

Article

Justice, What a Dream!—Mapping Intersections of Sustainability and Inclusion

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Abstract: This paper takes on the important concepts of inclusion and sustainability, in both their broad and discursive understandings, to map out the interrelations that teachers, who work within different areas of the Austrian school system, make between different, key aspects of their work and organization. The complex intersections of school organization, sustainability, and inclusion were analyzed following a situational analysis approach that made use of different types of mapping (e.g., messy, situational, positional) of data gathered from semi-structured interviews with a teacher-training student and teachers positioned across the Austrian school system, some of whom with experience in classrooms with, for example, refugee, d/Deaf, and neurodivergent students. The findings from these data display ways of being oriented towards sustainable and responsible as well as inclusive engagement, especially within educational spheres. By and large, what emerged from the data was the clear result that school organization as a whole plays one of the biggest roles in determining whether or not non-mandatory subjects such as “sustainability” are given space and time in the classroom. Therefore, if we want to promote topics on sustainability and a focus on climate justice in education, efforts need to be made to bring these topics into the official curriculum.

Keywords: inclusion; mapping; school organization; situational analysis; sustainability



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1. Introduction

This paper presents an initial exploration into highly relevant topics of our times that have, as yet, not been thoroughly explored in relation to each other: namely, the interrelation of sustainability and inclusion within educational settings. These topics are each important in their own right, but they also affect each other in ways that are both important for us to understand and which demand solutions. For instance, while issues of sustainability and climate change affect us all, individuals with learning difficulties and those coming from vulnerable situations have been found to be particularly susceptible to the effects of climate change on their social, physical, economic, and, therefore, also psychological realities [1] (see also [2], p. 67). These concerns with sustainability and the effects it has on different members of society, therefore, necessitate that everyone should be able to engage with, be included in, and can participate in learning about and dealing with the subject (see, e.g., [3], p. 209). It is important, then, to research just how sustainability is handled in schools and in connection with inclusive policies and actions (e.g., [4], pp. 106–107).

To start laying the foundation for work at this intersection, we have taken on the important concepts of inclusion (see [5], p. 207; [6]) and sustainability (see [7], pp. 17–18, 21; see also [8], pp. 16, 20), in both their broad and discursive understandings, to map out the interrelations that teachers across school types make between different, key aspects of their work and organization (see [9], p. 57). Despite the fact that the importance of both sustainability and inclusion are promoted by a number of universal documents (such as the

SDGs) and used next to each other, details of their intersection remain under-researched. Relevant readings—among others—include Inclusion as a necessity for holistic change encompassing everyone, such as promoted by eco-feminist, eco-crip, and anti-eco-ableist strands (e.g., [10], p. 79; [11]), on the one hand, and sustainability as a topic of inclusive education in the sense of making complex knowledge and truths available to everyone (e.g., [4,12,13]) on the other hand. The latter points to the importance of educational institutions and questions of pedagogy and knowledge in the context of conveying critical perspectives on sustainability.

Using the specific case of schooling in Austria, the complex intersections of school organization, sustainability, and inclusion were analyzed following a situational analysis approach (see [14]) that made use of different types of mapping (e.g., messy, situational, positional) of data. This data was gathered from semi-structured, group interviews with seven teachers and a teacher-training student who work within different areas of the Austrian school system. Some of the interviewed teachers had, for instance, experience in classrooms with either refugee, deaf, and/or neurodivergent students. This was to assure a highly diversified sample in a small-scale qualitative study setting. Questions surrounding the teaching and practice of inclusiveness and sustainability have been at the core of this research. Therefore, in the interviews with the teachers and in analyzing the data that emerged from transcribing them, we also paid attention to how school organization, including the structure of the school system and curriculum as well as administrative aspects of schools, can and has played a role in how teachers feel, think about, and include non-mandatory topics like sustainability in the curriculum.

The answers and connections that teachers made in the interviews were approached in two steps in order to analyze and compare the intersectionality of school organization, sustainability, and inclusion. The first task of the research looked at the teachers' self-declared willingness and ability to include lessons, activities, and other extracurricular actions that teach about, promote, and support sustainability during the school day and within their school system. The second task involved determining to what extent these teachers' and their schools' practices were inclusive. Following the results, we used mapping and other imagery to help us visualize the extent to which sustainability is included in the teachers' work with their students and the extent to which the inclusion of sustainability has been enacted through inclusive practices.

The findings from these data display ways of being oriented towards sustainable and responsible as well as inclusive engagement, especially within educational spheres. By and large, what emerged from the data was the clear result that school organization as a whole plays one of the biggest roles in determining whether or not non-mandatory subjects such as "sustainability" are given space and time in the classroom. Therefore, if we want to promote topics on sustainability and a focus on climate justice in education, efforts need to be made to bring these topics into the official curriculum. Another important finding has been that, in order to see an active effort made to practice inclusiveness and sustainability and promote long-lasting change, the teachers themselves as well as the community need to be personally committed to doing so.

Inclusion and Sustainability—What Is There at a Complex Nexus?

Traditionally the term inclusion is connected to schools and education, but it also reaches far beyond. It points to the importance of enabling everyone to be part of society, working on dismantling ableist structures, and giving a voice to everyone ([15], p. 204). However, it is important to point out that it evolved from different sciences and can be found in different areas. This points to an overarching, holistic approach and principle that is often paired or intertwined with other far-reaching societal developments, among these, sustainability. In our understanding, the meaning of the word reaches beyond an understanding in the sense of ecological questions but similarly to inclusion, thus reaching beyond a one-sided interpretation but also pointing to societal change. For, since unsustainable management deprives people of the chance to realize their goals and hinders

their development, and non-sustainable lifestyles exclude and disadvantage others, it is necessary to see that the one affects the other and an inclusive society must therefore automatically be a sustainable society ([16], p. 81; [4], p. 107).

The high levels of the interrelatedness of the two concepts of inclusion and sustainability can be illustrated by taking a closer look at the United Nation's Agenda 2030. In introducing and framing the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the UN's Agenda is an important reference to the main agents and aspects both hindering and enabling change. A search of the term "Inclus*" in the document leads to 45 hits in itself [17], but the following passage taken from the document's preamble points to even more points of reference.

We are resolved to free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want to heal and secure our planet. We are determined to take the bold and transformative steps which are urgently needed to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. As we embark on this collective journey, we pledge that no one will be left behind [17].

No one is to be left behind and the implementation can only work if all are collectively on board. Under the heading of "The New Agenda" in the document, we find references to the importance of inclusion related to the economy (points 21 and 27), the standard of living (point 24), education (point 25), migration (point 29), peaceful societies (point 35), and sports (point 37). Inclusion appears as one of the guiding principles that is to enable, foster, and guide sustainable change. So apart from the obvious reference to goal 4 which points to the need and relevancy of high quality, thus inclusive, education, we might go as far as to say that none of the 17 goals work without considering all. Take SDG 1 as an example: The intersection of disability and illness and poverty has been part of the scientific discourse for a long time [18]. Often illustrated as a vicious cycle, it points to the fact that disability in many cases leads to heightened medical attention that people will either be deprived of due to lack of access or financial means or will lead to financial shortfalls due to high costs (pointing to a relation to SDG 3). Also, it is unfortunately still a given that students with disabilities are often hindered from accessing education or at least higher levels thereof (pointing to a relation to SDG 4), thus leading them to be stuck with lower-paying or no jobs at all (pointing to a relation to SDG 8). Socio-economic deprivation can have many effects, hunger being among them (pointing to a relation between SDG 2 and, e.g., 7). The interrelatedness of different factors leading to discrimination, such as disability and gender (pointing to a relation with SDG 5), also illustrates the relevance of inclusion both at a general and interrelated level. As the realization of the 17 goals is to affect and include all, measures must be taken to ensure that everyone receives access to information and has the right to speak their mind and take action—regardless of their background, their abilities, and their location. In that regard, references to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) can be drawn. The UNESCO document titled *Education for Sustainable Development: A Roadmap* outlines efforts and concrete steps to implement sustainability-aware education and educational institutions. Among the ideas promoted are the importance of involving youth and the further training of teachers and other staff. In terms of inclusive sustainable approaches, the roadmap's priority action area 2 refers to efforts that "should be made to move the culture of institutions towards collaboration, solidarity and inclusion for people of all genders and backgrounds" (see [19], p. 28).

Similar to sustainability, inclusion can only be realized if everyone is part of a whole in a way that suits them, shows them equal rights and respect. Taking an intersectional-social research position, inclusion is all about the pairing of participation and exclusion. Pedagogies, on the other hand, tend to say they focus on education for all in school. This fuzzy relationship is a challenge that is effective throughout the present discourse as well (see [20], p. 53). Nevertheless, inclusion has become an important term not only in (special) education (for further readings also see [21,22]). In their 2002 *Index for Inclusion*, Booth and Ainscow, two of the main representatives on the topic of inclusion, popularized the idea that inclusive development at the institutional level needs to combine cultural, policy-, and

practice-related aspects. This points to the fact that inclusion encompasses all walks of life and is to be understood as a process [23].

With the ratification of the UN's *Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities* (UNCRPD) in 2007, Austria committed to implementing all claims into regional law. This is relevant, for instance, with paragraph 24 which requires inclusive education. Related to this, inclusion has also become prominent within politics and society (see [24]).

This leads right back to the beginning of the section and the question of how “inclusion” is going to be defined throughout this paper. While a variety of definitions of the term “inclusion” have been suggested by different scientists, we decided to rely on a broad definition of the term. This allows us to see inclusion as the minimization of discrimination and maximization of participation for all (see [5], p. 207), and it offers a perspective that allows a look at intersections between inclusion, as an actual topic of discourse within the educational sciences and not only as a goal of modern schools, or in our case, sustainability.

To illustrate the intersection rather bluntly, the following three contexts have guided the formulation of our general research interest:

1. People prone to exclusion are more often affected by disadvantages caused by lacking sustainability. Natural hazards leading to loss of property and financial aid will hit those even harder than others.
2. In terms of education, the inclusion of students with disabilities oftentimes stops when it comes to complex topics. Sustainability and associated complex cyclical events are among these. Specific groups of persons are prevented from entering higher forms of schooling and thus prevented from gaining access. Apart from the fact that many students might not be able to attend higher levels of education due to exclusionary tendencies, the ability and resources to provide differentiated materials and the ability to explain complex (utopian) layers of future developments might be limited.
3. The impact of climate change and other hazards caused by lacking attention to changes in natural habitats, neoliberal gain-oriented lifestyles, etc., add to societal division. This is causing additional levels of vulnerabilities and leading to the emergence of new groups facing exclusion as well as rising numbers and growing precarity in the living and health conditions of those already affected. Following Pufé [16], living in a sustainable way means not unjustifiably limiting other people's opportunities. As unsustainable lifestyles often lead to the disadvantage of (groups of) people, an inclusive society must also be sustainable (p. 81). Unlike this clearly established connection between inclusion and sustainability at the societal level, little research exists regarding this connection at the school level.

These definitions are also problematic, though, as they might lead to a false sense of meaning. “Broad Inclusion” suggests that participation as understood in social sciences and pedagogical inclusion are defined in the same manner, which is not the case as elaborated above. Therefore, in our case, a broader perspective serves the purpose. For schools, this would imply institutional development, in which the education of students is a habitual activity where joint teaching becomes common property (see [25], p. 423). Concerning an Education for Sustainability, it is suggested to not only teach about the environment but also to encourage students to actively create a sustainable future (see [26], p. 5). They indeed draw a direct relationship between education and sustainability but there is no reference to inclusion. On the other hand, other authors explicitly make a connection between inclusion and sustainability. Although they define sustainability in an environmental sense and characterize inclusive education as necessary for the promotion of sustainability ([27], pp. 119–120), the study and its findings focus first and foremost on aspects of the current status of inclusiveness (in the regional context of Russia), not on the nexus of inclusive education and sustainability ([27], pp. 122–126). Nevertheless, this study also shows the importance of focusing on the relationship between sustainability and inclusion.

While there has been literature on the topics of “sustainability” and “inclusion”, there is a lack of research that has looked at the intersectionality of these specific terms and the understandings encompassed within them. Since this project has been designed in a way

to start the mapping of intersections between “sustainability” and “inclusion”, our project should, in any case, not be considered as a standalone study but as an exemplary study that inspires the collection of further data from many more contexts. In this paper, we seek a political and social understanding of inclusion as was discussed by [6], amongst others. We also rely on [9], who spoke of the school as a place to focus on so-called epochal key issues. These issues included environmental issues as well as peace, equal rights, and the media (p. 57).

2. Materials and Methods

The entire working process was methodologically guided by situational analysis, a qualitative approach that evolved from grounded theory (see [28], p. 223). The main difference with grounded theory is the look at relationality in the situation. It allows researchers to look at relations between different aspects of the situation (see [14], p. 108). We decided to work with situational analysis because we wanted to explore relations between sustainability and inclusion in the context of schools. The chosen methodology also explains the sample size, as not the size of the sample but the systematic handling of the data matters (see [29], p. 29).

To get information about the role of sustainability in Austrian schools, we decided to conduct interviews with teachers. More precisely—based on purposive sampling (see [30], p. 362)—we started contacting teachers working in inclusive contexts and/or actively engaged in supporting sustainability to have participants with knowledge of at least one of the examined topics—inclusion and sustainability. Overall, eight teachers participated in three different group interviews; at the time seven of them were actively working in different schools, and one of them was a teacher-in-training and had a job at a care facility (S1). Two of the participants (T2 and T3) were available twice and therefore took part in the group interviews twice (for an overview see Table 1). The interviews all lasted about one hour (Interview 1: 1:07 h, Interview 2: 1:03 h, and Interview 3: 1:11 h).

Table 1. Overview of Interview Participants.

Interview	Participants
1	T2, T4, T5, T6, S1 (Michelle and Juliana)
2	T3 and T7 (Juliana)
3	T1, T2, T3 (Matthias and Juliana)

All Note. The table represents who participated in the 3 group interviews. Each interview row includes the teachers who were interviewed (e.g., T2) and the researcher(s) who conducted the interview.

Due to COVID-19 restrictions during the course of this study the number of participants was limited. For this reason our sample size was also limited for this particular research project. With COVID-19 affecting what kinds of interaction and participation were possible, we had to get creative in finding people to take part in our interviews. One of us (Juliana) reached out to acquaintances and gave them permission to spread the information sheet and the consent form. Teachers for Future—a “teachers’ movement for a climate-friendly future” [31]—was contacted via their official homepage, and they sent out an email to teachers all over Vienna asking for engagement. Only one of these teachers (T7) replied to us. The situation with reaching out to teachers who work in secondary schools followed in a similar way. Of those who agreed to participate in our study, three (T1, T4, T2) work at the same school as one of our researchers (Juliana). In the end, we had a total of eight teachers (including the teacher still in training) who participated in our study.

All the teachers who participated in our study teach different subjects and have varying backgrounds (see Table 2). One teacher works on inclusion in a general public secondary school (T1). Another has also taught in inclusive classrooms but has no further training concerning inclusion (T4). The third participant also has no additional training in inclusion but works with pupils with different disabilities in their secondary school classes (T2). Two teachers participated who have explicit inclusive training and work with

neurodiverse children with different learning abilities and assigned curricula in specialized schools (T5 and T6). One of those teachers spent a year teaching in Asia. Another teacher is an activist who is working at a public secondary school in Vienna (T7). The last participant works as an inclusive elementary school teacher outside of Vienna (T3), before that he worked for a university for three years and also three years as an elementary pedagogue. Despite the relatively small sample size, the participants offer a wide range of experience for research as they work in different school types (see more in Section 4). Admittedly, the sample size does not represent the overall situation in Austrian Schools as we contacted teachers engaged with inclusion and/or sustainability and working in Vienna and the surrounding area on purpose. However, it helped gain an insight into how those topics play a role for engaged teachers. This approach allows identified aspects for further research.

Table 2. Overview of the Teachers' Subjects.

Teacher	Subjects Taught	Years of Teaching Experience
T1	Biology and German (high-level ÖGS competence)	6
T2	Mathematics and geography	4
T3	Inclusive elementary school teacher (high-level ÖGS competence)	8
T4	Physics and geography	3
T5	Inclusive training for working with neurodivergent children	9
T6	Inclusive training for working with neurodiverse children	9
T7	Arts and geography (activist: Teachers for Future)	
S1	Teacher in training and working at a care facility	none

Note. The table shows the subjects of the interviewed teachers and other noteworthy aspects.

The aspects to be asked about were determined in advance of the first two interviews. These interviews were semi-structured, with only a few questions to initiate a discussion, in order to give the participants enough room for their own opinions and for unexpected aspects. The guideline was also adapted after the first interview based on the aspects discussed. After the first two interviews, we started to create situational maps that contained all aspects of what mattered in the situation—regardless of whether they were human or nonhuman. This follows the situational analysis approach to, gather everything of potential relevance in the beginning (see [14], p. 128). Because we only met online due to the pandemic situation, we used a padlet for creating the messy situational map, so all of us could change and revise the map at any time. Once we felt we had enough information on the messy situational map, we began to focus on possible relationships between the aspects. Therefore, we were already able to ask questions in the interviews about relationships between specific aspects (see [14], p. 138). We worked both alone and in groups to explore the relationships. In doing so, we had weekly meetings where we discussed our thoughts about certain relationships, and this led us to think about aspects for which we needed more data.

We also created memos both during and after each working session. Making memos is an essential aspect of working with situational analysis. In these memos, the researcher should note interesting thoughts about the research situation as well as open questions (see [14], p. 106). The memos were especially helpful for discussing our thoughts in our weekly meetings and helped us to avoid forgetting important ideas we had. In addition, the memos are supposed to focus on the relationships that are most important. Thereby, it

is possible to decide which relationships are especially important in the research situation and, based on this, on which relationships to focus in the research process (see [28], p. 242).

After working in this way, we decided to conduct a third interview. We created one relational map for this interview that contained the most interesting relationships as well as the relationships we felt needed more explanation. The third interview was held online via Zoom, and we used the relational map to start discussing our initial results with teachers. Luckily, T2 and T3 had already participated and could participate again in this interview. Their comments on the progress of the relational mapping were especially interesting. The map used for the third interview was validated in the sense of the intense discussion that ensued. After Matthias created it purposely for the third interview, Michelle and Juliana checked its comprehensibility and thoroughness. At the end of this process, a revision of the map was undertaken. In the interview, the discussion was guided by Matthias while Juliana provided additional information and already connected the statements of the interviewees with the map. In doing so, the shown relationships could be enriched by the opinion of the teachers.

Working with Situational Analysis requires reaching saturation in the sense of Grounded Theory, meaning an “in-depth understanding of the research topic” ([32], p. 315). Regarding the main situational map—the foundation of further analysis—Saturation is reached by the absence of major changes through continuing research (see [14], p. 144). Considering the sole focus on the perspective of teachers from different schools in Vienna, the point of having no major changes to the situational map was reached after the third interview. There are, indeed, limitations by the focus on the regional context and the non-inclusion of other actants like parents and students. Nevertheless—regarding the explanatory character of the conducted research—this sample offers a suitable opportunity to start getting knowledge about a (possible) relationship between sustainability and inclusion in schools in Austria. Furthermore, starting points for future research could be identified.

Finally, we adapted the situational analysis to bring our results together. When working with situational analysis, the researcher can typically begin to create positional maps once they have gathered a set of data about the situation. Positional maps show the discourses of the research situation and what positions have been taken on these issues (see [14], p. 165). They allow us to see the heterogeneity of positions taken in the research situation (see [28], p. 245). We created three-dimensional positional maps to show the “status quo” of sustainability and inclusion in relation to the different types of Viennese school systems where our participants are teaching. These positional maps will be explained in more detail in the discussion section.

3. Results

To facilitate the reading of the results, we provide a brief overview of the key aspects we found regarding the nexus of Sustainability and Inclusion and how they are dealt with within school settings in Austria. The key aspects are divided into those explicitly important in the relational maps referred to in Section 3 and the key aspects of the positional maps explained in Section 4 (see Table 3). Nevertheless, there is an overlap of these aspects. Besides obvious similarity with the reference to the aspect of time, inclusion and sustainability are of great relevance in the relational maps. Nevertheless, they are not explicated but implicitly shown through aspects like equal opportunities and promotion of independence and participation on the one hand (esp. pointing to inclusion) and aspects like science, international resolutions, and schoolbooks in relation to sustainability.

The aspect of time was identified as a major aspect; having too little time to deal with extracurricular topics was mentioned throughout all interviews. It was used as a starting point for the analysis of the relationships as there were many connections between too little time and other aspects mentioned, referring to reasons for having (too) little time for dealing with sustainability and/or inclusion as well as to consequences of the (almost) absent examination of these topics.

Table 3. Key aspects of the analysis.

Relational Maps	Positional Maps
Aspect of time	inclusion
School organization	sustainability
Teachers' view of school (organization) and sustainability	time

Note. The table shows the key aspects identified in the analysis.

Another important factor concerned whether a focus on sustainability and/or inclusion was the way that schools are organized in Austria. On the one hand, schools were viewed as quite restrictive and not actively involved in the topics of sustainability and inclusion, whereas on the other hand, dealing with the context showed international resolutions and related policy objectives need schools to deal with these topics.

For the third interview, these two key aspects with all their relationships to other aspects were combined in one map with the view of teachers regarding a school's (organization), and sustainability as a starting point to make the focus on the teachers' perspective clear. Thereby, the explanatory character of the study is clarified, and further research interests can be developed.

The positional maps directly refer to the overarching topics of inclusion and sustainability instead of mentioning specific facets of them in order to show the results of the analysis guided by the relational maps more generally.

3.1. The Schooling Context of the Teachers' Schools

Austria has a complex school system with many specialized schools that teach different types of curricula. However, the system itself is divided into two main branches with a certain purpose: there are schools that teach "official" mainstream curricula (e.g., *Gymnasium*; what we refer to as the general and academic track public schools), and schools for students with specialized educational needs (*Sonderschule*; what we refer to as specialized schools). Usually, with some exceptions, these schools categorize students into two groups: those with and those without disabilities. With the UNCRPD's recognition and ratification of "inclusion", the system became more permeable. This has meant that some students with disabilities are taught in specialized schools at a customized pace and in less inclusive settings with specialized curricula. Part of what distinguishes these schools is that there is not just one version of the curriculum that can be adapted to students' needs; rather, it is the student who adapts to the curricula.

In the interview, two of the teachers (T5 and T6) were working full-time at a specialized school for neurodiverse children. Their teaching schedule consists of 22 lessons per week, and they are mostly teaching as a team in one class. This means that the team has full cooperation and support built into their school day. Those teachers see standardized tests, which mainly ignore the reality of the students, as particularly challenging.

One of the teachers who we interviewed was somewhat of an outlier because they work for an Austrian elementary school outside the city of Vienna (T3). At the general public elementary school, there are class teachers like the ones in specialized schools, where teachers mostly work with a comprehensive system and a less restrictive subject canon. Therefore, curricula for different students can be coordinated for one classroom more flexibly than for those who attend a multi-grade class.

Most of the teachers who participated in our study, however, have been working at a general or academic track public secondary school. These public secondary school teachers who were interviewed work in schools that also include students with sensory impairments who follow the regular "official" curriculum. One of those teachers (T7) is also an activist at Teachers for Future. These teachers say that they only have a few lessons per week in certain classrooms and a centralized and standardized test at the end, which forces teaching to the test. The class teacher could take over that task, but that could also be another burden that takes time away from teaching or focusing on allegedly more important content. Points of view on this can diverge radically. A minority of teachers initiate projects, but these

structures are fragile and are often lost after a teacher leaves a school. Consequently, these projects are also often offered during students' and teachers' free time, and sometimes students do not have the resources needed to attend additional courses.

All the teachers interviewed, no matter in which branch they were teaching, saw that there would be great potential to include more lessons on sustainability in mandatory ethics classes, especially if there is an obligation to teach about climate change and animal rights. They also criticized the lack of certain topics in textbooks and teaching materials, which are often seen as "the secret curriculum" that decide what is taught in certain classes. The academic track public secondary school in Austria, the *Gymnasium*, stands out with the extent to which content is mainstreamed (especially with the official curriculum) and in the homogenous ages of the students who attend.

3.2. Mapping the Situation and Results

The results of the interviews have been mapped in various ways in order to show the different aspects, relations, and general intersectionality of our main concepts of school organization, sustainability, and inclusion. Messy maps, interview maps, situational and positional maps helped us to determine how and what the teachers who were interviewed feel about, think about, and correlate with these three concepts. In analyzing these maps, it became apparent that, while all three concepts are interconnected (at least within these teachers' experiences), the primary relationships were between sustainability in relation to school organization and inclusion in relation to school organization (time being one of the most integral factors of this organization). Therefore, we also decided to create 3-dimensional figures which portray these relationships primarily against the school organization aspect of time.

3.3. Aspects of Time

Figures 1 and 2 below were created to show what words and concepts the teachers related to the keywords "aspect of time" and "school organization" (Figure 1 relational messy map) and how they visualize the structure of the school and community in relation to the "aspect of time" (Figure 2 relational map).

The teachers we interviewed reported not having enough time to deal with sustainability and underlined having difficulties including any topic in their lessons that is not explicitly included in the mandatory topics. This is mainly due to the little time available for open discussions and students' questions that would lead to a further engagement with relevant as well as contemporary topics. Therefore, we decided to create one relational map focusing solely on the aspect of time to emphasize the importance of this factor and its relationship to other aspects.

Society's expectations of what school should provide seem to be one reason for having too little time to talk about questions and topics that are not (explicitly) related to the taught subject. On the one hand, the school should prepare students for their prospective jobs—for example by preparing them for graduation whereas on the other hand, students should be empowered and taught to act and think independently.

"I only had senior classes, which means that I always had the content for the final matriculation exams in mind. To be honest, there's not much time left, it's like this, if something comes up, if I really notice, ok in class it looks terrible, that you say ok, you discuss it with them, [ehm] but it's difficult." [T2].

As one teacher describes, preparing for the exams is a really important part of teaching students. This results in a lack of time to speak about other—non-subject-related—questions and topics. Even when teachers would like to address other topics than the mandatory ones, it is difficult to make the time for talking about them.

The aspect of having too little time to speak about sustainability is viewed as being directly related to the organization of schools in Austria:

The word cloud diagram, titled "Sustainable Education", illustrates a network of concepts related to sustainable education. The words are arranged in a circular pattern, with lines connecting them to show relationships. The concepts include:

- Generalization
- Climate pedagogies extremely negative
- Economy vs. Sustainability
- Teacher education must improve
- stereotypes
- Rethink thought patterns
- satisfaction
- Changes in structure necessary
- Lack of creativity
- Media consume narrows thinking
- Perceived status symbol (car, phone,...)
- socialization
- Skills vs. Creativity
- Children's welfare
- Socio-economical-background
- teachers
- Headmasters / Headmistresses
- Fantasy is based on upbringing
- Not enough priority
- Insufficient top-down-management
- Cooperation with publishers
- No focus on basic cultural competences
- Teachers for Future
- Need to learn how to cooperate
- Location is key
- Children's welfare
- compulsion
- Schools
- Inflexible structures also have advantages
- Unable to prepare for the future
- Universities
- Teacher education
- School as space for endowment/sense
- Economization of schools
- Differences in creativity linked to media consume
- One person per school as climate advocate (paid position)
- Solution based actions
- Missing visions of future
- commitment
- Climate Clubs
- Necessary to offer advanced training (climate)
- researchers
- Defensive attitude
- Ministry of education
- Social justice
- Teachers, who are activists
- Plasticity of the mind is lost with age
- Ethics Class
- Teachers' attributes to students and schools
- prejudice
- Friday's for Future
- Curriculum
- „Sustainability“ underrepresented during training
- Lobbyism influences content
- vulnerability
- time
- Enabling participation
- Climate justice
- Cut budgets every year
- Defend freedom of teaching methods

Figure 1. Relational Messy Map: Aspects of Time and School Organization.

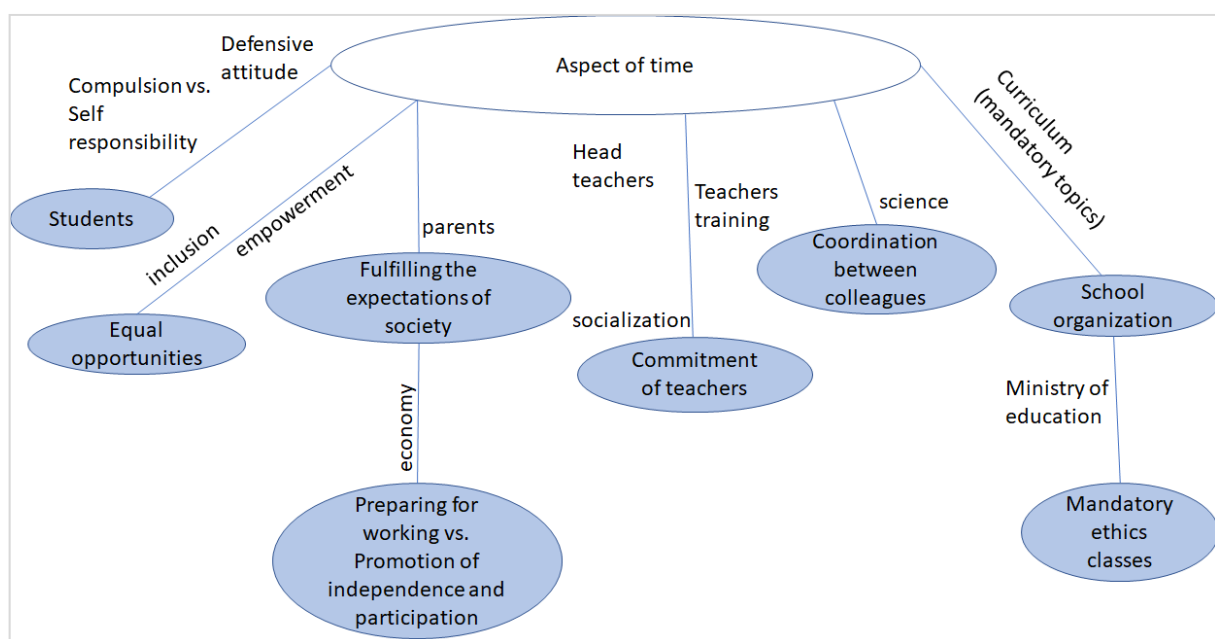


Figure 2. Aspects of Time Relational Map.

An additional problem described by the teachers is the absence of an official order to address sustainability in lessons, especially because many teachers in Austria are mainly focused on their subjects and do not bother to address more general topics.

The most important aspect mentioned in the context of the organization of schools was the possibility of mandatory ethics classes for all students. This was described as a possible solution for this aspect of time in interviews 1 and 2. Mandatory ethics classes are seen as a “step in the right direction” and as a “chance to deliver a part [of possible contributions of schools towards sustainability]” [T3]. Therefore, ethics as a mandatory subject can be described as an opportunity for those in schools to talk about relevant subjects which are not part of a special or official subject. However, there is the risk of having mandatory ethics classes leading to the problem that sustainability is no longer mentioned in other subjects; yet this topic should be present all the time [T4]. Therefore, we assume mandatory ethics classes for all students could facilitate dealing with sustainability (and other relevant topics). Nevertheless, there is a need to address sustainability in all subjects. The Austrian Ministry of Education is mentioned in this context because it has the power to decide to make ethics classes compulsory for all students.

In the context of the organization of schools, the different expectations of what schools should provide, and the debate about mandatory ethics classes for all students, it was also noted by the interviewed teachers that there is an influence of economic lobbyists on the design of curricula and thereby on schoolbooks. They see a conflict between desired, continuous economic growth on the one hand and sustainability on the other, and the teachers do not feel this conflict is really mentioned in schoolbooks. Instead, they describe the way that this conflict could be discussed in schoolbooks as a very unlikely one [T3 and T7].

This “aspect of time” that emerged from the interviews is also linked to the coordination between colleagues. Having good coordination between teachers and other colleagues can help to diminish the problem of having too little time. For example, addressing the same topic or aspect of a topic in several subjects at the same time will help to give students a better understanding of the discussed topic. In the other direction, poor coordination can lead to students being confronted with different and contrary opinions about sustainability. As a result, there is no or very little progress concerning sustainability. However, it should be noted that being confronted with different and contrary opinions is an elementary component of democracy even if it is possibly obstructive to sustainability. This aspect can be described as related to science as there are different definitions of sustainability (three-pillar-model of sustainability).

In the interviews, it was also mentioned that the focus on sustainability is related to the personal interest of the teachers and their commitment, for example, one person reported having worked with a very committed teacher [T6]. Therefore, a connection between the time aspect and the commitment of individual teachers can be assumed. It is likely that engaged teachers are also more likely to try to create time to deal with sustainability as well as inclusion. However, the possibility of implementing their own commitment and bringing it closer to the students is hampered by the fact that time resources at school are already limited, even for dealing with the official curriculum’s subject matter.

Within the context of teachers’ involvement, it can be assumed that their socialization may have an influence. The interviewed teachers pointed out the relevance of socialization and environment to the students and their attitude towards sustainability. We, therefore, assume that there are also differences among teachers, even if those we interviewed share very similar attitudes towards inclusion and sustainability.

The role of principals may also be considered in this context. Principals can encourage and support teachers’ involvement, but also limit it. For example, principals can decide whether they (want to) purchase teaching materials on sustainability or ban plastic cups from school.

A further aspect in the context of teachers’ commitment, which is also relevant in the context of school organization, is the design of training for (future) teachers. In the inter-

views, the teachers report having little or no contact with inclusion and/or sustainability during their studies. It can therefore be assumed that teachers either deal with these issues themselves or do not encounter them. Study-based treatment may cause future teachers to be more exposed to these issues, which may also result in increased engagement.

Equal opportunities for all students are another possible connection with the factor of time, although this was not mentioned in the interviews. In order to ensure equal opportunity, enough time must be allowed for the compulsory course content, so that the different learning speeds of the students do not present a problem. Sometimes there may not even be enough time to give all students the time they need to learn the content of the subject and so it is therefore difficult to discuss additional content that is not specific to the compulsory topics being handled in class.

According to the teachers' responses in the interviews, the interests of the students should also be acknowledged. One teacher reported having additional "class-teacher lessons" in which they need not deal with specific content the students have to learn, but they can talk about any topic that interests her students in general. For example, they have talked about gender justice, which refers to social sustainability but less to ecological sustainability. Thus, having time for discussing non-curricular topics does not necessarily lead to talking about (ecological) sustainability (i.e., inclusion vs. sustainability). On the other hand, students may even be reluctant to address sustainability issues, for example, because they are overwhelmed by it and its likely consequences or because of a different attitude in their immediate social environment. The question thus arises of how to deal with this.

3.4. School Organization

As seen in the data, the aspect of time was determined to be very connected to, and influenced by, various aspects of school organization. The aspect of time is not the only prominent aspect to fall within the frame of school organization. Therefore, we have also created relational maps to show the different elements of school organization found within the Austrian context (Figures 3 and 4).

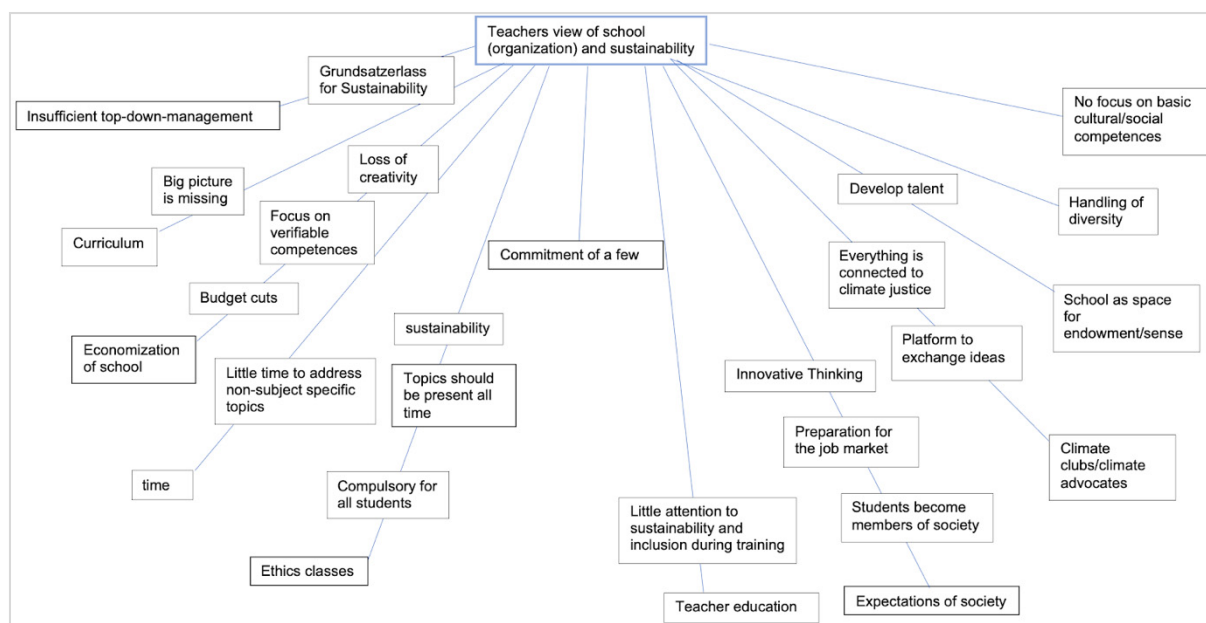


Figure 3. Relational Map: Teachers' Views of School and Sustainability.

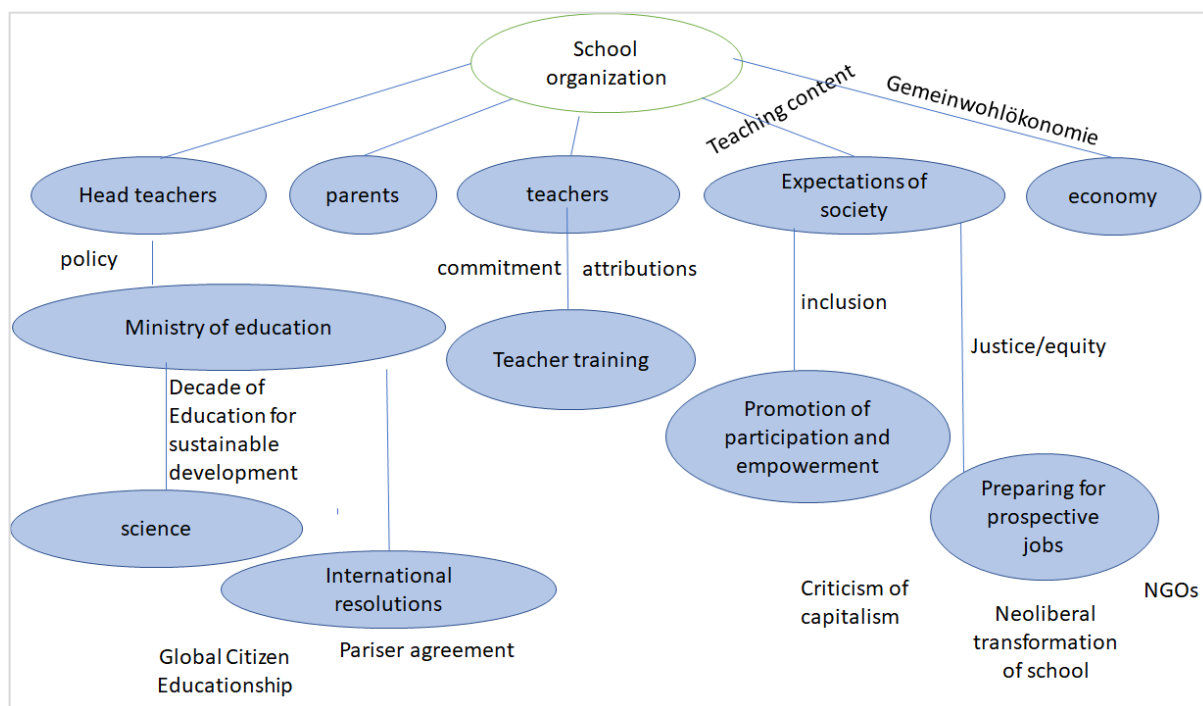


Figure 4. Relational Map: School Organization.

When interviewed, the teachers also made strong connections between the non-mandatory topics of sustainability that they wanted to include in their lesson plans and what was actually possible and available in the system (see Figure 3):

“But as long as the official order is not given and is not said: Hey, the topic is important, so it is also given from above. Not that they have to say, do sheets A, B, C now, so that the topic is worked off. Not at all. But that they just say, hey, sustainability is super important to us, you really have to include it in your lessons and put it into practice. And I think as soon as this, as long as this order is not given, it will also be quite difficult to change this thought construct [I only address what is important for me personally] in many teachers.” [T3].

This shows that the interviewed teachers regard the guidelines for mandatory topics as relevant for dealing with sustainability. In their opinion, it would be important to officially promote the discussion of sustainability to make it a mandatory topic and not to leave the discussion of this issue up to the teachers’ interests. This adds to the issue that neither sustainability nor inclusion can be addressed properly within the framework of the school and its current organization in Austria. Due to these reasons, our relational maps focus on the organization of schools and their connection to other aspects.

The economy influences school organization by affecting the curriculum and thus the content of teaching. Hence, it can be assumed that the topics covered and the perspectives from which topics are approached are influenced by economic interests. In this context, reference can be made to what is known as the “Economy for the Common Good” (*Gemeinwohl-Ökonomie*), an alternative way of shaping the economy that aims at the welfare of all and not just of individuals. It is presented as a way of dealing with the incompatibility between economic growth on the one hand and sustainable action and environmental protection on the other (see [16], p. 83).

At least at the local level (individual schools), it can be expected that parents have a possible influence on the organization of the school and/or everyday school life to a certain degree. This can be done, for example, through involvement in the parents’ council or through direct discussions with teachers and principals. This influence can both promote and hinder sustainability and inclusion.

It may also be assumed that societal expectations of the school affect the organization of the school. The organization of the school must contribute to the fulfillment of social expectations. On the one hand, it should prepare students for the job market and enable them to acquire educational qualifications that will help them to achieve their desired profession. On the other hand, the school should educate students to become independent members of society who are able to participate in it. In this context, the aspect of justice must be emphasized, because schools, especially against the background of an increasingly neo-liberal orientation, find themselves in an area of conflict between the guarantee of “high-quality” education, which helps students to achieve good qualifications and the facilitation of equal opportunities for all students.

Criticism of capitalism is mentioned at this point in the relational map because the teachers interviewed have been critical of the capitalist economic system and its effects. Among other things, the teachers have mentioned a focus of the students on status symbols. This focus is criticized, and advertising is also interpreted as a reason for this.

There is also a direct relationship between the school organization and the teachers. On the one hand, they are influenced by the school organization and must follow certain guidelines, for example, concerning mandatory topics. On the other hand, teachers can influence the organization of schools at least at the school where they are teaching. The teachers are located on the map in the “middle”, between school organization and teachers’ training (see Figure 4). This situatedness is because the way school is organized influences the teachers’ training and the way teachers are trained influences the school management and organization. In this context, we would like to point to the engagement of the teachers. This is relevant because dedicated teachers are more likely to at least try to influence the school organization for the purpose of being more supportive of their engagement.

Furthermore, the relationship between headteachers and school organizations has to be mentioned. In the interviews, it was pointed out that the headteachers have the possibility of influencing the organization of schools at least at a local level. As already stated above, they can decide whether the school still uses vending machines which produce a lot of plastic waste, or whether their school sells meat from factory farming or not. Additionally, it is seen as the task of headteachers to take measures to a certain extent for more sustainability because otherwise there would be no change [T5 and T7].

Headteachers are a kind of intermediary between the standards set by the Ministry of Education and the implementation of those standards enacted at their school. Additionally, science and international resolutions influence national decision-making levels. One example of international resolutions regarding this is the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, proclaimed by the United Nations (2005–2014). Politics is addressed in this context since decisions about the organization of schools are often made at the political level. Another important international resolution in the context of sustainability is the Paris Agreement (adopted at the end of 2015). It can also be referred to as “Global Citizenship Education” which was developed by UNESCO and “works by empowering learners of all ages to understand that these are global, not local issues and to become active promoters of more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, secure and sustainable societies” [33]. Science plays a role here because it participates in the formulation of international decisions. In addition, scientific actors are responsible for evaluating the current school system and making recommendations for meaningful changes or renovations to the school system.

4. Discussion on the Intersection of School Organization, Sustainability, and Inclusion

Since the interview participants included teachers primarily from two different school types: general and academic track public schools (e.g., *Gymnasium*) and specialized schools (e.g., *Sonderschule*), we decided to analyze our data separately for each school type as well as for general results as detailed in the previous sections. The primary reason for conducting a separate analysis was that these two different types of schools are organized in inherently different ways, especially in terms of how inclusiveness is incorporated into the school systems, resources, and curricula. In other words, since the specialized schools

are themselves set up in ways to meet the needs of students who might otherwise (i.e., in general, public schools) be categorized as “students in need of especial inclusion practices”. Our analysis of the data according to the two different school types is represented in Figures 5 and 6.

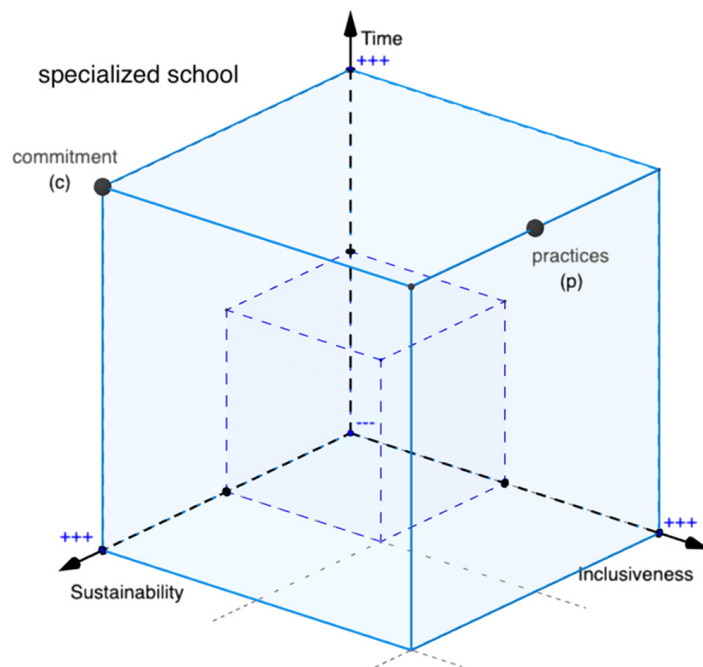


Figure 5. Positional Map: Specialized Schools. Note. Representation of significant data points from participants from the specialized school type. The +++ indicates the grade of significance of the datapoints being represented in the map in contrast with the three axes.

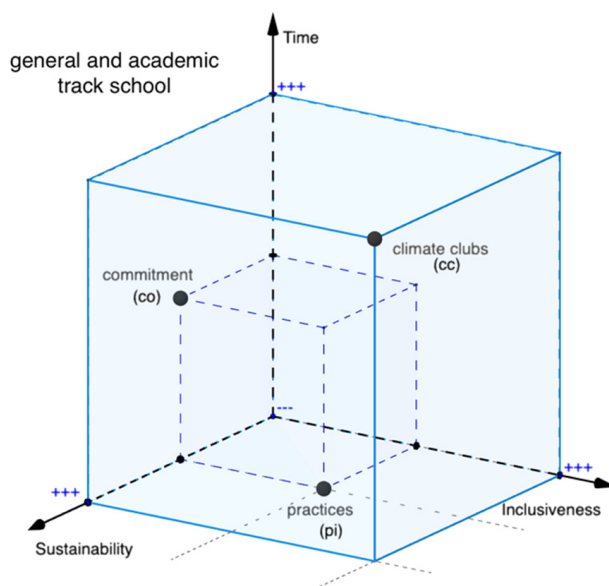


Figure 6. Positional Map: General and Academic Track Public Schools. Note. Representation of significant data points from participants from the general and academic track public school types. The +++ indicates the grade of significance of the datapoints being represented in the map in contrast with the three axes.

We decided to represent the given data in the 3-dimensional form of cubes. The 3-dimensional aspect has allowed us to portray the multiple intersections and relationships

between the different aspects of our study. Our three concepts of “sustainability” (x -axis), “inclusiveness” (y -axis), and school organization, here labeled as “time”, (z -axis) can be seen forming the foundations of the cubes—the 3-dimensional aspect of which allows for the representation of the correlation between each pair of axes.

The specialized school is represented through the cube in Figure 5. As the specialized school is purposed for educating students with, for example, diagnosed learning disabilities or particular neurodiverse needs, it is in its essence already a highly inclusive school type. It is endowed with extra resources for, and the expectation of more inclusive practices by teachers, students, and the school community both in and outside of class time. Therefore, we have understood the intersection between the specialized school and school governance to have a higher correlation than the general and academic track schools with school governance. In light of this understanding and since one of the goals of our study has been to analyze not just school governance but also the aspect of inclusion in relation to its actual and perceived intersections with sustainability, the cube in Figure 5 has been adjusted to already account for this higher correlation between “inclusion” and “time”.

Even with the adjusted cube for school type, we still see a high correlation between “inclusiveness” and “time” in the Figure 5 cube. This finding is due mostly to teachers’ efforts to include external community actors from outside of the school, especially students’ parents or guardians. While the high rate of external community involvement in the specialized school type considers activities having to do with a wide range of topics, the “practices” which are represented in the Figure 5 cube highlight the intersection of these efforts in terms of efforts related to topics or practices of “sustainability” (Point p along the y - and z -axes extended along the x -axis). Through their extended inclusive efforts, they try to encourage more sustainable practices for the whole family by, for instance, teaching about and providing produce grown regionally or with actual excursions to organic farms outside of Vienna. In this way, the teachers try to invite the larger community into the school with the aim of changing the behaviors of the students as well as of their families. However, even though the teachers put a lot of time and effort into including the external community in learning about sustainability alongside the students, these lessons did not have as much of a lasting impact as they thought they would. This lack of real, long-lasting change within the community at large can be partially answered by the socio-economic status of the families and what they are willing and able to change. This finding reminds us that addressing and trying to achieve sustainability goals can be more effective when done in connection with other issues relevant to inclusion and other UN SDGs, for example, rather than as standalone subjects.

One of the reasons that teachers in specialized schools have been able to perform more inclusive, outreach activities with the extended community (as seen in the previous point), is that, according to school policies as well as data from the interviews, specialized schools are organized with less strict regulations regarding curriculum than the other public-school types. This point of school organization for specialized schools is represented in the Figure 5 cube to show a high level of “time”. In addition, there is a high level of resources available at the specialized schools which allows teachers more flexibility in being able to incorporate voluntary topics such as sustainability into their lesson plans and activities. Yet these positive aspects of school organization are not enough on their own to see a change in the actual teaching and practice of sustainability in schools. Besides specialized schoolteachers having the available time and other resources at their disposal, the teachers who were interviewed also described having a high commitment to teaching about sustainability. It is the commitment of the teachers that brings sustainability into the classroom and makes use of the high amount of “time” at their disposal for tackling sustainable topics (Point c along the x - and z -axes). While the commitment of these teachers to incorporating “sustainability” into their school plans is high, the teachers did not show an especial commitment to more inclusive strategies in the classroom, outside of those already discussed and with the inclusive policies and resources already adjusted for in the school type. Teachers would be more likely to perform an intersection of “sustainability”

and “inclusion” if they have been trained in the ways of teaching both of these issues and practicing them at the same time.

Compared to the specialized school type, the general and academic track public schools (represented in Figure 6) follow official Austrian curricula for Viennese public schools. These schools have a high rate of standardization built into their school organization structures, with the upper academic tracked *Gymnasium*, in particular, consisting of a highly homogenous student body. Since these general and academic track, public schools are not inherently incorporating policies, practices, or perhaps even resources for inclusiveness at the different levels of school organization, from the classroom to the wider school community, the elements that determine the relation between “inclusiveness” and “time” come from extra efforts made on the part of actors, such as the general and academic public-school teachers who were interviewed for our study.

These extra efforts on the part of general and academic public-school teachers to practice inclusiveness also extend to other areas which generally need a high level of commitment in order to be incorporated into the school day—in this case, sustainability. Intersecting with the regulations (and, as we see them in terms of our study, limitations) of the public-school organization structure, teachers at these general and academic track public schools are also expected to teach lessons and use materials based on an officially recognized, mandatory curriculum which does not leave much room for extracurricular topics such as sustainability to be introduced during class time. In addition to the lack of an official mandate to teach about sustainability in schools, the commitment of the teachers towards inclusion and sustainability is also not uniform within and across the schools (Point *co*).

Since sustainability is not regularly mandated in official curricula for Viennese public schools, it is the particularly committed teachers who find ways of teaching about and/or practicing sustainability at the general and academic track, public schools. Their commitment to “inclusiveness” and “sustainability” means an increase of resources, such as time, which are especially given outside of normal classroom hours. These efforts can be seen, for instance, through collaboration tasks run between multiple teachers and in the running of extracurricular climate clubs (Point *cc* along all three *x*-, *y*-, and *z*-axes in Figure 6). When, for whatever reason, teachers are not able to commit extra time and effort towards non-mandatory practices and subjects such as those of “inclusiveness” and “sustainability”, their intersection with time has been shown to have a much lower impact (Point *pi* in the middle of the cube in Figure 6). What is more, while the cube in Figure 5 has shown that external community involvement is very high and beneficial towards incorporating inclusiveness and sustainability lessons and practices with specialized school students, the general and academic track school does not involve the external community (e.g., parents) in their school organization or decision-making.

We did not want to only look at the 3-dimensional intersections of “sustainability”, “inclusiveness”, and “time” as a separation between school types but in terms of our general findings as well. Therefore, we have included a final cube, shown in Figure 7, which situates the context of the specialized school within that of the general and academic public schools. By bringing both school types back together, we thus show the relation of the correlated data from all school types as our general findings.

Like the previous figures of cubes, the 3-dimensional figure that represents all our data together (the cube in Figure 7) shows the relationship between the various aspects of school organization (i.e., “time”) with those of “sustainability” and “inclusion”. As seen in the maps that portrayed our results in the previous section, there are many factors that have informed how schoolteachers’ commitment to sustainability and inclusiveness are practiced and whether or not these practices can be considered successful. Some of these different factors have been individually represented in this cube of overall representation.

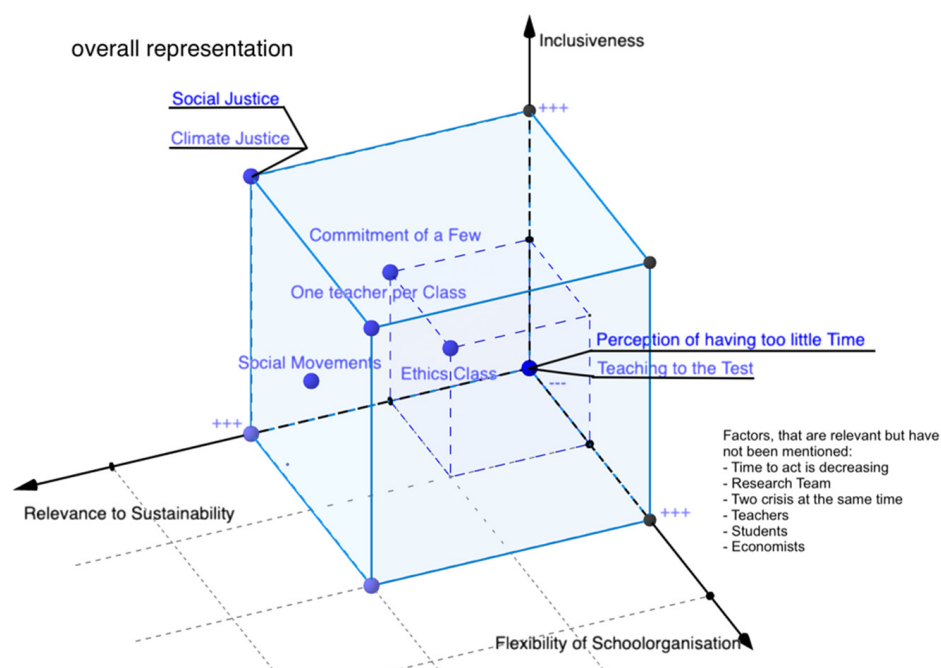


Figure 7. Positional Map: Overall Representation of Schools. Note. Representation of significant data points from all participants' school types. The +++ indicates the grade of significance of the datapoints being represented in the map in contrast with the three axes.

According to our overall data from this study, aspects of sustainability in relation to time included the teachers' self-declared willingness and ability to include lessons, activities, and other extracurricular actions that teach about, promote, and support sustainability during the school day, and within their school system. Aspects of inclusion in relation to time concern the involvement and determination of the extent to which these teachers' and their schools' practices were inclusive. These are the points that need to be highlighted and promoted, then, if we want to see headway on bringing sustainable and inclusive awareness and active practice more and more into the classroom—and, from there, everyday life.

5. Conclusions

As a result of our data from the interviews with teachers from different school types and levels in Vienna, Austria, we have determined that both sustainability and inclusion can be viewed in relation to school organization, especially the aspect of time given to a topic and/or practice. The results showed that, even though the teachers who were interviewed were working at different types of schools, there was little discrepancy between these different types of schools in terms of the interconnection between how the schools are organized and the goals and interests of the teachers. However, the difference became more remarkable in terms of school organization and the teachers' capacity to bring their goals and interests into the classroom. While inclusiveness was affected, it was the focus on sustainability and related topics which showed the gains or limitations that school organizations can ultimately have over "extra" curricula.

One of the ways we suggest for the more habitual and successful inclusion of the "extra"—yet very important and relevant—topic of sustainability in the classroom, teachers' lessons, tasks, practices, and student inclusion and involvement is to stop considering it an "extra", "voluntary" subject. Instead, we should recognize issues surrounding sustainability for what they are: global issues that affect us all and that situate us within the reality of our climate crisis. Initiatives like the important global goals listed by the United Nations in 2015 to promote awareness and effective change are an integral step towards alleviating this crisis, but we still need a wider, more universal level of awareness, understanding,

commitment, and practice of sustainable and inclusive goals in order to achieve a more positive future.

In order to make these “voluntary” subjects necessary when there are the incredibly restrictive issues of time and other resources given to topics outside the official curriculum, we must make sustainability and inclusion a mandatory part of the curriculum. At this point, we refer to the suggestion of Kidman et al. [26]—describing a framework of education for sustainability—to not only include sustainability in the curriculum but also in future curriculum development (pp. 6–7) as well as policy-making endeavors [19]. While it is very difficult and often politically contentious to add new subjects to their own, set hours in the teaching schedule, we suggest incorporating topics related to sustainability and inclusion into the already mandatory parts of the curriculum: add sustainability into the textbooks and teaching materials for mandatory ethics courses; incorporate examples and tasks concerning sustainability and inclusion into the mainstream courses for social sciences, mathematics, biology, and other sciences as they practice problem-solving skills; add reading and picture books that deal with sustainability and inclusion topics onto the reading lists and into the libraries. One example of how sustainability can be included in school geography classes in a way that really promotes sustainability can be found in the Australian context presented by Casinader and Kidman [34].

The promotion of the UN’s SDGs and specialized movements, such as Fridays for Future, promote awareness and change. For inclusion and sustainability to be effectively brought into the classroom, however, the data has shown that there is a clear trend that it is the commitment of those involved that matters. Teachers, students, the external community such as parents, and all of these groups recommend actors who have the power to greatly increase the practices of inclusiveness and sustainability, either inside or outside of the classroom, especially if they are really committed to seeing and inspiring change. For this reason, we suggest that an integral place to encourage commitment, at least in teachers, is in teacher-training schools. Though it is important to introduce and teach teachers about inclusiveness and sustainability while they are in training (see, e.g., [19], p. 30), we recommend that training bring a more personal awareness and understanding of these topics and should go further in order to encourage the understanding and commitment that pushes teachers to make the extra effort to fit inclusive and sustainable practices into their classrooms and school environments.

Finally, from these points, we also call for further interviews to be conducted for additional data collection. Expanding the knowledge-base of how “sustainability” and “inclusion”, as well as school organization, are perceived and practiced will increase our ability to understand the different aspects that affect these teaching practices and also point to contextually specific needs. Since our study here was only scratching the surface with a limited number of participants, further interviews would be useful, for example, in getting more information about how the topics of inclusion and sustainability are perceived and handled in different school systems and communities. The knowledge gained from this and further studies on inclusion and sustainability in schools can then be implemented in teacher training, especially in a way that encourages (future) teachers to deal with both topics tailored to their own school structures. In doing so, (future) teachers will be enabled to see that their action matters in order to increase their personal motivation for additional commitment.

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