

PETRA RØISE

18. IF CAREER EDUCATION IS THE SOLUTION, WHAT IS THE IMPLIED PROBLEM?

A Critical Analysis of the Timetabled Subject of Educational Choice in Norwegian Schools

ABSTRACT

The Norwegian curriculum subject of Educational Choice aims to facilitate career learning in lower secondary school. A curriculum, as a policy document, describes the government's expectations for what all Norwegian students should be taught. The aim of this study is to contribute to a more nuanced interpretation of how this curriculum frames and limits the opportunities for articulation of problems and alternative views. Methodically, Bacchi's What's the Problem Represented to be (WPR) approach to analysis is applied. Analysis indicates that the curriculum is embedded in a neoliberal rationale. Five problem representations that frame this rationale within the curriculum, are identified. A discussion of these problem representations contributes to challenging silences in the curriculum and explores alternative ways of thinking about career learning.

INTRODUCTION

Different policies and practices regarding career education are seen throughout the Nordic countries. In Norway, the subject of Educational Choice was introduced in lower secondary schools in 2008, serving students from 13 to 15 years of age. The revised curriculum from 2015 states that the subject shall contribute to the pupils gaining competence in making career choices based on the pupils' wishes and prerequisites regarding the education and jobs they're interested in (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015a). In addition, the subject will help to give students an understanding of the importance of education, participation, and lifelong learning. Furthermore, it will provide knowledge of where different educational trajectories can lead and insight into a changing labour market.

An overview of guidance research in the Nordic countries between 2003–2016 shows a growing field of research in educational and vocational guidance in a school context (Haug et al., 2019). Recent studies have focused on critical enquiries into the governance of career guidance (Bengtsson, 2016; Kjærgård, 2012). Furthermore, recent studies outside this region show a growing interest in research and evaluation

regarding the field of career education for young students (Hooley, Watts, & Andrews, 2015; Hughes, Mann, Barnes, Baldauf, & McKeown, 2016; Kashefpakdel & Percy, 2017). Kjærgård studies the Norwegian subject of Educational Choice in light of political educational discourses and economic societal discourses (2016). However, little attention has been given to critical investigation into the curriculum of career education in Norway.

A national curriculum is a document for political governance (Aasen, Prøitz, & Rye, 2015) which is designed to underpin pedagogical thinking. This chapter critically examines the content of the curriculum of Educational Choice. It illuminates problem representations within the curriculum and discusses their significance for professional practice. Through discourse analysis, using Bacchi's What's the Problem Represented to be (WPR) approach (2009), the following question will be investigated: Which implied problems are represented in the curriculum of Educational Choice?

What Do We Mean by Career Education?

The terms *career education*, *career learning* and *Career Management Skills* (CMS) will be used throughout the chapter. Based on an analysis of the concept of CMS in a European context, Sultana (2012) introduces the following definition:

Career management skills refer to a whole range of competences which provide structured ways for individuals and groups to gather, analyse, synthesise and organise self, educational and occupational information, as well as the skills to make and implement decisions and transitions. (Sultana, 2012, p. 5)

This definition is identical to the one used in the curriculum guidance document for the subject of Educational Choice (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015b). Career learning can be seen as a process that takes place in order to acquire these skills. In the curriculum guidance document, the term career learning is used to describe a general learning process regarding the subjects of personal choice, education and occupation, and work. When these learning processes are facilitated within schools, it's labelled as career education (Guichard, 2001). Where career education is about collective learning processes within schools, career counselling is the service delivered by individuals for individuals or small groups.

RESEARCH ON CAREER EDUCATION IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

Different policies and practices regarding career education are seen throughout the Nordic countries. Short introductions to policy and practice are presented, starting with Finland, Denmark, Sweden and Iceland, before exploring career education in Norway.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Finland's concept of career guidance and counselling is an important

factor in explaining the country's low educational dropout rates, and career guidance and counselling has become a compulsory part of curricula in all Finnish schools (OECD, 2014a). Similar to Norway, career education in Finnish schools is a timetabled part of the curriculum (Plant, 2003). According to Sweet, Nissinen, and Vuorinen (2014), it consists of a total of 76 hours of scheduled activities during grades seven to nine. They report that class-based activities are usually facilitated by trained school counsellors. In addition, there is an entitlement for individual guidance and group counselling, and practical introduction-to-working life periods in workplaces (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2016). As part of the overall career education curriculum, each student in compulsory education spends two weeks in workplace to learn about the work environment (OECD, 2014a). In the OECD evaluations, the integration of career education into teaching practices in Finnish educational institutions is considered one of the subject's biggest strengths (Vuorela & Metsä, 2015).

In Danish folkeskolen (compulsory education), the compulsory subject Education & Employment is not timetabled, but needs to find its place as an integral part of other subjects or as cross-curricular activities from kindergarten to 9th grade (EMU Danmarks læringsportal, 2018). The subject consists of three areas of competence: personal choice, moving from education to work, and working life. These areas of competence are not allocated to any one independent curriculum subject, but are part of teaching in all compulsory subjects. The chapter by Skovhus and Thomsen in this book gives more detailed insight into career education in Denmark.

The situation in the Swedish school system is different from those in Finland and Denmark. Historically, the link between school and work-life has been incorporated across Swedish curricula in different ways through school reforms since the 1970s (Lovén, 2015). Since 1990, this has changed and the focus on collaboration between school and working life has weakened. There are no compulsory lessons in career education in Swedish schools, although a broad approach to career guidance has been common across the curriculum (Lovén, 2015). Information on the possibilities for upper secondary education is given by counsellors through lessons and individual talks (Euroguidance Sweden, 2015). However, career education in Sweden seems to be changing. A recent national school development programme addresses eight different thematic areas, including the topic school and work life (Skolverket, 2018). A stronger linkage between school and work has been called for. In the summer of 2018, practical work life orientation similar to that in Finland (praktisk arbetslivsorientering PRAO) became a statutory requirement in the Swedish Education Act. This means that the principal of an elementary school will be responsible for ensuring that *PRAO* is organized for a minimum of ten days for all pupils in compulsory education starting from Year 8 (Regeringskansliet, 2017).

In Iceland career education is mentioned in the national curriculum, which shall include an emphasis on

school counselling and the presentation of different occupations and study programmes as an aid in the choice of future studies and employment. (Icelandic Ministry of Education, 2008)

A recent survey shows that 42% of compulsory education in Iceland gives some sort of elective or obligatory career education in 10th grade (Erlingsdóttir & Guðmundsdóttir, 2017). This survey also shows that 78% of compulsory schools employ school counsellors. It seems that Icelandic students are subject to uneven levels of career education.

The Curricular Development of Career Education in Norway

The first curriculum for Educational Choice in Norway was introduced in 2008 (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2008). At that point, its thematic areas were stated as:

- upper secondary education and working life, mainly focussing on the structure of upper secondary education and the content of various educational programmes;
- exploration of educational programmes, including activities based on the competence goals of educational programmes in upper secondary education; and
- one's own choices, including mapping and reflecting on personal interests and dispositions related to educational and professional choice.

Borgen and Lødding (2009) evaluated the implementation of the 2008 curriculum. They pointed out that there was a danger of the subject becoming similar to other school subjects, where strong students succeeded because it included a lot of reading, writing, and reflection. On this basis, some uncertainty was reported about whether the subject's intentions could be achieved through the existing curriculum and competence goals (Borgen & Lødding, 2009). This evaluation of the curriculum showed that students had an unclear picture of how Educational Choice was composed and how their efforts in the subject were assessed. They reported that few students had a clear answer to whether the subject was helpful for the educational choices they would make in the 10th grade.

Moreover, the authors (Borgen & Lødding, 2009) conclude that unclear responsibilities between schools and regional or county municipalities contributed to the schools choosing activities that they had experience with and control over. The schools' internal career counsellors and teachers taught the subject. In order for teachers to teach Educational Choice, research shows that they need specific competences (Andreassen, 2011b; Borgen & Lødding, 2009).

The curriculum was revised in 2015 (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015a) and the following three thematic areas were defined in the revised version:

- personal choice, focusing on developing an awareness of one's interests and opportunities and reflection regarding career choices;

- education and occupation, with a focus on acquiring knowledge and practical experience regarding upper secondary education and different professions; and
- work, aiming to strengthen students' knowledge of working life and a changing labour market.

The strong focus in the first curriculum (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2008) on the exploration of structure and educational programmes in upper secondary schools was toned down in this revised version. Moreover, the role of gender and the concept of lifelong learning are introduced in the descriptions of the learning outcomes.

On an organisational level, Educational Choice comprises 110 hours, which can be distributed across the three years of lower secondary school. In practice, the 110 hours are distributed through timetables in very different ways. It is my understanding that some schools offer career education for half an hour each week, where other schools gather the hours allocated to career education into sections or projects.

A 2012 report evaluated the first curriculum in Educational Choice in Norway, including the voices of students, teachers, and school leaders (Lødding & Holen, 2012). In the report, persistent challenges were pointed out. Cooperation with external partners was regarded as both important and challenging. The subject demanded financial means and good logistics. The teaching material was lacking and there was a need to develop greater competence amongst teachers. Challenges were reported regarding the differentiation of career education in regards to the different needs of individual students (Lødding & Holen, 2012).

As Sultana (2012) points out, career education as a distinct subject can be criticized for not relating to life concerns. An integrated solution can secure stronger links between CMS and other aspects of the curriculum (Sultana, 2012). A problem that can arise is that if CMS is everybody's responsibility, there is a danger of it becoming no one's. Looking beyond the Nordic countries, we see that the UK has been trying to solve this through careers leadership (Andrews & Hooley, 2017). An integrated solution presupposes and facilitates teachers' collaboration in integrating career learning into their individual subjects, and training is required to be able to do so (Sultana, 2012). A systematic career education system, as part of a comprehensive career guidance framework, is desirable in order to inform students about the world of work and career opportunities (Hughes et al., 2016). Norway, with the curriculum subject Education Choice, is in a position to contribute to this field of research.

DISCOURSE ANALYSIS AS METHOD

Ball (1993, 2015) makes a distinction between policy-as-text and policy-as-discourse. Policy-as-text focuses on how concrete actors translate a policy into concrete practice. Policy-as-discourse focuses on how policy frames and limits the opportunities for articulating problems (Ball, 1993). A way to conduct critical policy-

as-discourse analysis is by applying Bacchi's What's the Problem Represented to be approach (WPR). According to Bacchi,

all policies are problematizing activities, they contain problem representations. (2009, p. 2)

An example from this analysis is that the curriculum of Educational Choice proposes to improve young people's insight into the world of work through work experience programmes. Following the logic of the question 'what's the problem represented to be?', if 'work experience programmes' is the proposal ('the solution'), then clearly it is assumed that young peoples' lack of work experience is 'the problem'.

The term problem representations does not focus on the linguistic construction of a text, but

approaches texts as 'levers' to open up reflections on the forms of governing, and associated effects, instituted through a particular way of constituting a 'problem'. (Bacchi & Goodwin, 2016, p. 18)

Bacchi argues that the ways in which problems are constituted draws on forms of subjectivity, influencing how we see ourselves and others (2012).

A WPR analysis builds on six core questions, as shown in Figure 18.1.

<p>What's the Problem represented to be? - approach to policy analysis</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What's the 'problem' (e.g. of 'problem gamblers', 'drug use/abuse', 'gender inequality', 'domestic violence', 'global warming', 'sexual harassment', etc.) represented to be in a specific policy or policy proposal?2. What presuppositions or assumptions underpin this representation of the 'problem'?3. How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?4. What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?5. What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?6. How/where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced, disseminated and defended? How has it been (or could it be) questioned, disrupted and replaced?

Figure 18.1. WPR analysis questions (from Bacchi, 2012)

In this case, the curriculum of Educational Choice can be seen as a policy intervention. This analysis will reveal what is being thought, for instance, about career learning in schools, about youth in general, and about the labour market. In curricula, as in any policy document, there may well be more than one problem

representation, and different kinds of representations may even be conflicting or contradictory. Identifying the underlying assumptions helps identify the epistemological and ontological assumptions framing the problem representation(s) in order to understand the knowledge and values that underpin them.

ANALYSIS

This analysis included the publicly available and current curriculum document for Educational Choice, introduced in 2015 (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015a), as well as the guiding document for teachers, which provides suggestions on how to teach the subject (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015b). The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training devised the curriculum document. The directorate is responsible for the development of kindergarten, primary, and secondary education and functions as the executive agency for the Ministry of Education and Research in Norway.

The analysis was conducted in accordance with the WPR procedure developed by Bacchi (2009). Two of Bacchi's questions were excluded from the analysis, though – 'How has this representation of the problem come about?' and 'How/where has this representation of the problem been produced, disseminated, and defended?'. Addressing them would involve a complete genealogy of the problem representations (Bacchi, 2009), which would require a separate analysis for which there was not sufficient space in the current chapter.

The curriculum documents were read in depth several times, with particular focus on the discursive assumptions and silences that are represented. Attention was also paid to tensions and contradictions, scrutinising

[...] possible gaps or limitations in this representation of the 'problem', accompanied by inventive imagining of potential alternatives. (Bacchi, 2012, p. 22)

The document was a starting point for the analysis, which also incorporated the imaginative exploration of possible assumptions that frame the curriculum. Bacchi (2012) refers to Rein and Schön (1994) when explaining framing as a process of bringing together ideas and observations in a meaningful and persuasive pattern. Such an approach to analysis shows the researcher's priorities, meaning that others might have chosen other representations.

FINDINGS

This chapter investigates the following question: Which implied problems are represented in the curriculum of Educational Choice? Rather than addressing the problem that is assumed to already exist out there in the world (i.e. youth managing careers), Bacchi's initial question requires that we go further and identify the implied

problem targeted by the curriculum. In other words, if the curriculum subject of Educational Choice is the solution, what is the implied problem?

Career guidance, in a historical perspective, has been related to education and employment (Plant & Kjærgård 2016). Current

[...] political discourses include the idea that every citizen should pursue a career and that career guidance should serve the knowledge economy and seek to increase individual's human capital and capacity to compete. (Plant & Kjærgård, 2016, p 12)

This political context for the curriculum subject is visible in different policy documents. The report of the OECD Skills Strategy Diagnostic Report Norway 2014 addresses, *inter alia*, that Norway has high dropout rates in upper secondary and higher education, while there are fewer jobs available for those with lower levels of education. Among other things, it is recommended that young people should make informed educational choices in the light of the needs of the labour market (OECD, 2014b). According to the Official Norwegian Report, good career guidance can help reduce the dropout rate in both undergraduate and higher education (NOU 2016:7, 2016). It is also stated that learning to deal with choices and transitions at a young age is economically profitable, as well as being valuable for the individual.

Following Bacchi's main question, I identified within the curriculum documents the conviction that youth can learn to manage their career choices and careers. This conviction builds on the assumption that career education contributes to the prevention of dropping out of school, as can be found in the political context for the curriculum subject. It appears that the assumption of youth being at constant risk of dropping out of school provides a rationale for addressing the problem of their lack of career management skills, with the subject of Educational Choice as a pedagogical intervention. Building on these assumptions, a general observation is that the curriculum subject is embedded in a neoliberal political rationale, visible in the individualisation of responsibility placed on youth regarding their education and future employability. As stated by Hooley, Sultana and Thomsen,

neoliberalism entails more than just an economic and political doctrine: despite its ideological claims of non-intervention, it involves extensive and invasive intrusions into vast areas of social life, including the most personal – such as, for instance, the choice of vocation, work and career. (2018, p. 8)

Analysis of the curriculum documents led to the formulation of different problem representations to frame and explore the stated observation. These representations, presented in Table 18.1, present the discursive content of Educational Choice from a critical viewpoint.

DISCUSSION

Through the five problem representations presented in Table 18.1, a neoliberal political rationale is explored. Moving forward in this chapter, the analysis of each representation will be discussed.

1. Career learning is done through a curriculum

The first problem representation that will be investigated is the simple existence of a curriculum for career learning. Organising career learning as a curriculum subject is one possible approach to facilitating career learning, where several other approaches are imaginable. Sultana (2012) discusses alternative options, for example, through a whole school approach, extracurricular activities, or a mix of these approaches. Each approach builds on different assumptions about what students need in order to live independent lives and where this is best learned. Different career education policies and practices in the Nordic countries are already presented earlier in this chapter.

In Norway, career guidance is regarded both as a responsibility of the whole school and linked to the subject of Educational Choice. The curriculum guidance document states that in order to be able to develop the subject of educational choice and to make career guidance a task for the entire school, it is a prerequisite that school management is actively promoting the development of the subject. They must ensure the anchoring of the school's career guidance and Educational Choice programmes in the school's other plans (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015b). A Norwegian report by Buland et al. (2011) shows that career guidance has become more of a task for the whole school than before. In order to strengthen the integration of career learning with other subjects, developmental research has been conducted (Hovdenak & Wilhelmsen, 2011), but more needs to be done to create policies and practices that support a whole-school approach to career learning (Buland et al., 2011).

2. The name of the subject implies a focus on educational choice

Where the mere existence of a curriculum can be critically analysed, so can its name. The curriculum name Educational Choice implies a focus on the student choosing an educational trajectory, as opposed to on work or other career activity. Teaching CMS (which Thomsen refers to as career competences) in the Nordic countries has a strong focus on the choice of education (Thomsen, 2014; Skovhus, 2016). Consequently, less attention is paid to the opportunity to facilitate learning activities that support the development of CMS among participants. When career learning activities have a learning focus instead of a focus on choice, it can often increase their meaning for both students and teachers (Thomsen & Skovhus, 2016). Danish

Table 18.1. Problem representations

<i>What's the problem represented to be?</i>	<i>What presuppositions or assumptions underpin this representation of the problem?</i>	<i>What is left unproblematic in this problem representation?</i>	<i>What effects are produced by this representation of the problem?</i>
1. Career learning is done through a career learning curriculum.	Career learning can be done in a school environment. Career guidance is a task for the entire school. Dropping out of school is an individual and societal problem.	Other approaches to career learning are imaginable.	It seems challenging to attain policies and practices that support a whole-school approach to career learning.
2. The name of the subject implies a focus on educational choice.	A strong focus on students' choice of educational trajectory is promoted.	A focus on career choice can collide with the idea of lifelong learning.	No suggestions are made on how to teach for or about lifelong learning.
3. Career learning is about individual competence and skills.	Youth can learn to manage their career, ensuring them a good career.	It's left unproblematic that careers can evolve by happenstance.	The sociocultural environment of the individual and its influence on individuals' possibilities in life is not highlighted.
4. Gender awareness needs to be promoted.	If youth were more aware, they would choose occupations that are less gender specific. It is important that work is distributed equally between sexes.	A gender-segregated labour market seems hard to change.	A focus on gender inequality is being replaced by a focus on individual awareness and individual outcomes.
5. Youth have little work experience.	Today's generation of young people have little understanding of work as a concept. Youth seem unaware of what it is like to work.	It is left unproblematic that, without an upper-secondary degree, youth have little access to the labour market.	This representation strengthens a discourse of youth being responsible for their own work experience.

research illustrates how to change perspective from choice to learning in career learning activities (Poulsen, Thomsen, Buhl, & Hagmayer, 2016).

The focus on forthcoming career choices also seems to collide with the idea of lifelong learning. On the one hand, this curriculum carries the intention of students

exploring their interests and educational opportunities after lower secondary school. On the other hand, the curriculum states competence goals related to the thematic area of work as being able to reflect on the importance of work participation and lifelong learning (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015a). In the curriculum guidance document, no suggestions are made as to how teachers can work with reflections on lifelong learning.

3. Career learning is about individual competence and skills

In the neoliberal rationale, career learning is about individual competence and skills. This implies that managing a career is a competence and a skill to be learnt, that the school environment is a suitable context for this learning, and that mastering it will secure a good career. When the intentions of a curriculum are to increase employability, the result could be that those who end up dropping out of school have only themselves to blame (Sultana, 2012). Other perspectives might be that careers can evolve by happenstance, emphasising the individuals resilience to change (Krumboltz, 2009) or that career learning is best done in a work environment, not at school.

The societal costs of dropping out of school are high and the subject of Educational Choice is presented as a way of promoting individual responsibility for employment. This trend towards the individualisation of social issues is also discussed by Sultana (2012, 2013). Responsibilities that are now seen as individual were earlier regarded as the responsibilities of communities and collectives. This modern emphasis on individualisation is worrisome in a time when ideas of solidarity are being weakened (Sultana, 2012). The problem of an individual's responsibility to finish school and get a job does not take into account other sociocultural factors that influence the individual's possibilities in life. Sultana calls for a critical approach in order to avoid

yet another way by means of which the state reframes its deficit by projecting it as personal failing, with the victim blamed for problems that are structural in nature. (Sultana, 2012, p. 9)

Supporting students in developing individual career management skills through the curriculum may result in students making more reflective career choices. However, I caution that although framing dropping out of school as risky may result in more students staying in school (this can be debated), this may not necessarily lead to happier and healthier students.

4. Gender awareness needs to be promoted

The theme of gender is introduced in the 2015 curriculum. Concerning the theme personal choice, one of the three competence goals is to explain the role of gender in educational and professional choices. With regards to the theme work, one of the six competence goals is to discuss gender-traditional educational and vocational choices

(The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015a). Furthermore, the curriculum guidance document states that it is important that students do not limit their choice of education and occupation based on gender stereotypical images (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015b). The political emphasis on gender issues could build on an underlying assumption that if students are more gender-aware, their choices in education and occupation will be less gender-specific.

Moreover, the curriculum guidance document also states that the purpose of the subject is not to have equal gender distribution in all educational trajectories and occupations, but to become aware of barriers that unconsciously affect the choices students make (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015b). A focus on gender inequality is being replaced by a focus on individual awareness and individual outcomes. Competence goals on gender awareness become a tool to reduce gender segregation in the educational and labour market, to the individual's responsibilities to take down sociocultural and political barriers created by others. This oversees the need to highlight and investigate

complex structural problems that exist beyond the school gate, where future possibilities continue to be shaped by, for instance, 'class', 'race', culture and gender, and their multiple intersections. (Irving, 2011, p. 57)

A gender-segregated labour market seems hard to change without first changing gender-segregated occupational choices. But in many ways, it is the gender-segregated labour market that has influenced the mindsets of young people.

5. Youth have little work experience

Another perspective on the problem representation is that of youth having little work experience. In the curriculum guidance document, it says that job shadowing for many students will be their first experience with work life (The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, 2015b). This can be seen as subjectification, referring to the way subjects – youth and students – are constituted within problem representations (Ball, 2015). Such subjectification can be thought about differently. Students, though maybe not active members of the working community, have experienced work life by observing their parents and through their roles as clients, customers, and patients. Teaching can, for instance, be made more practical by using these experiences as starting points for exploration.

Furthermore, the curriculum guidance document makes suggestions for experiential learning through practical activities, like visiting secondary schools and work-experience programs. These activities can involve cooperation with external actors like parents, other schools, and local businesses. Such collaboration has existed in many forms for several decades (Plant, 2020). These pedagogical interventions build on the assumption that young students have little experience with the world of work. These interventions being presented in a curriculum gives the impression that students' lack of experience can be solved through the educational system.

Andreassen (2011a) raises the question of whether the intentions of the curriculum to facilitate work experience and collaboration with external actors match poorly with the school's organisation of education. The evaluation of the first Norwegian 2008 curriculum shows that unclear responsibilities between the schools, school owners, and regional or county municipalities contributed to the schools favouring activities that they have experience with and control over (Borgen & Lødding, 2009). Furthermore, it is reported that within class situations, with little time for reflection and discussion, it seems easier for teachers to create a parallel course of activities. Another persistent issue is that of the economic and logistic side of organising experiential learning (Lødding & Holen, 2012).

It is also left unproblematic that without an upper-secondary degree, youth have little access to the labour market (OECD, 2018). Today's labour market is characterized by a hard competition for unskilled work (Statistics Norway, 2018). Other solutions could be to increase opportunities for employment by making it more attractive for employers to hire young people on a part-time basis, or to change legislation allowing more jobs to be performed by them.

LOOKING FORWARD

A curriculum draws on a particular form of subjectivity, which will shape the way teachers think about their practice and their students. The aim of this study was to investigate problem representation within the curriculum of Educational Choice, not to convey a singular truth, but in order to contribute to a discussion about what is being taught. The identified rationale was that of the individual being responsible for their own education and employability, in the near future and throughout their lives. Contesting such an individualistic mode is, for example, the research of Thomsen on collective forms of career guidance (2017).

According to Andreassen (2011a), it is a known phenomenon that societal problems in many countries are left to be solved in schools. Furthermore, she states that societal issues become school subjects without teaching competence necessarily being present. There is a need to pay attention to the training of those who teach career management skills (Sultana, 2012). In order to promote a higher priority for the subject in schools, mandatory competence requirements need to be developed (Buland, Mathisen, Mordal, Austnes-Underhaug, & Tønseth, 2014). This requirement is supported by the 2016 Official Norwegian Report on career guidance in Norway (NOU 2016:7, 2016). In order for practitioners to transform the curriculum into meaningful career education, they need to be able to critically read the curriculum from a policy perspective.

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