

## English summaries

**Sara Högdin, 2006: Educational resources at home: A study concerning parental involvement in their children's education/ Hemmets resurser: Om ungdomars upplevelse av föräldrars stöd och engagemang i deras skolgång/ Pedagogisk Forskning i Sverige, Vol 11, No 1, pp 1-18. Stockholm. ISSN 1401-6788**

This article introduces a study concerning parental involvement in children's education. The study contains a quantitative survey among 1 193 children, 13 to 15 years old, living in a Swedish middle-sized city. The central topics of this study are; the children's experience of (i) their parents' assistance in their homework, (ii) their parents' participation in meetings at school with teachers or other parents and (iii) their parents interest in their education. Finally, these topics are analyzed in relation to the children's own activity in their education. The questionnaire, which has been used in the survey, has been analysed statistically and the results are presented in frequencies, cross tabs and logistical regressions. The situation among children with immigrant background compares to those with Swedish background. Other central perspectives are based upon gender, socio-economic class and family situation.

Previous research shows that differences in parental involvement are an important component for the exploring of differences in school achievements among pupils. Children achieve better results in school if their parents are involved in their education. Parents' who are involved, transfer positive attitudes towards education to their children and these children view their education as more important than other children do. According to previous research parental involvement even proves to be more important than family background for the children's school motivation and school achievements.

However the degree of parental involvement varies between different groups of parents. The parental involvement is lower in families with either immigrant background, low socio-economic status or in single parents' households. Parents in these groups do not have the same possibility as other parents to support their children in their education. For example, these parents often have low education, limited knowledge in the Swedish language or, especially if they are single parents less time. Children of these parents often achieve poorer results at school.

In a study by Ogbu the results show that children from some ethnical minorities achieve better results in school than children from other ethnical minorities. It is, therefore, important to examine the situation for children in

different minorities. Ogbu describes how some minorities develop a resistance to the majorities' society, which leads to a negative attitude towards education among the adults. These children often get no parental support at all. The adults' negative attitude is transferred to their children and this leads to a poor interest in education among these children.

Previous research shows that girls with immigrant background to a smaller extent receive parental support during their education. This is especially true among families from countries with a more traditional society and a more traditional view of the role of sexes. If these parents maintain these more traditional attitudes, they expect the girls to work in the household in the future and hence have no need for education.

The result from the analysis in this article shows that most of the children experience a high parental involvement in their education. Results from the previous studies are confirmed; the parental involvement is lower in families with low socio-economic status, low education, immigrant background or single parent households. Children with immigrant background from a country in East- and South Europe, the Middle East, Asia or Africa, in lower extension, experience that their parents are involved in their education, in relation to other children. Children with background in West Europe, Latin America or North America experience parental involvement to the same extent as children with Swedish background.

Logistic regressions are used to control the correlations. The results among girls and boys differ in several ways. Among girls, but not among boys, remains a significant correlation between parental involvement and the parent's education. Parents with low education are not involved in their daughters' educations, in the same extent as parents who are academically educated. However, parents seem to be involved in their son's education to the same extent, regardless of education. In a deeper analyse, education is only significant within immigrant families. In families with Swedish background parents participate in their children's education irrespective of their own education.

Among girls, yet not among boys, remains a significant correlation between parental involvement and immigrant background. Parents with background in the Middle East, Asia and Africa, in lower extension, are involved in their daughters' education. According to Ogbus study, the children in these minorities are expected to pay less attention to their education, since the parents' negative attitude towards education is often transferred to their children. This is not the case in this study. Instead, the result indicates that children, especially girls, with immigrant background, from the Middle East, Asia and Africa, have a higher activity in their education, in relation to other children. The parental involvement seems to have no effect on the girls' activity in their education. On the contrary, the parental involvement seems to have a central influence on the boys' activity. If the parents show an interest in their sons' education, the odds are ten times higher that their sons take a more active part in their education. The results demonstrate the importance of using gender perspective in this kind of studies.

**Jonas Almqvist, 2006: Rhetoric of technology in educational politics: a historical case study/ Teknikretorik i utbildningspolitik: En historisk fallstudie/ Pedagogisk Forskning i Sverige, Vol 11, No 1, pp 19–38. Stockholm. ISSN 1401-6788**

Different agents within the educational system – pupils, teachers, school leaders, debaters, public authorities, politicians and so on – may have different expectations on the use of technology. This means that the implementation and development of the usage of educational technology is a political issue, as some ways of using it in educational practices will be included while others will be excluded. Certain agents will be involved in the design of the usage of technology, whereas others will not take part. This article connects to this problem. The aim of present study is to identify expectations on the usage of educational technology and on the technology users as expressed in the curricula for the Swedish compulsory school during the years 1962–98.

When the Swedish compulsory school in the 1960s replaced the parallel school system and all children were to attend the same school system, a very specific pedagogical problem arose: education had to be individualised to serve children from different backgrounds and with different interests. Much of what is said about educational technology in the first two curricula, Lgr 62 and Lgr 69, are attempts to solve this problem. The question of individualisation, however, was shaped by different expectations of the educational system. Children were supposed to be given basic knowledge and be able to pose new questions and find the answers for themselves. This twofold ambition resulted in a central tension in the texts. On the one hand, technology was expected to be used for learning with the help of ready-made material. Conversely, technology was expected to be used only as a complement to children's observations of the world around them.

In comparison with Lgr 62, Lgr 69 further developed the issue of individualisation, but it also discussed the issue of who is to decide about the use of educational technology. There is a shift between the two curricula towards greater opportunities for the pupils to take part in the process of deciding how the educational practice is to be shaped. This is developed even further in the next curriculum, Lgr 80. The main difference between Lgr 80 and the earlier curricula is its focus on common activities in classroom practices, and not on the individual. This means that the issue of the usage of educational technology is blurred since it does not express any obvious expectations on how it shall be used. Conversely, it becomes more obvious, not in the curriculum text, but potentially in practice, since it becomes a question for the pupils and teachers to discuss.

In 1994 a new curriculum, Lpo 94, was published. In Lgr 62, 69 and 80 goals and means for educational practices are formulated, which means that they also handle questions about the use of educational technology. Lpo 94 only gives instructions about the educational goals, and thereby leaves the decision on how to shape classroom activities to teachers and pupils. Since it does not handle the question about educational means, the empirical material

is complemented with another text, the Government Communication entitled *Lärandets verktyg*.

The Government Communication has many similarities with the curricula for the compulsory school. However, there are also important differences. The expected demands from technological development to change education is similar to the ambitions formulated in the curricula of the 1960s. The great difference, however, is that in the 1960s, the school system was expected to be a central and positive force in shaping society, while in the 1990s it had to follow the technological and societal change: »Information technology demands new ways of working». There is also a focus on critical thinking in the governmental communication. Children are expected to learn how to select and judge information from various sources. However, this is not the case when it comes to the question of choosing educational methods and hence not the use of educational technology. If one is to follow the instructions in the Government Communication it is impossible not to use information technology in educational settings.

Optimism regarding technology, and the view on technology as a determinant on the educational system, returns in the texts from the 1990s, but in a slightly different manner than in the 1960s. The problems that technology was expected to solve are about technology itself. All pupils are expected to get the possibility to appropriate knowledge about the use of information technology as a tool in education for learning and for preparing them for life in the information society. In the 1960s the school was expected to be a positive force for social change, while in the 1990s it was expected to follow technological developments.

Lgr 80 differs in central parts from the earlier and later texts. The critique of the view on technology and science as positively shaping the future resulted in a shift in the curriculum: the problems that technology was expected to solve were not as obvious as they had been. The absence of the expectation of educational technology to be used for individualisation by children working by themselves, with material for learning or searching for information, leaves open the question of how technology is expected to be used. In Lgr 80 the use of technology is not taken for granted. It is a subject for discussion among teachers and pupils on how technology can be used and what problems it can solve.

When it comes to the question of who is expected to decide why and for what technology is to be used, there is a tension between two positions in the texts. The first one emphasises the role of technology itself. Most obvious is the text from the 1990s where technology demands new ways of working in educational settings. The second one argues that technology is dependent on the decisions people make. It is, however, possible to distinguish between two different positions in this latter view. On the one hand it is the experts, in this case the teachers, who are expected to decide about technology usage. This view is expressed mainly in Lgr 62. On the other hand, it is the users, that is the teachers and pupils, who are expected to decide. This is expressed in Lgr 69 and, above all, in Lgr 80.