



**BELONGING:
INTEGRATION
INTO SCHOOL OR
WORK GROUP**

BELONGING – INTEGRATION INTO STUDENT OR STAFF GROUP

What it is:

- Feeling that you fit in / others feeling that you fit in
 - Don't have to be the same – not 'assimilated' but accepted
- Feeling that you are an active participant of the group
- Feeling that you contribute, and your contribution is valued by others
- Recognition of individual differences
- Access needs are understood and accommodated to maximise participation

What it isn't:

- Not the same as just being in the same place
- Low expectations, lack of opportunity
- May not be truly possible if not hired or admitted on same terms as others

BELONGING – INTEGRATION INTO STUDENT OR STAFF GROUP - IMPACT

Impact on inclusion (summary)*

- Not feeling accepted has negative individual impact
- Some people may exclude themselves—learned helplessness, self-stigma, low self-esteem
- Miss out on skills and talents of PWDs

Impact on good outcomes for people with disabilities (summary)*

- PWDs are free to contribute because their ideas are heard and wanted
- Builds realistic expectations and realistic self-esteem
- Personal development, greater opportunities to uncover and develop your potential (Schippers, 2010)
- Organisational development – contributes to better programmes /companies (Campbell, 2009)
- Sustainability of work—not the first to be let go
- Possibility of transforming the adult education programme or workplace (van Hove et al., tk; Mayo, tk)

* Reference all claims whenever possible

BELONGING— EVIDENCE BASE

Literature /research evidence*

- UN CRPD 2006
- WHO / World Bank 2011
- Goodley 2005 – employment opportunities
- Diverse teams in organisations – benefits of and downsides of
- Women in male-dominated / ethnic minorities in US – moving into new fields (Nussbaum)

Research gaps?

- Impact on employees without disability?

** Always highlight the quality and applicability of existing evidence:*

- *Is it a case study, small study or large study? Prioritise data from well-designed research over case studies.*
- *How long did the study last – if there is a claim for outcomes, was it long enough to see whether impacts were long-lasting? Prioritise studies where impact has been robustly investigated.*
- *Consider whether the barrier may have greater impact in some work/education settings than others, in different cultures, for women or men, etc.*

BELONGING - RESPONSES

Solutions / protective factors*:

- Participatory Action / Participatory Action Research in adult education workplaces (WRR, 2017)
- Positive examples for employers and coworkers / co-students, education leaders and PWDs (Lunch and Lunch, tk)
- Diversity awareness at high levels and within the group itself
- Building social capital in the school/workplace (Requena, tk)
- Public acknowledgement of schools and workplaces that are inclusive

Characteristics of inclusive schools and workplaces:

- Barriers eliminated to the greatest extent possible (Ward and Baker, 2005; Zolna, Sanford, Sabata and Goldthwaite, 2007)
- Someone who sees your capability and believes in you – public positive feedback
- Positive atmosphere for trying and failing and trying again
- Contributions of PWDs are publicly acknowledged

Use research about other disadvantaged groups as a basis to explore belonging and what contributes to it..

Issues in multiculturalism.

BELONGING – ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Is it applicable to all people with disabilities or for sub-groups?
 - Almost always yes... with room for choice. We need more research on this.
- What changes would be needed to address issues of intersectional barriers to participation (race, gender, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic status?)
 - Policy responses may need to be more complex to take these issues into account. Overall diversity policy response.
- What changes might be needed with different work/education groups, in different settings etc.?
 - Obviously policies need to suit the setting: awareness raising, etc. should be specific.

BELONGING - REFERENCES

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