

The Journal of Youth Voices in Education: Methods, Theory, Practice

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Relations and interpersonal bonding: Urgencies in education

As editor of this enthusiastically and collectively driven journal, it is my great privilege to introduce the seven new papers for *The Journal of Youth Voices in Education*, vol 1, No 2, 2019. Understanding and preventing marginalization in education are core agendas in the MaCE project, and the following seven contributions all address these important challenges. A focal point that permeates all seven papers are the importance of relations and interpersonal bonding in education. Personally, and perhaps often instinctively, we all know that relations are built over time, and accordingly, that insufficient time can be poisonous and challenging. This is very much also the case in education, not least for (but by no means exclusively for) vulnerable students, that occasionally, might need a little extra support.

In the first paper, *Transmission of learning between contexts and arenas: A qualitative study of young boys in vulnerable positions, their learning identities and possession of knowledge*, Marie Møller-Skau scrutinizes the potentials of crossing contexts in education. Møller-Skau thoughtfully emphasizes the urgency of taking the students interests and relations in their leisure time sphere into consideration, when educational activities and learning processes are developed.

Møller-Skau's inspiring opening is followed by Ingrid Gulseth Berge's paper entitled *Inclusive learning – increased motivation and self-efficacy*. Berge's work is compelling, and emphasizes, through youth narratives, how important it is for students to meet teachers, that actually see and acknowledge their needs, and also how important it is to experiment with various learnings styles and sometimes work in small groups.

The third paper *Recognition in the school society*, by Kathrine Bordevich & Silje Brekke Valen, digs into two specific relational constellations, respectively teacher-student relations and friendships between students. The stimulating analysis illustrates how recognition in relationships deeply influence students' school life and mental health.

The next paper *Youths problem - but the responsibility of the adults* is by Trude Austad Gulliksen, and it revolves around young people's experiences with bullying. The empirical examples are disturbing, and Gulliksen accentuates the necessity of strong relationships in school and teachers' responsibility for taking action when students are being harassed.

Kathrine Bordevich & Ronja Fredriksson Paulsen's "*It would have been better if I had friends*": *A qualitative study of young people's childhood's friendships in school societies* is a significant contribution, that highlights how important friendships and peer relations are for students, when they struggle through school and try to manage, or even escape, the roles they are assigned along the way.

The sixth paper, *Youths development - can the quality of their closest relationships affect their mental health?* by Silje Bjørklund Grøterud, focuses on student's relationships with peers and especially parents. The empirical analysis is a tough read, with youth narratives pointing at challenging family relations and feelings of depression and loneliness. In her conclusion, Grøterud reflects if early interventions, focusing on relational competences and interpersonal bonding in school, will prevent such challenges and accordingly contribute to better living conditions for vulnerable students.

In the closing paper, *Challenging Neoliberal Discourses as 'nasty little theories': Co-Creation in Higher Education*, by Kaz Stuart, MaCE-students' survey responses are analyzed in order to understand what sufficient time, relational bonding and co-created learning means for studying and how such privileges contrast dominant neoliberal agendas in education.

Enjoy your reading!

David Thore Gravesen

Editor