

Institution: Edge Hill University		
Unit of Assessment: C23 Education		
Title of case study: Visualising Inclusion in the classroom context (VOICES_Ed)		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2017-2019		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g., job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Fiona Hallett Clare Woolhouse Virginia Kay	Professor in Education Reader in Education Senior Lecturer	September 2004 - current January 2007 - current September 2011 - current
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2017-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>This case study presents the impact that a research-based photographic resource, co-produced with children and young people, has had on the perceptions and practices of stakeholders from a range of educational settings and from society at large. The resource has been used by schools, local authorities and Tate Liverpool in order to challenge institutional and structural barriers that lead to discrimination or exclusion. This has led to the development of a package of work on inclusion to be used as a professional development resource for educational settings in the UK.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The research underpinning this impact case study began in 2017 with a policy analysis of the development of the role of the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) in schools, since its inception (output 6). The findings of this analysis indicated that, although policy around the role of the SENCO has changed since 1994, constraints remain around the degree to which the SENCO is able to influence pedagogical practices that marginalise those most vulnerable to exclusion. As such, this output indicated the need for a resource designed by children and young people to counter problematic policy-driven initiatives in schools and other educational settings.</p> <p>In the same year, research was undertaken in Armenia around perceptions of difference (leading to output 4). The research participants involved in this study were: individuals with Special Educational Needs/Disabilities (SEN/D); the parents of individuals with SEN/D; student teachers; serving teachers; and citizens with no personal relationship to disability issues. The outcomes of this research indicated the need for disability scholars in the global West to demystify the language of inclusion and revisit what we think that we know about inclusive education. This alignment with the aforementioned policy analysis in England pointed to the need for a learner-led resource that could be used across national boundaries.</p> <p>In 2017, the team began a programme of research with children and young people in England to address these concerns alongside broader notions of social inclusion. Rather than using conventional educational research methodologies, such as interviews, focus groups or observations, the children were given single-use cameras and asked to take pictures of inclusion or exclusion in their school setting. An explication of this methodology was published in output 3, as an example of how researchers can create space for multiple voices, perspectives, and stories in order to shape knowledge that can be shared with a variety of communities.</p> <p>An analysis of the substantive results of this phase of the research was published in output 1. This article presented some of the images taken by children alongside responses from educational practitioners that illustrated a lack of understanding of educational inclusion and, by extrapolation, exclusion.</p> <p>The photographs were exhibited at TATE Liverpool garnering two further research outputs, both of which explored ethical concerns about perceptions of difference and the ethics of conducting research with children. The first, output 5, outlined three theoretical lenses which can be used as vehicles to think about citizenship, disability discrimination and the 'invisible learner', in order to emphasise the marginalising effects of educational systems and the processes of identity</p>		

formation and societal engagement. The second, output 2, explored the concerns and challenges posed by adopting a photo-elicitation method with children and young people. This involved addressing how researchers might access the perceptions of individuals and respect the differing 'voices' of research participants. The article concluded that while photo-elicitation with children is not without its challenges and limitations, the approach provides a multimodal route for accessing and sharing some of the multiple and varied voices that are too often deprived of a platform.

3. References to the research

- 1) Dunne, L., Hallett, F., Kay, V. & Woolhouse, C. (2018). Spaces of Inclusion: Investigating place, positioning and perspective within educational settings through photo-elicitation. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*. 22(1). pp.21-37
- 2) Woolhouse, C. (2019). Conducting photo methodologies with children: framing ethical concerns relating to representation, voice and data analysis when exploring educational inclusion with children. *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*. 42 (1) P.3-18.
- 3) Dunne, L., Hallett, F., Kay, V. and Woolhouse, C. (2017). Visualising Inclusion: Employing a photo-elicitation methodology to explore views of inclusive education, *SAGE Research Methods Cases*.
- 4) Hallett, F. Allan, D. and Hallett, G. (2019). Reconsidering Inclusion: Western Theory and post-Soviet reality. *Disability Studies Quarterly*. 39(2)
- 5) Hallett, F. (2019). 'Citizenship, disability discrimination and the invisible learner'. *The Palgrave Handbook of Citizenship and Education*. Peterson, A., Stahl, G. & Soong, H. (eds.). Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing
- 6) Hallett, F. and Hallett, G. (2017). 'Leading Learning: the role of the SENCo'. *Transforming the role of the SENCo*. 2nd edition. F. Hallett and G. Hallett (eds). 2nd edition. Open University Press: McGraw-Hill Education

All items were published in rigorously peer-reviewed journals or books of international standing.

4. Details of the impact

Development of the photo-voice resource

In the initial stages of this project, the research team worked with children and young people in order to develop a resource consisting of photographs, scenarios and 'fulcrum words' (single words or phrases that conveyed particular perspectives) that illustrated inclusion or exclusion. These items resulted in the production of a photo-voice resource; that is, a resource through which children could express themselves via alternative means. This resource took two forms; the first of which were large versions of each image printed for use in school and local authority workshops and at TATE Liverpool. In the second format, the images, scenarios, and fulcrum words were reproduced as a VOICES_Ed boxed resource to be used by individual schools and educational settings. Although the underpinning research identified a specific area of concern around the needs of children and young people with SEN/D, the themes addressed in the resource included race, gender, identity and social class.

Impact on educational settings

The photo-voice images were presented to Inclusion Quality Mark (IQM), an organisation working with over 5,000 schools in England and, in May 2019, the CEO of IQM asked the VOICES_Ed team to "present their research to school clusters and to subsequently work with individual schools in order for their research to make a real impact on schools, teachers and young people" [source 1a]. At one such cluster workshop, involving 16 schools in North West England, an IQM Ambassador noted that "a large number of delegates showed interest in working with Edge Hill using the photo elicitation approach" [source 1b].

In response to an interview published in the Times Educational Supplement [source 2], the VOICES_Ed team were invited to work with Hammersmith and Fulham Local Authority,

Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole local authorities, a school in Birmingham and a facility for looked-after children in Hertfordshire.

The two Local Authority events involved over 70 senior leaders from Hammersmith and Fulham and 12 school leaders, teachers and teaching assistants in Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole. The Principal Lead Advisor for Secondary Schools at Hammersmith and Fulham Local Authority commented that the methodology “will provide valuable case study material as we will be able to measure impact through both qualitative and quantitative research tools including surveys of parents, children and governors disseminate findings to Headteachers and Councillors” [source 3]. Likewise, a range of professionals at both events identified plans to use the methodology to: “work with children who have been permanently excluded” (SENCo, Large Secondary School); run “staff meetings around perception of inclusion in respect of teaching and learning facilitation” (Deputy Head Teacher, All-age Special School); create “strategies to influence pupil voice/staff perceptions” (Senior Leadership Team member, Special School); and, “work with student leadership team, transition leaders, antibullying ambassadors” (SENCo, Academy Trust) - [source 3].

When using the boxed resource, the manager of an out-of-school provision reported that “Engaging with the research project has helped me reflect that a more fundamental change in attitudes, particularly of the staff involved in childcare settings, is needed to enable a truly child centred environment”. Given the current climate, it is indicative of the impact of the resource that the manager noted that “on getting ready to re-open the club when the schools return, the questions we are asking ourselves are directly linked to the child’s ownership of the environment married obviously with their safety. It is a fundamental shift in thinking which I could never have predicted at the start of working with the research tools” [source 4].

Likewise, the SENCo of a secondary school in the Midlands reflected that “We used the feedback from students to inform pastoral teams of issues and raised some safeguarding concerns that arose” and that “We still plan to pursue the activities with other year groups moving forward. We have planned an ‘inclusion week’ for the final week of term (sadly now delayed due to school closure)” [source 5].

Impact on children and young people

Sixty-two children and young people evaluated the impact of using the photo-voice resource during school-based workshops with 22 student making specific reference to the need for staff to adopt more inclusive practices. At times, the need for attitudinal change related to issues particular to themselves, such as “my anger issues, that I am triggered easily by people” and “why I can’t stop talking, I think some know that I have autism” [source 6a]. In general, personal comments of this nature came from children under the age of 12.

In contrast, students over the age of 14 [source 6b] raised issues that concerned them about society, such as “we are treated differently whilst we wear a hijab, however we all share the same moral values” or “I wish they knew what we actually went through at home and other places”. This age group also expressed disquiet about the educational expectations that they experienced with one student commenting that “I wish teachers knew that I do not learn and develop at the same rate as others so teachers shouldn’t compare us to others and how well we do”. Another student remarked that they wanted teachers to know “how pressured and stressed we are to do good in school and that at the end of the day we are just kids” [source 6b].

Impact on the general public and the inclusion debate

The Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE) is a disabled people-led organisation who, in 2019, created a petition ‘Don’t shut Disabled people out of mainstream education’ which received over 108,655 signatures and was presented to Downing Street in January 2020. The VOICES_ED team wrote an article for the ALLFIE journal, *Inclusion Now*, which reached large numbers: the Communications Officer at ALLFIE confirmed that “Google Analytics tells me that the post has had 256 unique page views (which is high for our blog posts)” - [source 7].

In addition, the VOICES_Ed team held a week-long art installation and workshops at TATE Liverpool, whereby visitors had an opportunity to explore views and experiences of belonging and social inclusion through engaging with the images and associated workshops. The VOICES_Ed installation was held in the TATE Exchange space, which “is a space and a programme at Tate Modern, Tate Liverpool and online for everyone to debate and reflect upon contemporary topics and ideas, get actively involved, think through doing, and make a difference” (<https://www.tate.org.uk/tate-exchange>).

Across the week, visitors were invited to share their views verbally or by posting comment cards beneath the photo-voice images. In total, 3,367 visitors and staff engaged with the installation and the Programme Manager of Public and Community Learning at TATE Liverpool stated that the VOICES_Ed research had “undoubtedly had an impact on the guiding principles of TATE Exchange” and that “research of this nature that resonates with Tate’s creative learning approach is vital to help us to plan for the immediate and long-term future, where we can provide learning opportunities for all through creative learning as a practice that generates new knowledge and skills through an open, learner-led experiential process that has no predetermined outcomes” [source 8].

During the exhibition, a member of TATE Liverpool staff commented that “I was watching your screens and looking at your images and just had to come over, it’s so important to have these exhibitions next to Matisse or other famous artists” (source 9).

In addition, a curator of a history museum in Sao Paulo, Brazil, commented that “It really impressed me how this project was realised, bringing childrens’ point of views to the museum and really involving the audience to the topic in the heart of Tate’s exhibitions. It would be great if we can implement this kind of strategy in our museum!” (source 9).

Of the 185 written comments posted under the photographs, 156 made specific reference to inclusion and/or exclusion. A typical response to an image of two girls looking at a mobile telephone was that “this picture really highlights the theme of bullying in today’s society”. When reflecting upon an image of a child using a communication aid, one visitor said that “In my opinion specialist schooling for ASD only promotes exclusion via a segregation of difference to pigeon-hole and separate seems **borderline medieval**”. Nothing in the image suggested that the child had autism or, indeed, attended a special school; the response was personal and deeply felt, demonstrating the need for research of this nature if the Academy is to understand the complexity of societal perspectives around difference and discrimination.

A final example of comments that highlighted the need to question the degree to which schools promote inclusion was made by a visitor who said “I believe we perceive the classroom to be a place where we are not encouraged to communicate (which promotes inclusivity) we are scolded, told to be quiet and reminded of this when we look at an image of a classroom” [source 9].

In terms of the global debate around inclusion, Woolhouse (2019) was cited in a UNICEF Innocenti Report [source 10] in relation to the ethical involvement of children with disabilities in evidence generation. In citing Woolhouse 2019, the authors noted that “with photo-elicitation, communication is an essential part of the research, providing the opportunity to gather views about, reactions to and interpretations of the photographs, but anonymity and confidentiality can be difficult to navigate” (p. 44). Innocenti is UNICEF’s dedicated research centre with a core mandate to undertake cutting-edge, policy-relevant research that equips the organisation and the wider global community to inform policy, guide action and also to challenge assumptions

Planned resource/professional development roll-out (2020)

Distribution of the boxed resource was planned for the spring term of 2020 and, in January 2020, the first resources were given to two settings [one of which is source 4].

Further boxed resources were due to be rolled out between March and May 2020 to: the school cited in source 5 (representing 600-700 children and young people) three clusters of IQM schools (representing over 3,000 children and young people) and to the school leaders in Bournemouth (representing over 1,400 children). However, due to the Coronavirus pandemic, all work with schools, local authorities and IQM ceased in the anticipation that work could resume in September 2020.

When it became clear that the planned extension of the programme was not possible due to school closures, the team worked with IQM to develop an online CPD resource for IQM schools; initially for the three clusters mentioned above. The online platform included the images and fulcrum words from the boxed resource and introductory sessions were designed to be used virtually and/or as a precursor to using the boxed resource. These activities were planned to take place in September-October 2020 but, again, due to the pandemic, the planned programme has had to be delayed until all children have returned to schools. These are now scheduled for May-July 2021.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- 1) 1a) Correspondence received from Chief Executive Officer, Inclusion Quality Mark (UK)
1b) Evaluation from IQM Ambassador
- 2) Times Educational Supplement interview
- 3) Phase 1 Impact Report
- 4) Statement from Out of Schools Club Manager
- 5) Statement from SENCo
- 6) 6a) pupil evaluations
6b) evaluations from young people
- 7) Correspondence from The Alliance for Inclusive Education (ALLFIE)
- 8) Statement from Programme Manager Public and Community Learning -TATE Gallery Liverpool
- 9) TATE Liverpool data
- 10) Thompson, S., Cannon, M., Wickenden, M. and UNICEF, (2020). Exploring Critical Issues in the Ethical Involvement of Children with Disabilities in Evidence Generation and Use (No. inwopa1110).