

Beyond Inclusion toward the Best-loved Self: Reconsidering Identity, Knowledge, Pedagogy and Methodology in Teaching and Teacher Education

Keywords : best-loved self; diversity and inclusion; narrative inquiry

Abstract :

As school contexts globally contend with mitigations of increasingly diverse demographics, fundamental questions surrounding more equitable approaches to integration are necessarily raised. The discourses which follow often centralize racial-ethnic, linguistic, and/or nationality or immigration demographics. Such conversations can consequentially reduce students to iconographic tropes, thereby ignoring ranges of uniqueness inherent within any human individual. Indeed, such reductionism may ignore additional manifestations of diversity within any human being, thereby relegating approaches to inclusion as mechanistic functions of the schooling context, rather than something truly celebratory. This symposium rejects mechanistic approaches to inclusion, asserting within the body of work presented that, any actualization of inclusivity by PK-12 educators toward cultivations of diversity remains meaningless without preliminary and ongoing intentional considerations around the authentic cultivations of students' development of their best-loved selves (Craig, 2013). In this sense, centralization of the best-loved self concept as a pedagogical amplification to school understandings of demographic diversities provides a wider space for students to more expansively self-actualize within their schooling experiences, allowing for different forms of authentic integration to be practiced in rejection of blanket assimilation methods. As such, this symposium narratively explores examples of the best-loved self as a kind of praxis and through its practical potential within multiple dimensions of identity, pedagogy and methodology. Beginning in teacher identity, Lee presents the metaphorical understanding of the best-loved whole self through a Korean immigrant teacher's life story. Next, Scaramuzzo shares his in-depth reflection on the effects of amplifications of LGBTQ+ students' best-loved selves on remedying exclusivities of LGBTQ+ voices within the U.S education system toward a singular and crucial pragmatism. Then, moving through pedagogical integration, McIntush and Norton examine storied interconnections of social emotional learning and culturally responsive teaching from the vantage point of learners' best-loved selves. Ali's presentation follows, bridging in-service teachers' pedagogical use of technology with personal practical knowledge through their storied best-loved selves. Currens and Singer uncover a pre-service teacher's journey to find her potential best-loved self in practical coupling between mathematics and literature teaching. Shifting to a methodological sense of the best-loved self, Park ends this symposium by proposing musical narrative inquiry as an inclusive way to find new concept linkages in education and educational research. This series of presentations traverse several domains (spiritual, environmental, social-emotional, experiential, intellectual, and methodological) to bring forth insights on integration and the best-loved self.

Link with the theme of the conference

In line with the conference theme, inclusive ethics in education, this symposium presents that robust educational endeavors emerge from the intersection of inward and outward integration in spiritual, environmental, social-emotional, experiential, intellectual, and methodological dimensions of education and educational research.

Thematic axis involved:

pre- and in-services K-12 educators' practical experiences (Axis 3) and theoretical and methodological views on inclusion in academic contexts (Axis 2)

References

Craig, C. J. (2013). Teacher education and the best-loved self. *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*, 33(3), 261-272.

