Explanatory study on educational functions of European Baccalaureate programme

The European Baccalaureate (EB) is a curriculum offered by European Schools. Despite the EB's popularity and success since the 1950s, there needs to be more theoretical and empirical research on its educational functions and processes that shape the creation of educational functions. This study aims to fill this important research gap by delving into both planned and implemented educational functions in the context of the EB program.

The study adopts a pioneering approach by examining the dynamics between the planned and attained educational functions of the EB curriculum from multiple perspectives of economic, social, cultural, national policies functions. The research transcends conventional descriptive studies by employing an explanatory framework to understand the developmental processes underlying educational functions and the reasons behind their specific roles.

The study's innovative nature lies in its comprehensive multi-method approach, combining curriculum document analysis, questionnaires, focus groups, and classroom observations across schools in selected countries. This holistic approach ensures a nuanced understanding of educational functions from various perspectives, including the macro level of policy, the meso level of school implementation, and the micro level of classroom experiences.

Theoretically, the research contributes to advancing the conceptual understanding of curriculum functionality and the intricate processes through which educational functions emerge within international and multicultural curricular frameworks. By examining the interplay between policy intentions, school-level implementation, and lived classroom experiences, the study provides valuable insights into the complex dynamics shaping the development of intended and unintended educational functions.

The study's explanatory framework, which seeks to unravel the reasons and factors influencing the alignment or misalignment between planned and attained educational functions, has the potential to enhance curriculum functionality theories. The unique focus on exploring the "grey areas" that may emerge during curriculum implementation is a novel and significant contribution, unveiling unintended outcomes and shedding light on the dynamics of curriculum implementation, the role of stakeholders, and the potential for unintended consequences to shape the educational experience.

The findings of this research have broader implications for the design and implementation of curricula and educational programs aimed at fostering cross-cultural understanding, as societies become increasingly globalized and international. By examining the EB as a case study, the research can inform curriculum development processes, teacher training, and educational policies, ultimately contributing to more effective and inclusive educational practices. Furthermore, the study addresses an ancient problem and challenge of human school education by bridging the gap between the intended and achieved aims of the curriculum. By investigating the disconnections between planned and attained curriculum functions, the research offers valuable insights into curriculum alignment, coherence, and fidelity, informing strategies to enhance the effectiveness of educational programs.