

Coursework

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Current paper is devoted to the analysis of the paper "For Whom the School Bell Tolls: Conflicting Voices Inside an Alternative High School" by J.-H. Kim. It is the study of major conflicting voices inside a high school. The author is focused on the alternative school and demonstrates how it is different from other types of schools. Different voices of the school are presented in a specific time and space. However, all of them are valued equally and objectively. They represent conflicting positions regarding alternatives of school experience (Kim, 2006, p. 1).

The author tries to demonstrate tensions that exist in such types of schools. The following components of the research plan may be presented. At the beginning, the author outlines the essence of the problem and his object of study. He concludes that the alternative school should not be analyzed from the same positions as typical schools. The author provides a relevant review of the literature on alternative education. He presents the position of different scientists regarding the issues under consideration. Then, existing research methods are introduced. The main theoretical framework that is used is that of Bakhtinian novelness. It is presented, and the views of its five protagonists are considered in the process of analysis.

The article is the example of qualitative research. This conclusion may be reached for a number of reasons. First of all, quantitative methods such as regression and statistical analysis are not implemented in the process of research. The style of presenting information is narrative. The author is primarily focused on explaining the logical relationships between main parameters. Moreover, he presents all his examples from the qualitative perspective. The ideas and thoughts of different individuals are examined. The paper is based on dialogic conversations about the "best practice" for students. Kim shows that different scholars have different positions on this issue, and he tries to determine the

strengths and weaknesses of every point of view. Kim demonstrates that students from such schools may experience significant educational inequalities. Thus, they have unequal opportunities that cannot be considered as a normal situation for any democratic society. In fact, the author successfully outlines the essence of the problem. However, his proposed solutions are not strict and are not quantitatively specified.

Kim believes that the current era of standardization and accountability cannot expand its principles to the sphere of alternative schools. The existing problems are not properly addressed, and the students from such schools have a limited amount of opportunities and are in a disadvantaged social position in comparison with other social groups. The author uses some statistical information in the process of research. In particular, he mentions that 95% of students taking AIMS are included in the profile determined by the Arizona Department of Education (Kim, 2006, pp. 3-4). However, the use of statistical information does not mean that he implements at least some of quantitative methods. Statistics is introduced in the analysis exclusively for descriptive purposes. However, no statistical evaluation methods were implemented.

Explaining his research methods and methodology, Kim explicitly states that “more formal conversations with students and staff” were the main source of initial information for him (Kim, 2006, p. 4). At the same time, the author's methodology seems highly relevant in the case under consideration as it allows specifying main views expressing by different experts and students. This research may also contribute to the change of the paradigm in the area of alternative schooling. The author has appeared as being successful in presenting a number of fragmented stories in a coherent way that may be used for making reliable scientific conclusions and recommendations.

Reference

Kim, J. (2006). For whom the school bell tolls: Conflicting voices inside an alternative high school. *International Journal of Education and the Arts*, 7(6), pp. 1-19.