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EDUCATIONAL POLICIES

IMPLICATIONS FOR EQUITY, EQUALITY AND EQUIVALENCE

- ABSTRACT -

The report is part of one of the studies within the project “What about equivalence” granted by The Swedish Research Council and led by Professor Tomas Englund at Örebro University, Sweden. Studying equity, equality and equivalence in education across borders includes a number of challenges associated not only to conceptualization but to other aspects such as historical and political dimensions. The different approaches that are found in sociological analyses of educational equity show this complexity. Acknowledging these limitations the aims of this report are threefold: (a) To present main issues concerning the implications for equity, equality and equivalence of the current educational policies in different national educational systems. (b) To present, and to some extent expose for further discussion, what concepts, theoretical grounds and indicators are used in the approach of the subject at issue. (c) To present some of the current concerns on equity, equality and equivalence in other educational contexts and in Sweden in order to, at a later stage, assess its possible relationship. The report also expects to be a springboard for further joint enquiry and discussions among the scholars who have been involved, and others interested in the subject at issue. The scope is therefore limited to this need to open up for mutual construction of knowledge of perspectives on a complex issue, which is of paramount importance for school practices.

The perspectives on equity, equality, and equivalence, which are presented in this report indeed vary concerning both the conceptual frames and the methodological approaches used by each contributor. Rather than a hindrance this “diversity” is assumed as a meaningful

contribution to the tenet supported in this report, that issues of equity, equality and equivalence should indeed be viewed with a broader perspective beyond simple comparison of concepts across national educational systems. The contributions here presented do indeed map this broad perspective.

Key words: equity, equality, equivalence, social justice, educational policies.