

II. RECENZJE I NOTY

MERJA PAKSUNIEMI, PIGGA KESKITALO (EDS) *Introduction to the Finnish Educational System*, BRILL Press, Leiden 2019, pp. 126

The last decade has changed our way of thinking about education. Academic researchers and politicians around the world were trying to create effective educational systems. Many of them failed, introducing too many reforms fast and thoughtlessly. For the last few years the Finnish educational system has become a synonym of high-quality achieved over years of hard work. The reviewed book edited by Merja Paksuniemi and Pigga Keskitalo has many virtues. It puts emphasis on empirical and theoretical understanding of how education has been developed and executed in Finland. This latest publication, published by BRILL Press, will give the reader a deep insight into the Finnish way of thinking.

The authors of this book are academic teachers, experts in the field of teacher education and vocational education. Each of the chapters is written by experienced lecturers who share the real picture of the past and current issues in Finland based on their own research results. The aim of the authors' work is comprehensibly presented in the widespread introduction. The writers describe how the educational system was built and what the aspects that influence the most learning and teaching nowadays are. The reader will comprehend the learning path from compulsory education to the vocational one as well as the primary school teacher education. According to the authors it is crucial to provide an in-depth description of the National Finnish Education System for an international audience to fully understand its phenomenon. There are seven elaborate chapters in this book with very personal and informative introduction.

Chapter one entitled 'Milestones of basic education in Finland: Pedagogy, structure and language' is written by Otso Kortekangas, Merja Paksuniemi and Heikki Ervast. They managed to present the roots of the Finnish education system including the international beginnings of Finnish basic education. What was especially called as a question is how the country's educational history influenced the current school system. This particular chapter represents an important contribution to our understanding the important aspects and milestones in the Finnish education which interest reader and keep him intrigued.

The second section is focused on tracing inclusive education and its prerequisites in the Finnish education system. Suvi Lakkala opens it with extensively described two different factors that impacted the Finnish education development. From one point of view the country's legislation and norms have gathered the understanding of the key issues of inclusive education. Nevertheless, the diverging and growing Finnish cities and upcoming demands for cost-efficiency education cause inequality in Finland.

The third part of the book 'Finnish vocational education and training in transition' written by Pertti Lakkala and Suvi Lakkala offers the reader a deep analysis of the current changes in Finnish Vocational Education and Training. The chapter starts with the short history of vocational training and then follows with reforms that took place in Finland in the last few years. The advantage of this section is relevant research knowledge, official statistics and documents from the various Finnish institutions.

Chapter four is the most specific one as it related to initial teacher education at the University of Lapland. The current situation is presented by Outi Kyrö-Ämmälä, the Vice Dean in the Faculty of Education at this college. She widely described the initial teacher education model created by the reflective practitioners and researchers in a field of education. It is mostly based on the identity formation and professional development of teachers who can facilitate schools with diverse and demanding learners in the future. This chapter indeed represents valuable and innovative approach in this particular publication.

Chapter five is dedicated to one area of particular interest which is the Sami education in Finland. The authors, Rauna Rahko-Ravanti and Pigga Keskitalo present educational needs of the Sami and the role of the Finnish educational system in it. The main aim of the chapter is to maintain the language and culture as well as present the challenges that Sami students and teachers face in their everyday life. The writer managed to present his ideas with balance between the theory and best practices tested by the authors.

The sixth chapter is entitled 'Immigrant students in the Finnish educational system' and was written by a doctoral researcher Minna Körkkö. She describes a brief history of immigration and draws our attention to the main principles of organising immigrant education. The author in a detailed way marks main problems and challenges that need to be faced to develop the educational system for immigrants in Finland.

The last, seventh chapter written by Päivi Rasi, Marjaana Kangas and Heli Ruokamo is dedicated to promoting multiliteracy in the Finnish education. They provide the reader with a complex definition of multiliteracy in a theoretical and practical way. With a reference to the national core curricula for basic and upper secondary education, the reader gets a deep insight into presented issues. What is more important, in this chapter teachers will find the guidelines how to use teaching practice to promote students' multiliteracy not only in Finland. The six-steps pedagogical model is also worth mentioning the main role of which is to include multiliteracy in cross-curricular phenomenon-based learning.

Introduction to the Finnish Educational System is essential reading for anyone interested in the Finnish educational system from the practical or scientific perspective. Merja Paksuniemi and Pigga Keskitalo did a great job of selecting contributors with the most forward-looking research ideas. All things considered, this publication gives a complex and diverse insight into current situation of the Finnish education system. The book includes such features as straightforward writing style, example of working systems and reasonably broad coverage of the field of comparative education. To put it briefly, this book will keep the reader's focus and interest from the first page to the last one. Although a number of important issues are raised in this publication, they are sadly not considered in adequate depth.

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