

INTERSECTIONAL CONTESTATIONS – THE MEANINGS OF INTEGRATION OF ‘MIGRANT’ PUPILS IN AUSTRIAN SCHOOLS

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Engaging with intersectional approaches to the study of migration politics
Online workshop - 6 July 2021



Research Question and Aims

- Education is a contested battlefield for integration policies in Austria
- Elaborating the specific role of gender in the context of education and integration policies
- Showing complexity of intersecting positions of ‚migrant‘ children

→ How does school staff negotiate the category of gender among other intersecting structures of inequality in which ‘migrant’ pupils are positioned in the context of Austrian education and integration policies?



Theoretical Foundation

→ Intersectionality as the intersection of axes of inequality (Crenshaw 1989)

Inclusionary and exclusionary forms of intersectionality:

1. “*Inclusionary intersectionality*” is sensitive and aware of intersecting power structures (Dill/Zambrana 2009)

2. “*Exclusionary intersectionality*” (Mokre/Siim 2013) runs the risk of reproducing domination and discrimination and thus excluding specific groups from society



Methods

- 52 in-depth interviews and 13 focus groups with teachers and school principals
- At 15 schools in Vienna and Eisenstadt
- Between September 2019 and January 2020



Results

1. Connection between ‘inclusionary intersectionality’ and holistic integration approach → emancipatory

- Example: reflecting Gender

“Successful integration is when no child is subject to discrimination on basis of nationality, gender or religion” (I6)

2. Connection between ‘exclusionary intersectionality’ and assimilatory integration approach

- Example: gender vs. religion and culture

“Shaking hands with women even if you are a Muslim man” (S3_5)



Conclusions

On the one hand ...

- Recognizing the integration process by taking interplay of gender with other social structures of domination into account (nationality, religion, ...)
- Emancipatory approach needs intersectional concept

On the other hand ...

- The instrumentalization of the different intersectional positions of 'migrant' students can lead to an exclusionary form of intersectionality and thus create a form of pressure to assimilate
- Reinforcing (Western) gender images, both of mainstream societies and migrant communities.



References

Crenshaw, Kimberle. “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politic.” *University of Chicago Legal Forum* (1989).

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Thank you for your attention! 😊