

ARTÍCULO ORIGINAL

Engaging with students' voices: using a framework for addressing marginalisation in schools

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ABSTRACT: This paper focuses on the importance of engaging with students' voices in order to understand and address marginalisation in schools. Using illustrative examples from research conducted in schools, the aim is to demonstrate how through the use of a framework, issues related to marginalisation can be addressed in schools and, in so doing, facilitate inclusion. The process of using the framework will be described and the paper will conclude with a discussion about how marginalisation can be addressed in schools from three perspectives: first, by taking specific actions regarding individual students, or in relation to issues that create barriers to student participation; secondly, by engaging with *all* students' voices; and thirdly, by focusing on the involvement of 'forgotten groups of learners' in the process of data collection and analysis.

KEY WORDS: Students voice; Marginalization; Inclusive education; Inclusive practice.

El compromiso con la voz del alumnado: uso de un marco de trabajo para abordar la marginación en las escuelas

RESUMEN: Este artículo se centra en la importancia de establecer un compromiso sólido con la voz del alumnado para comprender y abordar la marginación en las escuelas. Se describirán algunos ejemplos ilustrativos procedentes de la investigación llevada a cabo en distintos centros educativos, a fin de demostrar cómo gracias al uso de un marco de trabajo se pueden tratar cuestiones relativas a la marginación en las escuelas y, de esta forma, facilitar la inclusión. Asimismo, se describirá el proceso de uso del marco y se concluirá el artículo con una discusión sobre cómo abordar la marginación en las escuelas desde tres perspectivas: en primer lugar, mediante acciones específicas con respecto a estudiantes particulares o en relación a cuestiones que supongan una barrera para la participación del alumnado; en segundo lugar, por medio de un compromiso con *todas* las voces del alumnado; y, por último, al concentrar la atención en la implicación de "grupos de alumnos olvidados" en los procesos de recopilación y análisis de datos.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Voz del alumnado; Marginación; Educación Inclusiva; Prácticas inclusivas.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Anderson and Herr (1994) argue that "students are everywhere in schools, and yet they are too often invisible to the adults who work there" (p. 59). They refer to the work of

Fine (1991) who suggests that schools engage in an active process of ‘silencing’ students through their policies and practices so as to smooth over social and economic contradictions. However, most recently, a concern with students’ voices has gradually moved to the centre of educational researchers’ attention. Whilst much of this work has emphasised the need to engage with students’ views, empirical work which demonstrates the impact of such engagements is rather limited (e.g. Fielding, 2001; Mitra, 2003; Rudduck and Flutter, 2000).

In this paper, I explain the use of a framework that guides collaborative inquiry in schools. The framework places students’ voices at its centre, as well as collaboration between practitioners, students and researchers. It is argued that through the use of the framework avenues for discussion with students can be opened up and, most importantly, issues of marginalisation can be addressed within school contexts. The paper will explore the following question:

- How can a framework be used in order to engage with the views of students in schools?
- How can schools draw on the views of students in order to address issues of marginalisation?

2. DEVELOPING THE FRAMEWORK

The development of the framework described here is based on a number of theoretical ideas. Firstly, it relates to theories of inclusive education that place emphasis on the quality of education provided for all children (Corbett, 1997; Corbett, 2001; Farrell, 2000; Lewis, 1995) and are concerned with issues of human rights, equal opportunities and social justice (Armstrong et al., 2000). Therefore, the framework emphasises the need of giving *all* students a voice, regardless of their characteristics or the labels assigned to them, in order to understand issues that relate to marginalisation and ultimately to facilitate improving the quality of their educational experiences.

Secondly, the rationale on which the framework has been developed relates to what Clark et al. (1995) refer to as the ‘organisational paradigm of inquiry’ in relation to special education. Clark and her colleagues argue that research which follows this paradigm “is directed at identifying what features within schools facilitate such responses and what processes can be initiated which would bring those features about” (p. 79). Bearing this formulation in mind, the rationale on which the framework was developed follows an organisational paradigm. In particular, it views the idea of listening to students as one of the processes which could bring to the surface features which are important for the successful implementation of inclusive education.

Lastly, the research is based on my earlier work which aimed at conceptualising marginalisation. In particular, I defined marginalisation as taking one of four forms: (i) when a child is experiencing some kind of marginalisation and is recognised almost by everybody including himself/herself; (ii) when a child is feeling that he/she is experiencing marginalisation whereas most of the others do not recognise this; (iii) when a child is found in what appears to be marginalised situations but does not feel it, or does not view it as marginalisation; and, finally, (iv) when a child is experiencing marginalisation but does not admit it (Messiou, 2003; Messiou, 2006a; Messiou, 2006b). Concerning these four conceptualisations, it has to be made clear that these are not robust categories into which any child who was possibly experiencing marginalisation could be confidently put, but rather suggestions for thinking about marginalisation as experienced by children in relation to certain school context. Therefore, it can be argued that there is no single or definitive conception of marginalisation, as I have demonstrated through my work, and that we are rather talking about multiple definitions.

Issues of marginalisation have come to be seen in relation to the notion of inclusive education. In particular, inclusion is a much broader term than previously thought to be, concerning any kind of marginalisation that might be experienced, regardless if it is associated with traditional notions of ‘special

need' or not (Armstrong et al., 2000; Ballard, 1997; Booth and Ainscow, 1998; Mittler, 2000). However, what counts as marginalisation and participation in schools settings is essentially complex. At the same time marginalisation within schools is a multi-faceted notion that needs to be examined very carefully in relation to specific contexts. The framework that is described here aims at

understanding marginalisation and issues of inclusion, by paying attention to how students feel and think about what is happening in schools. Therefore, attention is drawn to specific contexts and existing relationships within them, as well as how these are perceived by students.

The framework (Messiou, 2012) consists of a four-step process as follows in Figure 1:

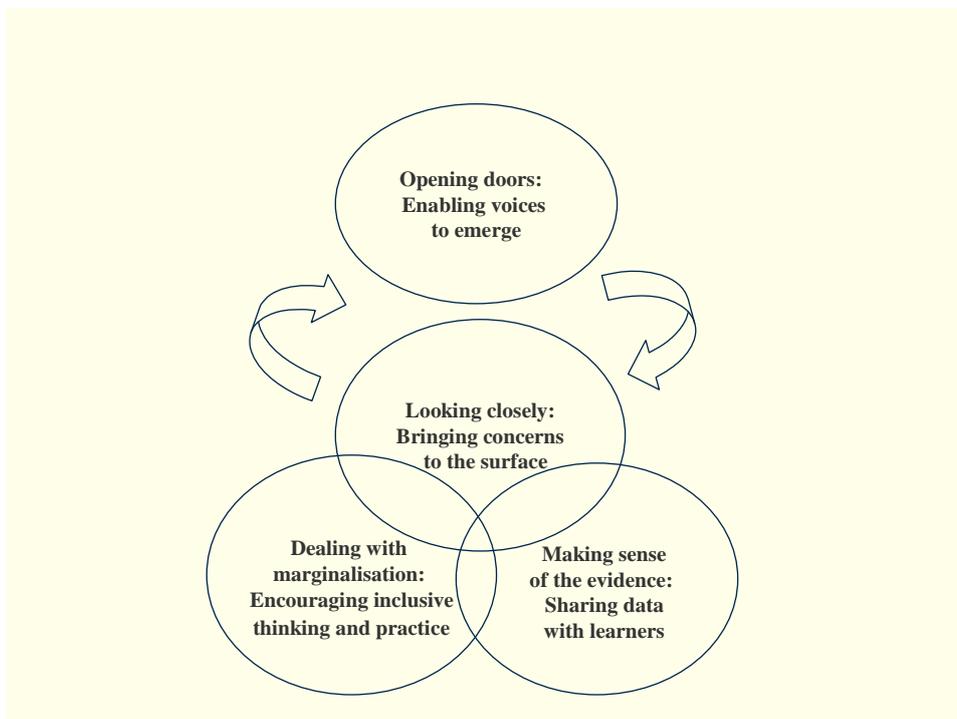


Figure 1: A framework for promoting inclusion and addressing marginalisation

The framework can be used in schools by researchers, practitioners or by students who take the role of co-researchers or researchers. As can be seen, the first step stands on its own, whereas the three following steps are overlapping. In what follows, a description of each of the steps is made.

Step 1: Opening doors: Enabling voices to emerge. In this first step, various techniques are used that allow voices and issues that might lead to marginalisation of students in the schools to emerge. Techniques that are used include: scenarios, visual images, drawing, role-play, sociometric measures, etc. All these techniques can be described as ones that place the learner at the centre and view them as active participants, rather than as subjects of the research.

Step 2: Looking closely: Bringing concerns to the surface. This step involves the close examination of the information gained during the previous step in order to identify those who are experiencing forms of marginalisation in school, as well as issues that might lead to marginalisation.

Step 3: Making sense of the evidence: Sharing data with learners. This step focuses attention directly on issues of marginalisation that have emerged through the previous step. At this stage, it is crucial to ensure the anonymity of individual students. This step involves dialogue between practitioners, students and researchers. Through this process of collaboration and sharing of information, assumptions are made and deeper understandings achieved.

Step 4: Dealing with marginalisation: Encouraging inclusive thinking and practice. This last step can be seen as overlapping with the previous one. By sharing data, and issues that have emerged through data collection with students, they are most likely to start making suggestions about how to address some of these issues. Issues of marginalisation are addressed in order to determine actions to be taken in the light of the evidence that has been analysed. Again, this involves collaboration between students, practitioners and researchers.

In what follows, two examples are described that demonstrate how the framework can be used in practice in schools. One of the examples comes from a primary school and one of the examples comes from a secondary school. The framework was used differently in the two contexts: in the primary school it was used by the researcher, in collaboration with students and teachers, whereas in the secondary school it was led by students who took the role of co-researchers.

2.1. School 1: Working collaboratively with children and teachers

This study took place in one classroom of a primary school in England over one academic year. The framework was used by me as a researcher. For the first step, in order to bring students' views to the surface participant observations were employed and individual interviews with all the children. Consent from all individual students was gained before each interview (Messiou, 2011). Within the semi-structured interviews, specific techniques were used to facilitate the conversations with children. Those techniques have been developed through my earlier work and included 'message in the bottle', discussion of scenarios and sociograms (Messiou 2003, 2006a, 2008). Each of the interviews lasted around half an hour and were tape recorded and transcribed for analysis.

In addition, visual images were used as a way of recording children's thoughts regarding aspects within the classroom. The use of visual images has been discussed in the literature as a powerful source for engaging with students'

voices (e.g. Ainscow and Kaplan 2005; Thomson 2008). For this study, children were put into pairs, and with the use of Flip cameras, they had to film what they felt help them to learn in the class and what makes it difficult for them. Issues of consent were also addressed here. Specifically, those who did not want to be filmed were identified in order that they would not appear. In fact, only one student did not want his face shown in the films. Each pair had the flip camera for a day and then they had to present to their class what they filmed.

The data gathered from the above sources of information was then analysed and issues that were of concern were identified, as it is suggested through the second step of the framework. At this stage, the views of the teacher were also gathered in regards to the issues that were emerging.

In the third step of the framework, information that was gained through the earlier step was shared, both with adults working in the classroom and with children. Deciding on which aspects of the data to use was a challenging task in itself. On the one hand, anonymity of the children had to be protected, and therefore, the issues that were raised had to be chosen carefully so that others would not be in a position to guess who had expressed a particular view. On the other hand, areas of concern had to be discussed in order to explore in more detail what children thought about them. Therefore, it was made very clear to participants, especially the children, that the aim was not to find out who said what but to discuss the issues that were brought to the surface from particular individuals. So, at the beginning of the session, it was agreed with children that they would not try and think who expressed a particular view but rather discuss the issues that were brought up. In particular, the children had to work in their groups and were given different extracts from various interviews to discuss through the guidance of a set of questions, as follows:

- How do you think the child feels?
- What could be done differently so that the child does not feel that way?
- Has anyone been in a similar situation at school? Can you give us an example?

Afterwards, the children reported back to the whole group and this led to further discussions with the whole class. Through this last step children's interpretations of the data were achieved.

One such example of an extract shared with the students, was the following:

Kiki: I've noticed that outside your classroom in the corridors there are some displays with people's work ... have you ever stopped and looked at those?

Luke: Yeah.

Kiki: Is your work somewhere on display?

Luke: No.

Kiki: Was it before?

Luke: No.

Kiki: What do you think about that?

Luke: Not that sure but I think it's a bit mean to everyone 'cos erm what if someone erm has done good work and they don't get to go on it ... everyone should get a chance to go on it.

The children in this extract all agreed that this boy must feel sad regarding his work not being on display. In addition, two of the children in the particular group said that their work was never on display either. As the teacher had told me before carrying out the interviews, it was the school's policy that students' work was on display in the corridors outside the classroom.

When I was carrying out observations in the school I noticed that many children were looking at these displays during break times. Having each child's work on display can be seen as an inclusive practice that creates a sense of community, where each child feels that his/her work is valued (Sapon-Shevin 1990). In discussion of this issue with the teacher before carrying out the interviews, she said that she did not think that students pay a lot of attention to those displays, and that most possibly they do not even know whose work is on display and whose is not. However, in the interviews I had with the students it became

evident that they did take note of them and that all of them knew whose work was on display.

When the above interview extract was shared during the group session, children came up with a very interesting idea in response to the question: 'What could be done differently so that the child does not feel that way?'. They said that they could make a chart with everyone's names and keep a record of whose work is going on display. And then, when one child's work goes on display, they can cross out that name in order to ensure that everyone gets a chance for their work to be seen.

In the follow up discussion we had with the whole class, when each group was presenting their ideas, one girl put up her hand and said:

'I would also like to say that it should not be just work that is nicely done that is put on display but also if you made the effort and have improved that should also be taken into account'.

The teacher immediately stepped in and said:

'But we already do that!'.

One of the teaching assistants then confirmed this view (in what might have appeared to be a rather dismissive way):

'Yes, we already do that!'.

The girl blushed and appeared to be a bit uncomfortable. I then said:

'This is a very good point, and your teachers say that they already do that, so that's something that you need to think about if you will be involved in the chart that you just suggested. To make sure that you do take into account if someone's work has improved or not.'

Discussing this incident after the session with the teacher and the teaching assistant, it was quite interesting listening to them defending what they do and trying to convince me that they had explained that to the children. I commented to them that I did not doubt what they said and that they had explained it to the children. I explained, however, that the

evidence from the interviews, and then the follow up discussion with children, had shown that they were either not fully aware of what the staff did.

The teaching assistant then commented:

'Yes, we might have to emphasise that to them again...'

The teacher added:

'Yes, but when we asked them to choose what would go on display, they were the ones that chose the ones that were aesthetically better than others.'

Again, it was made clear to both of them that while this might have happened, it should be seen as an opportunity for further discussion with the children, especially when they would come up with their criteria for the chart.

This third step of the framework planted the seeds for the final step that of addressing marginalisation. For example, as we saw in the example above some students felt that their work was never put on display, even though they were keen to have it seen. The students came up with a practical suggestion in order to make sure that everybody was treated fairly - that of preparing a chart and making sure that a record was kept of whose work had been on display. Therefore, in this instance, a possible action was determined during the third step. However, its implementation was carried out later, as it was noted during a subsequent visit to the school, when it was good to see the chart being used by students.

2.2. School 2: Students taking the lead

The second example of this approach comes from a secondary school where students using the framework took on the role of co-researchers themselves. Focusing on issues of marginalisation, they collected data from students in a particular year group. I consider it necessary to provide a bit of background about how this particular school used the framework. A group of students from the school, and support staff who acted as facilitators, took part in a two-day workshop held in the university. Another school also

took part. The aim of the first day was to explain to the participants - both the facilitators, as well as the students - what the purpose of the training was and to familiarise themselves with a number of possible methods for data collection. An exploration of the difficult concept of marginalisation was carried out, using a video clip and processes of brainstorming with the students, so as to relate the term to their experiences. The specific methods of data collection explored were power maps, visual images, observations and interviews. At this point ethical considerations were also discussed with the students. The framework for addressing marginalisation was also presented to the students on the day.

At the end of the day, each of the two school groups had to come up with a plan and agree the methods they were going to use to explore marginalisation in their own context. Flexibility was given to the students to choose any methods they preferred, or even to suggest new ways of collecting evidence. The students were also asked to choose the methods they were going to use for data collection. It was quite interesting that the students from this particular school decided to be more creative and use additional methods to the ones explored on the day. So, for example, they developed what they called a star chart to explore whether students in their schools feel that they are involved in decision making, instead of using the power map activity, which they considered too time consuming. Also, they decided to develop questionnaires as they had done on other occasions in their school.

After that first day, when the students went back to their schools, they dealt with the first step of the framework - that of collecting data and allowing marginalised voices, as well as issues that possibly relate to marginalisation, to come to the surface. The second day of the workshop, which again took place at the university some weeks later, focused on looking closely at the data collected (the second step of the framework) and planning next steps. Each school group made an informal presentation explaining how they had worked and what their initial thoughts were in relation to the data collected. Then they looked more closely at the data in their school groups, identifying emerging themes and discussing how they would share

that information with other classmates (that would be the third step of the framework). During this process, even though they mainly worked in their school groups, they shared their ideas with the students from the other school, who also contributed to the refinement of their thinking. By the end of the day they also had to decide how they would share the information gathered with other students.

The group of students from the school I am referring to came up with a very interesting idea regarding the third step of the framework. Rather than going into various classrooms and sharing data with their classmates, they set up five different stations in the library, where other students could go and be informed about their project, and also explore further the views that were raised during the first phase of data collection. This idea had taken shape during the second day workshop at the university. However, the actual implementation of it was further discussed afterwards in the school and, with the help of the facilitators, the students managed to get it organised.

The five stations involved the following activities: a brief Powerpoint presentation in order to explain to the other students what the project was about and what the students had done up to that point; At the second station, findings from a questionnaire survey were presented. Here the students presented posters with graphs and pie charts, showing in percentages what they found out by analysing students' responses. They also asked students if they agreed with the overall findings, or if they disagreed in any way. Whilst this was going on, the student co-researchers kept additional notes. The students at the third station presented findings from their observations, using notes to stimulate discussion, and at the fourth station they presented findings from their interview. They prepared posters where they had extracts from their observation notes and their interviews, which highlighted some of the areas that they wanted to explore further. Alongside, these extracts they had a set of questions they asked each group of students to address in order to identify whether others also experienced what they observed and what they discussed in interviews with students. At the final station, a presentation of findings from two activities

was made together: from the star charts and from the use of the photovoice technique. The star charts were presented to the students and they were asked to elaborate on how they felt about their own experiences in their school. In presenting the visual images material the student-researchers came up with a very interesting idea in order to see whether others felt similarly to them. They prepared word cards with the different places in the school that were photographed and asked the group of students who were coming in to put them accordingly to what they believed. It was interesting to see that some of the places that the students felt safe in school, for example, were not perceived as such by all of the other students. This might have been due to the fact that these students were younger than the ones that acted as co-researchers. So, through this third step of the framework by sharing information with others a more in-depth understanding of complex issues was achieved.

In the final step of the framework, the students who worked as co-researchers, got together as a group and identified a set of areas emerging from their analysis of the data. These included the following:

- *Safety issues.* For example, the doors in a particular corridor were highlighted by most of the students as being unsafe, as they can swing and hit pupils coming from the other side. Or, a particular area of the school was identified as having stones and broken glass, which some students were throwing to other students.
- *Seating plans.* The issue of well-behaved able students (this was the phrase used by students themselves) being required to sit with pupils who misbehave came up with regard to seating plans. The well-behaved pupils felt that this affects their learning and they wanted this issue to be discussed and addressed.
- *Individuals being bullied.* Some students expressed concerns about being bullied in the school and the fact that they had not shared this with anyone else up to that point when they talked with the student co-researchers.

Subsequently, these areas of concern were presented, with appropriate supporting evidence from the data, at a meeting with the vice principal of the school. He was clearly impressed with the students' analysis, and how they supported this with evidence from their classmates' views. As a consequence, he tried to find solutions for most of these concerns in consultation with the students. As the students explained, through the discussions that took place at that meeting a set of actions to be taken were determined. So, for example, the vice principal reassured them that he would talk to the caretakers about tidying the area where there were stones and broken glass, as well as putting signs up to deter pupils from throwing them. At the same time, they all agreed that if they saw anyone continuing doing this they would explain the dangers and try to discourage them.

3. ADDRESSING MARGINALISATION

The final step of the framework deals with addressing marginalisation and encouraging inclusive thinking and practice. As illustrated in the examples of the two schools, and in other schools too, marginalisation can be addressed through the use of the framework from three perspectives: first, by taking specific actions regarding individual students, or in relation to issues that create barriers to student participation; secondly, by engaging with *all* students' voices, an approach that was found to be a productive way of addressing marginalisation; and thirdly, by focusing on the involvement of 'forgotten groups of learners' in the process of data collection and analysis.

3.1. Taking specific actions

As I discussed earlier, during the third step of the framework a set of possible actions is likely to be identified. Some of these possibilities may have emerged as the discussions took place, whereas others could have been identified later on, as those involved reflected further on what had occurred. For example, in the primary school one area that emerged that seemed to make some students feel marginalised was that of the way students' work was displayed in the school. A specific

action in regards to that took place. Or, in the secondary school, bullying of individuals emerged as an issue and specific actions were taken to address this issue. Such practical actions were put in place in order to address marginalisation. It has to be pointed out here that this does not necessarily mean eliminating marginalisation, since the concept is so complex as discussed earlier. Consequently, the actions might have to be revised on an ongoing basis in the light of new evidence brought to the surface.

3.2. Giving everyone a voice

The idea of engaging with students' views in research has become a growing trend internationally over the last years. Most of the times, the projects described in publications based around this idea entail engagement with particular groups of learners, and many times, are just limited to a small number of students (e.g. Kaplan, 2008; Lawson, 2010). This is possibly due to various practical constraints, not least that of carrying out a project that is manageable and that does not "disrupt", at least not to a large extent, what is going on in schools. Therefore, usually a group of students is selected and researchers or practitioners explore their views and develop an argument based on what a relatively small number of pupils is saying.

What is quite distinctive about the framework is that it allows and encourages everyone to have a voice. It gives the opportunity to all students in a school, a year group, or a classroom to be heard equally. This, in itself, takes away the stigma of marginalisation that some students might feel.

3.3. Involving 'forgotten students'

In those contexts where groups of students act as co-researchers, as in the example of the secondary school, their selection can be a way of addressing marginalisation.

Usually, when teachers are asked by researchers to nominate students to take part in such initiatives, they choose the ones that are most articulate and confident. In a number of schools that I have worked with, I encouraged

practitioners intentionally to use groups of students that would not be usually chosen, ones that are easily 'forgotten', possibly marginalised too. Sometimes these students are seen as being 'in the middle', i.e. not perceived as being very able, nor of constant concern and likely to receive lots of attention and other opportunities to participate in school activities.

So, for example, in the secondary school described above students were chosen to act as co-researchers because they had not previously been involved in projects. At the end of the project, when I talked to the students, one girl commented:

'I felt really important. 'Cause the same people are chosen all the time and this is really annoying. It is always the high grade students that are chosen. And we are not. We are in the middle. So, when they were coming in the class to take us out I always thought "Yes, not you this time. It is us!". And when we came to the university that was great... They always talk about equal opportunities but it's not. The same kids are chosen all the time. And it is unfair.'

For me, all of this relates to the concept of 'transformability', as defined by Susan Hart and her colleagues in their book, 'Learning Without Limits' (2007). They propose a move away from deterministic views of students' general ability in order to open up possibilities for the transformation of all learners. For me this is why the choice of students is very important and why it is worthwhile giving opportunities to groups of learners that might well be excluded from other similar opportunities. In this way, we can signal to children and young people that we are not making assumptions about their capability. In other words, like Hart and her colleagues, we are refusing to set 'limits' on what they might learn.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The process suggested through the framework relates to the idea of action research. Action research has been defined as research by practitioners to solve their own problems, as well as to improve their

professional practice (McKernan, 1996). The process suggested by the framework aims to improve practices in order to offer the best experiences to students in schools. In other words, though the emphasis is on marginalisation - and on issues that relate to it - the framework will allow subtle issues to come to the surface that might be of concern - or that can be improved - to prevent individuals from experiencing marginalisation, or, in other cases, to address issues of marginalisation that are already occurring. In this important sense, the approach can be viewed as making significant contributions to overall school improvement, albeit with a strong commitment to social justice. In offering a critique of educational action research, Hopkins (2008) makes the point that the specification made of processes in the various suggested action research models can be restricting for practitioners. He argues, 'the tight specification of process steps and cycles may trap teachers within a framework which they may come to depend on and which will, consequently, inhibit independent action.' (p.55). I feel that the framework I offer here, though presented as a step by step approach, does offer the flexibility to teachers to adapt each of the steps in a way that suits them and the reality of their school context, as the examples that I have used illustrate. I am also arguing that, through the framework, independent action is encouraged rather than prohibited.

For me, in order for the framework to be used effectively within a school, a strong commitment to engage with students' voices is needed, and, therefore, leadership is a significant issue. In other words, supportive leaders, who will make sure that the process is followed and keep everyone involved committed to the whole framework, are an essential part of the success. In this context I take success to mean an authentic engagement with students' voices and the emergence of democratic dialogue amongst teachers and students.

The framework has a contribution to make here in that it aims to open up opportunities to students to express those views that they might have not dared to do so under other circumstances. However, what is of most importance is for such views to be

heard and acted upon. In all these ways I see the framework as a way of enabling students - particularly those who might experience marginalisation of some kind - to gain a voice and ultimately become more visible within their schools. And through this process the empowerment of students is facilitated. As this occurs, it is likely that the school itself is transformed. As Fielding (2004) argues:

“Transformation requires a rupture of the ordinary and this demands as much of teachers as it does of students. Indeed, it requires a transformation of what it means to be a student; what it means to be a teacher. In effect, it requires the intermingling and interdependence of both”. (p.296)

As we have seen, the use of the framework employs collaborative structures, where practitioners and students share information and, through engaging in dialogues, arrive at collective solutions for confronting marginalisation. In these ways, a greater of interdependence between students is reinforced, as well as interdependence amongst students and adults. Where this occurs we see progress towards what others have defined as an inclusive culture (Dyson, Howes and Roberts, 2004).

As noted above, marginalisation is a complex multi-faceted notion, and therefore, it should not be assumed that following the four-step process will lead to the disappearance of marginalisation. Rather, what was found was that once such an approach is embedded in a school's work, practitioners are likely to become more sensitive to the benefits of listening to what students say and sharing concerns with them in order to find solutions. Therefore, the framework can be viewed as a means of promoting inclusion as being a never-ending process, rather than as a fixed state. Furthermore, it was found that by adopting such an approach the process of dialogue within school contexts can be facilitated. As Lodge (2005) argues, dialogue “is about engagement with others through talk to arrive at a point one would not get to alone” (p. 134). Through such dialogue, the levels of trust amongst the members of a school can increase, ultimately leading to a change in organisational culture.

Though there is a lot of published work around the theme of students' voices and its importance, there is still more work that needs to be done to demonstrate its potential impact on schools. More specifically, more needs to be known about how practitioners can put into practice student voice activities in such a way that enables them to reflect on what is happening in schools, and act upon such issues. In other words, though there are lots of practical guidelines on how to use isolated activities, a systematic way of engaging with students' voices seems to be largely absent.

The framework developed through this study demonstrates how an authentic engagement with students' voices can be achieved in schools and, how through this process issues to do with marginalisation can be addressed. In particular, it presents illustrations of how research knowledge can be constructed in close collaboration with practitioners and students, and as a result, how this can have a direct impact within school contexts.

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