including 22.5 hours of analysis and reflection. At the end, graduates must complete university courses totaling 60 ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) in order to receive a certificate with the title Academic leisure pedagogue.

Due to this training program having been established only recently, it can be concluded that not enough about the outcomes of the training is known and that the knowledge of professional life conditions and challenges of leisure pedagogues in Austria have not yet been investigated thoroughly, as this field has not been the focus of much research. It is not clear if the outcomes of the training fit the requirements of the daily work, which await leisure pedagogues at all-day schools; therefore, further research is needed.

Professional Life of Leisure Pedagogues at Austrian All-Day Schools

At the beginning of the interviews, the leisure pedagogues were asked to describe their everyday professional life. It was found that the graduates are involved with designing a diverse program and organizing a wide range of activities, including guided leisure activities as well as unguided leisure activities.

The diversity of the offer seems to show a large urban/rural disparity. While the three participants from the rural areas mentioned 38 different activities, the three interviewees from the city mentioned only 17 different activities. This striking divergence should be the subject of future analysis.

Leisure pedagogues also have many administrative tasks. These include coordinating homework lists for teachers, keeping attendance lists, ordering meals, providing kitchen services, coordinating appointments with clubs and extracurricular partners, etc., along with refining the integration of the school day with the after-school programs. Based upon these statements, one gets the impression that leisure pedagogues are used as gofers for a variety of tasks. What is not yet currently provided for in the concept of leisure education in all-day schools was explicitly mentioned by 2 interviewees, namely the fact that leisure pedagogues are also used as learning aids.

Regarding the professional experience of the interviewees, they were asked about factors that promote their work and factors that hinder them.

The two most important pillars of all-day schools are: having enough qualified personnel and the appropriate infrastructure and space. Leisure pedagogues, however, are responsible for up to 25 students at the same time. This is an unbearable challenge, which was confirmed by all six interviewees. The goal of fostering innate talents and proclivities is challenging in groups of 25 students. Individual support and special needs require these groups to be much smaller.

The fact that 4 different employers (nation, federal state, community and private organizations) are involved in the employment process leads to an unclear distribution of duties and responsibilities. Additionally, leisure professionals at schools do not know whom to ask or where to go with their needs and ideas. High expectations from different vested interests (stakeholders) make the professional lives of leisure pedagogues challenging. These conflicting interests lead to areas of conflict and the leisure pedagogues are torn with regards to their activities and loyalties.

According to the participants of the interview, the salary is okay but the number of working hours is low. Leisure professionals start work at about 12 and finish their work at

about 5pm, which means they usually work no more than 25 hours per week and earn no income during holidays. So in reality, this is a part time job.

The school system seeks well-educated and skilled personnel to organize and arrange extracurricular activities. The children need leisure time to interact with friends and to recreate. The parents want their children to improve their marks. The teachers want the children to do their homework and learn for tests with the support of leisure pedagogues. And the leisure pedagogues are supposed to develop the students' non-academic skills, however leisure time requires voluntariness and spontaneity. So the job encompasses coordinating different agendas (which are sometimes ambivalent) as well as managing free time.

Yet, what the interview participants have in common is the joy of working with students. It is important to them, however, that they take on the role of leisure pedagogues, where cognitive learning is less important than the development of social skills and informal, voluntary learning. In one interview partner's case, school criticism is unmistakable, but so is the desire to improve the concept of school:

> "… and I like to work with children, it seems to be fun. It's leisure time. That means you can work more dynamically, but you're not forced to implement any structure that's given from the outside, but you're convinced that it doesn't make any sense at all. So there was a bit of school criticism, but don't get me wrong. I don't think the concept of school is wrong. So school in ancient Greece was the leisure, which means the distance to think. That's a brilliant concept, actually. One would have to implement it in the sense of the original concept, then we would be on the right track."

The interview partners see their profession as an important task for society and are aware of their responsibility and their roles as pioneers in this field of education.

Regarding the training, the interviewees criticized the one-year program as extremely exhausting, nevertheless, the interviewed graduates were generally satisfied with its quality. They all agreed that this training should be compulsory. One interviewee explicitly asked for more communication and conflict management training to more easily manage the challenges of the job.

The final focus was on development scenarios and potential for the future. The interview partners see that clarification of their role in society and amongst people, who interact with all-day schools, as a must. The lack of tradition and the rapid implementation of the all-day schooling system have created many unanswered questions even among those, who work in all-day schools.

One interviewee also mentioned that a better dovetailing between school and extracurricular content, as well as a better organizational approach are necessary. Collaboration in all-day schools was, in general, an important issue in the interviews.

The fact that the training was perceived as enriching and that the interviewees feel more self-confident in their professional lives makes clear the need for a compulsory training for the pedagogically-active personnel in the all-day school system.

Discussion and Conclusion

Based upon the feedback from interviewed graduates, an extended training is now being offered at the University College of Teacher Education in Styria and so, for future stu-

dents—at least for those in service—the same amount of hours will be divided over 3 semesters.

Motivation and engagement as well as enthusiasm and a pedagogical emphasis, where the child is the key focus, are premises for people working at all-day schools. Without a doubt, infrastructure, education policy, socio-cultural lineups, salary law, employment rate and other factors are important for the staff at schools. But there is one more indispensable condition and this is a basic understanding of what are called a pedagogical unity of action and a learning organization. The school must not be separated into two parts: one that is responsible for the idea of free time and self-ruling and the other responsible for the time with strong structure and academic focus. A lack of dovetailing of curricular and extra-curricular areas leads to divergences, dichotomies and irreparable separations, which undermine a harmonious collective concept in all-day schools. The right mixture of different professions, inclusion of talents and skills of all people and the pooling of burdensome and satisfying activities are the components of a secret recipe for convincing collegial work, which requires designated cooperation time for the whole team. The goal is a dialogue about the divided basic understanding of how to deal with the students' proposals and quality. All-day schools require concrete goals, jointly developed tasks and objectives, plus the security of continuous communication and cooperation between school and organizations that employ leisure pedagogues. In the name of the leisure pedagogues, even more integration into all-day school life must be demanded. This would also create the opportunity to turn a part-time job into a full-time job. What more does it take to give the representatives of extended education the esteem and recognition needed to make them important members of Austria's all-day schools?

From the graduates' point of view, this role needs clarification in society and among the people who interact with the school. For this reason, a survey has been created—based on the findings of this study—with the aim of gaining a representative sample concerning the daily professional life of leisure pedagogues in Styria. This involves identifying items to facilitate understanding of the areas of conflict caused by the ambivalent relationship between leisure education and school, the conflict-riddled relationship between leisure pedagogues and their employers and, finally, to understand how to further improve the training of leisure pedagogues.

In time, the results will lead to a better understanding of the needs of leisure pedagogues and to improving the education in all-day schools in Austria.

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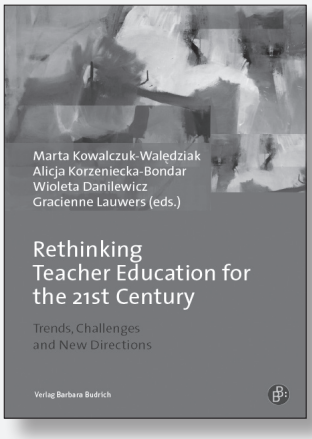

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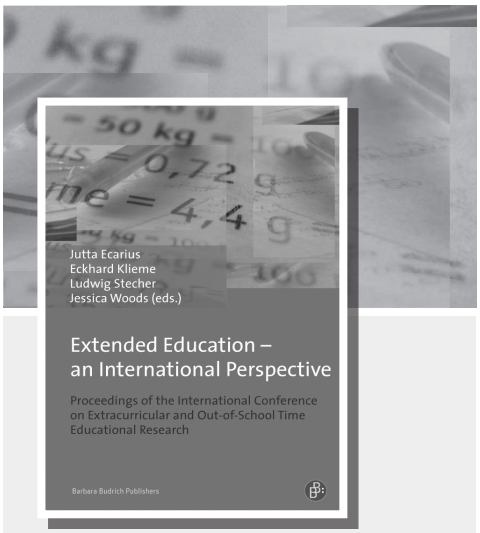

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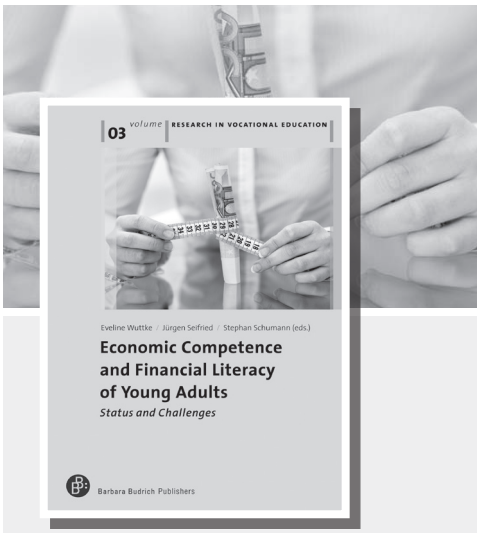

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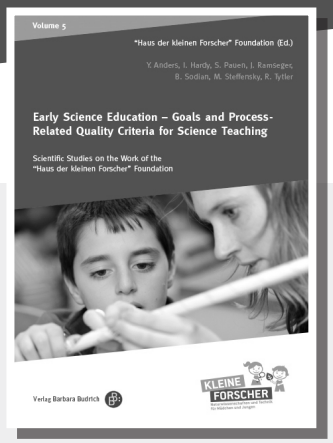

„Haus der kleinen Forscher" Foundation (Ed.)

Early Science Education – Goals and Process-Related Quality Criteria for Science Teaching

Scientific Studies on the Work of the "Haus der kleinen Forscher" Foundation, vol. 5
2018 • 267 pp. • Pb. • 19,90 € (D) • 20,50 € (A)
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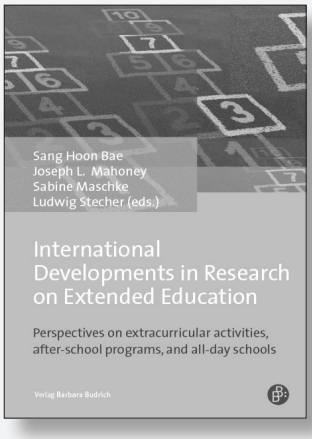

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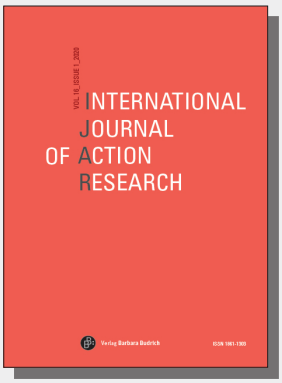

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