

Title

A Comparative Study on Teacher Education for Diversity: Global Similarities and Context-Specific Differences

Research Overview

This study analyzed the structures of teacher education for diversity in Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. Through an international comparative analysis, we identified global similarities and context-specific differences across these countries.

Purpose of Study

As student diversity in schools continues to increase, countries worldwide are discussing how to develop teacher competencies to effectively engage with diverse learners. Teacher education for diversity takes various forms, as both the meaning of diversity in education and the nature of teacher education are highly contextualized by each country's social, cultural, and educational environments. This presentation provides a comparative analysis of teacher education for diversity across countries, highlighting their unique characteristics and identifying emerging global trends.

Two key perspectives frame this analysis. The first concerns the dimensions of diversity. According to the OECD (2023), diversity encompasses six dimensions: migration; ethnic groups, national minorities, indigenous peoples; gender, gender identity, sexual orientation; special education needs; and giftedness. This study examines the dimensions emphasized in teacher education in each country and maps the varying degrees of focus.

The second perspective concerns approach to teacher education. Although previous research has noted a shift from deficit-based to asset-based approaches, framing these approaches as a strict dichotomy may obscure the types of support needed in real educational settings. Therefore, this study positions each national approach to teacher education for diversity along a spectrum ranging from deficit- to asset-based approaches, identifying its distinctive characteristics.

Research Methods

Eight countries—Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany—were selected as case studies. Methodologically, this study examines teacher education for diversity through three structural components: research, policy, and practice. For each component, relevant materials were analyzed, and interviews were conducted with individuals involved in teacher education. Because the relationships among these three elements differ across countries and do not exist independently, this study did not attempt a rigid classification. Instead, it analyzes the characteristics of teacher education for diversity by considering how these elements interact.

For the document analysis, the research component included academic literature on teacher education and diversity education including multicultural education, anti-discrimination, and social justice education. The policy component included policy documents, such as professional standards, accreditation standards, and reports on teacher education reform. The practice component included programs' websites and related materials. Interviews were conducted with teacher educators, practicing teachers, researchers, and administrative officials involved in policymaking.

Results and Discussion

Several similarities in teacher education for diversity have emerged across countries, transcending contextual differences. First, every country focuses on specific dimensions of diversity, albeit with varying degrees of intensity. For example, Japan emphasizes special education needs and students from foreign backgrounds, whereas South Korea focuses on children of multicultural or migrant backgrounds. France and Germany have prioritized immigrant populations. Social factors such as historical discrimination, national value systems, and disparities in educational outcomes shape these focal points. However, although each country emphasizes particular dimensions, none excludes others; all share the premise that broader dimensions of diversity must be considered.

Second, countries are able to take broader dimensions of diversity into account through the use of meta-level concepts that encompass all dimensions. South Korea's global citizenship education, Germany's inclusion and intersectionality frameworks, and the United States' social justice frameworks provide overarching approaches that integrate diversity beyond individual dimensions. These concepts encourage not only knowledge acquisition but also teachers' reflection on their own values and biases as well as critical perspectives on social structures.

Third, teacher education for diversity is being actively implemented at the practical level. Underlying this process is the need to interpret the meta-level concepts that support asset-based approaches. For example, in the United States, social justice teacher education programs have adopted holistic frameworks that embed diversity and equity in community-based teacher preparation. However, these practices are sometimes dependent on specific individuals. To mitigate this, policy and research function as structural supports. Germany's state-level policies and theoretical scholarship provide

a stable foundation for implementation, whereas England's anti-racist frameworks are sustained by a scholarly tradition of critically interrogating national policies.

Moreover, practices in teacher education for diversity have prompted the reconceptualization of teacher education. They operate across systems and foster community empowerment, institutional restructuring, and reflective engagement with teachers' assumptions and biases.

Reference

OECD (2023). *Equity and Inclusion in Education: Finding Strength through Diversity*. OECD Publishing.

Keywords

Diversity; Teacher Education; Comparative Education