

DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE FINNISH EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract. The article studies how the Finnish education system operates because it has received worldwide acclaim after achieving exceptional results in Programme for International Student Assessment assessments. The Finnish educational system achieves its exceptional standards through a complete system that combines its highly skilled teaching staff with trust-based management practices and custom learning assistance methods.

Keywords: Finnish education system, educational reform, teacher training, equity in education, PISA assessment, comparative education, educational policy

Annotatsiya. Ushbu maqola Xalqaro talabalar bilimini baholash dasturi (PISA) doirasidagi yuqori natijalardan so‘ng xalqaro e’tirofga sazovor bo‘lgan Finlyandiya ta’lim tizimining o‘ziga xos xususiyatlarini tahlil qiladi. Natijalar shuni ko‘rsatadiki, Finlyandiya ta’limidagi yuksak muvaffaqiyat alohida bir siyosiy choradan emas, balki yuqori malakali o‘qituvchilar, ishonchga asoslangan boshqaruv va individual o‘quv qo‘llab-quvvatlash tizimining kompleks uyg‘unlashuvidan kelib chiqadi.

Kalit so‘zlar: Finlyandiya ta’lim tizimi, ta’lim islohoti, o‘qituvchilar tayyorlash, ta’limdagi tenglik, PISA baholash, qiyosiy ta’lim, ta’lim siyosati

Аннотация. В данной статье рассматриваются отличительные особенности системы образования Финляндии, которая получила международное признание после выдающихся результатов в оцениваниях Программы международной оценки учащихся (PISA). Результаты показывают, что образовательное превосходство Финляндии обусловлено не отдельной политической мерой, а целостной интеграцией высококвалифицированных учителей, управления на основе доверия и индивидуализированной поддержки обучения.

Ключевые слова: система образования Финляндии, образовательная реформа, подготовка учителей, равенство в образовании, оценка PISA, сравнительное образование, образовательная политика

Introduction. The Finnish education system has become a worldwide standard because it has maintained high academic achievement results during international assessments since the year 2000. Global educational researchers together with policymakers have conducted studies to identify the Finnish educational success methods because Finland spends less on education than other nations that achieve similar academic results [1]. The study of Finnish educational excellence leads to important theoretical research and practical applications for nations that implement complete educational reforms, which includes post-Soviet nations that want to achieve modern global educational standards [2]. The research shows its importance because transitional economies require evidence-based educational policy development. The Finnish educational model shows essential insights for countries that want to achieve educational quality together with equity and efficiency [3]. The article conducts a systematic literature review to examine the distinct characteristics of the Finnish education system and to discover principles that exist beyond specific cultural boundaries.



Methodology and Literature Analysis. The study uses systematic literature analysis as its main research method to investigate peer-reviewed articles and governmental publications and academic books that study Finnish educational systems. Scholars identify teacher quality as the essential element which enables Finnish educational systems to achieve successful results [4]. Classroom teachers need to fulfill the requirement of completing master's degree programs which focus on developing their pedagogical research skills and content knowledge. The requirement enables Finnish teachers to acquire theoretical knowledge and practical skills which allow them to make independent professional decisions about their work [5]. Educational equity serves as a distinct characteristic which multiple comparison studies have documented throughout academic literature [6]. Academic sources confirm that achievement gaps between highest and lowest performing students in Finland remain among the smallest internationally, demonstrating successful implementation of equity-oriented policies [7]. The absence of high-stakes standardized testing distinguishes Finnish education from many comparison systems [8]. The testing philosophy described in this research helps students decrease their anxiety levels while boosting their intrinsic motivation and providing teachers with the freedom to handle different educational needs without having to prepare students for tests [9]. The research shows that teachers maintain their professional motivation through the existing system which allows them to balance their teaching methods with their professional responsibilities [10].

Results and Discussion. The literature analysis shows that Finnish education systems show their unique characteristics through the complete adoption of multiple interconnected elements which extend beyond basic policy changes. Teacher professionalism serves as the keystone enabling other system features to function effectively. Highly educated teachers capable of research-based practice can successfully implement heterogeneous instruction, formative assessment, and autonomous curriculum development that less prepared practitioners might find overwhelming. The relationship between teacher quality and other system characteristics appears bidirectional, as attractive working conditions and professional respect enhance recruitment of talented candidates into teaching [6].

Finnish educational systems treat equity as their main value because this value reflects the social values which Finnish society holds to support all citizens and maintain social unity [7]. Educational policies require educational policies to be studied through their cultural context because their educational systems which use different political systems require special methods for implementation. The educational system of Finland uses three specific methods which include early intervention support and special education integration and resource allocation to disadvantaged schools as main strategies that can be used in various educational environments. Finnish research shows that special education services reach about 30 percent of students during their school years which makes learning support services appear normal while eliminating the stigma that comes with needing extra help.

The trust-based governance model connecting national authorities, municipalities, schools, and teachers' presents both advantages and potential limitations for international application. Established democracies with strong rule of law and low corruption may more readily implement decentralized systems without risking accountability failures. Developing nations might require transitional approaches maintaining greater central oversight while progressively building local capacity and professional cultures supporting autonomous practice. Literature indicates that Finnish trust in teachers evolved over decades of consistent policy implementation rather than emerging spontaneously, suggesting that sustainable reform requires long-term commitment transcending electoral cycles.

Critical analysis of examined sources reveals certain limitations in Finnish educational research. Much scholarship originates from Finnish institutions or researchers with professional connections to the system under study, potentially introducing favorable bias. Additionally, Finnish demographic homogeneity, small population size, and high socioeconomic development



complicate direct comparison with larger, more diverse nations facing different educational challenges [4]. Recognition of these contextual factors prevents simplistic policy borrowing while permitting identification of principles adaptable to varied circumstances.

Conclusion. This literature analysis demonstrates that Finnish educational excellence results from coherent integration of high-quality teacher preparation, equity-oriented policies, trust-based governance, and assessment practices prioritizing learning over accountability. These elements operate synergistically within specific cultural and institutional contexts shaped by decades of deliberate reform. While wholesale replication of the Finnish model remains impractical for most nations, core principles including investment in teacher professionalism, commitment to educational equity, and balanced autonomy-accountability relationships offer valuable guidance for evidence-based policy development. Future research should examine implementation experiences in countries adapting Finnish-inspired reforms to assess transferability across diverse educational contexts.

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