

AUKŠTASIS MOKSLAS IR STUDIJOS

Development of Comparative Education Worldwide and at Universities of Lithuania

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This article compares the state of the field of Comparative Education in Lithuania with developments internationally. As in most of the countries of the erstwhile Eastern Bloc, the confluence of circumstances in the past decades resulted in Comparative Education being strongly and visibly present in courses taught at pre-graduate and postgraduate levels at universities in Lithuania since 1990. What is absent are research institutes of Comparative Education, also established chairs of Comparative Education, Comparative Education departments and academics exclusively occupied with (teaching and conducting research in) Comparative Education. Comparativists in Lithuania are also not strongly connected with each other and with the international Comparative Education community. While Comparative Education research gets done vigorously and the themes of research are very topical and include equity issues (including gender equity), quality and quality assurance, internationalization of higher education, the societal effects of education (e.g., the effect of education on values, including the political values of students, the effect of education on economic development or on social mobility) and research on the learning of students.

Key words: Comparative Education, Lithuania, education research agenda, teacher education

Introduction

Education is assuming an ever important place in the modern world, more so within the context of a nascent knowledge economy, i.e. where the production and employment of new knowledge is becoming the driving axis of the economy. Education has come to be understood in terms of national economic survival and, therefore, has been marked as a national priority in

many countries, more so as it is commonly recognized that the production economy is being overtaken by the knowledge economy (Pang, 2013, p. 19). One pivotal part of any national education project is teacher education. It is widely believed that an education system can only be as good as its teacher corps; the metaphor is a stream cannot rise higher than its point of origin. Comparative Education commonly occurs

as part of teacher education programmes. As is the case with any other sector of the education system, a regular stocktaking and assessment of teacher education programmes, in this case the occurrence and employment of Comparative Education in such programmes, is a wholesome practice. One way of undertaking such an exercise of stocktaking and assessment is to hold up the state of Comparative Education at universities nationally in the mirror of the developments internationally. The aim of this article is to compare the state of the field of Comparative Education in Lithuania with developments internationally.

The use of comparative-international perspectives is a widely accepted and appreciated method of approaching issues of educational praxis (Manzon, 2011, p. 174–175) and of illuminating the theoretical edifice of scholarly pursuits. An example of the latter within the field of Higher Education is Tight's (2007) comparison of articles in higher education journals published inside and outside North America. Comparing a domestic or national education and scholarly project with international developments in that particular field constitutes a force that counters academic parochialism, inbreeding, and intellectual shortsightedness – as well as the fog of proximity. Such an exercise is especially wholesome in Lithuania, with the academic community still recuperating from the effects of the relative isolation of the academic world outside the erstwhile Eastern Bloc, and where the country lies somewhat peripheral to the node of international academic network (North America and the core countries of Western Europe).

The article commences with a theoretical framework, a working definition

of what is meant and what is included under the term “Comparative Education”, and enumerating the three ways in which Comparative Education can be present in education programmes at universities. That is followed by a historical survey of the trajectory of Comparative Education as it has figured at universities worldwide. From such a survey, the significance of the field of Comparative Education is spelled out. The focus then shifts to the place of Comparative Education at universities in Lithuania. The position of Comparative Education at universities in Lithuania is then compared with that of Comparative Education elsewhere in the world, and in conclusion some recommendations for Comparative Education at universities in Lithuania are made.

Theoretical framework

Comparative Education: Conceptual clarification

Comparative Education is conceptually difficult to define; it is an ever growing, dynamic field. Comparative Education has been described as an amorphous field (Wilson, 1994, p. 480) or an “eclectic / diverse field with adjustable borders and contours which are difficult to demarcate” (Epstein, Carroll, 2005, p. 62). Since Jullien coined the term “Comparative Education” almost two centuries ago, many eminent scholars in the field have attempted to distill a definition for the field; but a neat, perfect definition remains an evading ideal.

For the purposes of the article, the following working definition, taken from Wolhuter (2013), will be used. Comparative Education can be defined as having a “three in one” perspective on education:

- an education *system* perspective;
- a contextual perspective;
- a comparative perspective.

Comparative Education focuses on the education *system*. The focus of Comparative Education is broader than must the education system *per se*. The education system is studied within its societal context and is regarded as being shaped by, or as being the outcome of, societal forces (geographic, demographic, social, economic, cultural, political, and religious). Finally, Comparative Education does not contend with studying one education system in its societal context in isolation. Various education systems, shaped by their societal contexts, are compared; hence the comparative perspective.

Ways in which Comparative Education can exist at universities

Comparative Education at universities can exist in one of three ways:

- it can be visibly and explicitly present in the form of Comparative Education modules under that name and with academics appointed as comparativists, e.g., in Comparative Education Chairs;
- it can be present not explicitly, but subsumed in courses such as “Globalization and Education” or “Education and Economic Development”;
- Comparative Education can be totally absent from programmes and curricula and in terms of infrastructure (such as a faculty with a brief to teach and to do research in Comparative Education)

Comparative Education at universities: pre-history

While Comparative Education appeared explicitly at universities only as late as the beginning of the twentieth century, it had had a long extra-university pre-history. This pre-history appeared in two forms, namely travelers’ tales and the systematic study of foreign education systems with the intention to borrow best practices to improve the own education system.

Comparison is a typically human activity. It could, therefore, be hypothesized that the first human beings, upon having made contact with communities, societies and cultures other than their own, started to compare their own societies, communities and cultures, including their ways of raising children, with that of others. The oldest written account of such comparison is in the biography which the Greek author Xenophon (c. 430–355 B. C.) wrote of the Persian king Cyrus. In this biography, he compared the Greek and the Persian ways of raising children. Such comparisons and written accounts multiplied as travelling became easier and widespread, during the times of the Roman Empire (travelers’ tales of the education and child-raising customs of foreign cultures and societies appear in i.a. the writings of Tacitus and Cicero), the Islam Empire (the writings of Ibn Khaldun), much more so during the times of explorations, missionary activities and colonization, even more when mass media came into existence. In the form of newspaper and popular journal articles, films such as “Not Without My Daughter”, containing comparisons between the Muslim and American ways of raising children and books such as “Battle Hymn of the Tiger

Mother” by Amy Chua (2011) containing a personal narrative of a child of Chinese immigrants in the United States of America; comparing American and Chinese ways of raising children, these colourful (if unscientific) lay comparisons continue to abound.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, a new kind of educational traveler got on the scene. Mostly government officials studied education systems and educational developments in foreign countries, with the goal to borrow best ideas, methods, insights and practices, i.e. to import them to improve their own education systems back home. These developments could be understood against the backdrop of the rise of national states in the countries of Western Europe and Northern America at that time, and the establishment of national education systems of primary education in the states as part of the national project of state and nation formation.

At the direction of the French Ministry of Education, Victor Cousin (1792–1867) undertook a study tour of Prussia in 1831 and in the following year delivered his report in two parts on his findings: “Report on the State of Public Instruction in Prussia”. The fundamental law establishing the French system of primary education, the Guizot Law of 1833, was based on Cousin’s report. Another example is the American Horace Mann who traveled to Prussia in the 1840s and identified segments of its educational system, which might be successfully transplanted into US schools (Kubow, Fossum, 2003).

These politically inspired comparisons generally do not comply with the rigors of scientific scholarship. Often, on the basis of pre-conceived ideas, beliefs and preju-

ices, rather than on the basis of evidence, some systems and practices are declared better than others. Another major problem is the summarily borrowing of educational practices, without taking into account the contextual differences between the two countries (the exporting and the importing country).

First six decades of the twentieth century: Comparative Education’s rise in North America and Western Europe

James Earl Russell taught the first course in Comparative Education, and this occurred at Teachers College, Columbia University (TC) in 1900 (Bereday, 1964). Following Isaac Kandel’s ground-breaking course at this very College Comparative Education as a taught course spread to many universities in the United States of America (USA) during the 1920s. Examples of TC alumni starting Comparative Education courses elsewhere in the USA include Thomas Woody at Pennsylvania, William Clark Trow at Michigan, and Paul Hanna at Stanford (Wilson, 1994a, p. 462).

The trajectory of Comparative Education at universities in the USA during the twentieth century continued at an upward direction, reaching a zenith during the post-Second World War decades, especially during the 1960s. The post-war decades ushered in a dynamic period for comparative education, with the development of the UNESCO (founded in 1945) and the slow inclusion of educational issues within institutions such as the World Bank and USAID. This post-war era, also a time of decolonization worldwide, focused considerable attention on the relationship of education to national development. The

time of the Human Capital Theory, first expounded by Nobel laureate Theodore Schultz in his 1961 presidential address to the American Association of Economists, and the time of the Truman Doctrine, with foreign aid (and education being a pivotal part of this), and the establishment of the Peace Corps all bode well for Comparative Education in the United States of America. At universities, such as UCLA, Comparative Education programmes were launched, while the University of Chicago's Center for Comparative Education, headed by C. Arnold Anderson, came into being.

The history of Comparative Education at Canadian universities can also be traced back to TC. In 1913, Peter Sandiford, a contemporary of Isaac Kandel at TC, moved to Canada where he taught at the University of Toronto till 1941. In 1918, he published the textbook "Comparative Education". However, it was not until the 1950s and the 1960s that Comparative Education spread across the country (Larsen et al., 2013: 172). Antanas Paplauskas-Ramunas headed the Centre for Comparative Education at the University of Ottawa from 1954, Joseph Katz established Comparative Education at the University of British Columbia, and in 1960 Reginald Edwards initiated Comparative Education at McGill University in Montreal, Quebec. A landmark in the development of Comparative Education in Canada was the establishment of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in 1964 at the University of Toronto.

During these first seven decades of the twentieth century, Comparative Education also made its first appearance at universities in Western Europe. The Institute of

Education, University of London, founded in 1931, was an important centre. At universities in Great Britain, Comparative Education programmes were founded by Brian Holmes, Joseph Lauwerys, Edmund King, Vernon Mallinson, and WD Halls. In Germany, in the 1950s and 1960s, the development of Comparative Education at universities was done by Friedrich Schneider (Munich), Franz Hilker (Wiesbaden), Friedrich Edding (Berlin), and Walter Merck and Gottfried Hausmann (Hamburg). In East Asia and South America (notably in Brazil), some beginnings were made, too. In Japan, the first chair of Comparative Education was established at Kyushu University in 1952. These were followed by chairs of Comparative Education being established at Hiroshima University, Kyoto University, and Tokyo University.

1970s and 1980s ebbing the tide: A reversal of the fortunes of Comparative Education at universities

A number of factors resulted in Comparative Education at universities falling on hard ground in the 1970s and 1980s, wiping out many of the gains made during the preceding six centuries. In the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the United States of America's population and scholars tended to look inward, and interest in affairs and education abroad was not so high as before (*cf.* Wolhuter, 2008, p. 327–328). In his 1972 CIES (Comparative and International Education Society) presidential address, Andreas Kazamias complained how Comparative Education posts had dried up in the USA. By 1990, Lawson (1990) reports that it was very uncommon to find more

than one Comparative Education specialist attached to a university in the USA.

The oil crisis and the ensuing global economic slowdown since 1973 saw the spectacular worldwide education expansion of the 1960s coming to a grinding halt or at best a slowdown in the 1970s (*cf.* Coombs, 1985). This economic slowdown also resulted in a decrease in the creation of academic posts at universities.

The woes of the 1970s were compounded by the neo-liberal economic revolution which took force in the Western Countries in the 1980s. In tune with the time-spirit of the neo-liberal economic revolution, teacher education at universities in many developed countries changed from a scholarly grounding of the basic sub-disciplines of education (such as History of Education, Philosophy of Education, Educational Psychology, and Comparative Education) to the training in a set of skills, much alike training of tradesmen (Altbach, 1991). By 1990, Holmes (1990) reports that only one British university had an established chair of Comparative Education, although Comparative Education was taught at eight more. One exception was Greece. After the democratization of Greece in 1974, teacher-trade unions called for the professionalization of the teaching occupation; one way thereto was by upgrading teacher education programmes: universities had to educate teachers, and Comparative Education became part of the newly instituted teacher education programmes at universities in Greece (Karras, 2013: 78). Also, in Sub-Saharan Africa, universities emerged in newly independent countries. Teacher education was the mainstay of these universities, and Comparative Education often figured prominently in teacher

education programmes. In Tanzania, for example, Comparative Education at the University of Dar es Salaam was present since the inception of that university in 1970 (Anangisy, 2013, p. 356–357).

1990s Continual Twilight in the West and the Rising Stars in the East

The 1990s did not see an improvement in the fortunes of Comparative Education in Western Europe and North America. Wilson (1994b) contends that Comparative Education programmes and teaching in Canadian universities by the 1990s became fragmented. For example, by the end of the 1980s the University of Ottawa's and by the end of the 1990s the University of British Columbia's Comparative Education programmes had all but disappeared (Larsen et al., 2013, p. 173). One heartening exception in the West was Spain. In the context of the democratization of Spain and its linking with the rest of Western Europe and the rest of the wider world, teacher education, too, was reformed. As part of the 1993 University Reform Law, Comparative Education became a compulsory foundation subject for the Bachelor of Pedagogy programme at universities (i.e. the teacher education programme) (Naya et al., 2013, p. 148–149).

What Comparative Education could not gain in the West, the 1990s proved to be a propitious time for Comparative Education for countries in the erstwhile Eastern Bloc. The context between the end of the Second World War up to the end of the 1980s was not conducive to the development of Comparative Education in this part of the world. In China, for example, Comparative Education was abolished at universities in the

1950s after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949 (Manzon, 2013, p. 239). Pro-Soviet governments in the Eastern Bloc during the decades between 1945 and 1990 looked with deep suspicion at any interest in Western education which academics might display. The fortunes of Comparative Education were reversed after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1990, the democratization of the countries of Eastern Europe and these countries' reconnection with the international world. In countries such as Bulgaria, China, and the Czech Republic, Comparative Education became a compulsory part of teacher education programmes at universities. In Africa, too, Comparative Education enjoyed good times at universities, although it is difficult to decide whether this was an autochthonous development, or whether it was a case of teacher education programmes of the late colonial (and early independence) era still lingered on in Africa, the calamitous (for Comparative Education) events of the 1970s and 1980s having not reached Africa yet (*cf.* Wolhuter, 2009).

The broadening of Comparative Education at universities in the 2000s

A number of key features of the era dramatically raised the value of Comparative Education in the 2000s. These include the powerful force of globalization, the rise of a knowledge economy, the competitiveness in a flat world (*cf.* the prominence of tests such as the PISA and TIMSS and the importance attached to national results by politicians), the unification (including the uniformization of education) in the European Union, initiatives such as Education for All (Jomtien Declaration and Dakar

Statement) and the Millennium Development Goals, the rise of the Creed of Human Rights (education being one of those Rights, at the same time education seen as a vehicle to establish a culture of respect for Human Rights), and the long global economic upturn which commenced in 1990 and continued for at least two decades.

Unfortunately, Comparative Education in most cases did not win back an explicit place in university programmes and courses, but was subsumed in courses such as "Globalization in Education", "Education and Democracy", "Human Rights and Education", and "Education and Development" Writing about the Canadian context, Larsen et al. (2013: 174) call this the "broadening of Comparative Education". In some cases, Comparative Education is almost explicitly back, as in courses such as "European Dimensions in Education: Special Issues" or "Educational Systems in Europe" both being taught at universities in Greece (Karras, 2013, p. 78).

In countries such as Greece and Spain, where Comparative Education was well entrenched and visible in 2000, it retained its status and place, and was probably given a new lease of life by the post-2000 societal forces enumerated above, while in some Western countries there is even signs of a return of Comparative Education. After a time of a precarious presence at universities in Switzerland, for example, there are signs of a revival. The University of Fribourg has, since 2006, offered a Masters Programme specialising in Intercultural and Comparative Education (Schüssler, Leutwyler, 2013, p. 158).

In the erstwhile Eastern Bloc countries, it continues to enjoy prominence at universities, and also at universities in Africa.

One exception, though, is South Africa. The exceptionally strong departments of Comparative Education, which existed in the years up to 1994 at the historically White Afrikaans universities, the historically Black universities, and the massive distance education university (University of South Africa, UNISA) and the correspondingly Comparative Education modules in teacher education programmes at those universities have, by 2000, all but disappeared (*cf.* Weeks et al., 2006).

The significance of Comparative Education

What then are the reasons, the purposes and the value of the scholarly field of Comparative Education?

Comparative Education performs the following functions:

- Description;
- understanding/interpretation/explanation;
- evaluation;
- application;
- educational planning;
- teaching practice;
- in other fields of educational study;
- furthering the philanthropic ideal.

Description

The most basic utility of Comparative Education is to describe education systems / learning communities, within their societal contexts, in order to satisfy the yearning for knowledge which is *sui generis* part of human nature. Bereday (1964, p. 5) puts it as follows:

“The foremost justification for Comparative Education is intellectual. [Humans] study Comparative Education because they want to know”.

Understanding: interpretation / explanation

On the next plane, Comparative Education also satisfies the need to understand: education systems in learning communities are explained or understood from surrounding contextual forces which shape them. Conversely, if education systems are shaped by the societal matrix in which they are embedded (and if education systems, in turn, shape societies and cultures), then the comparative study of education systems also fosters an understanding of cultures or societies.

Evaluation

Thirdly, Comparative Education serves to evaluate education systems: the own education system, as well as a universal evaluation of education systems. In an age of a competitive globalised world, the evaluation of the domestic education project assumes even bigger importance – hence the proliferation of studies such as the IEA studies, the OECD: PISA (International Programme for the Assessment of Student Achievement) studies, and the international ranking of universities. The universal evaluation entails how well the education systems of the world rise up to the challenges of the twenty-first century world as well as an estimation of the limits and the possibilities of the societal effects of education. Examples of the latter are as follows:

- to what extent can education be employed to effect economic growth? can education effect a democratic culture?
- to what extent does education offer an instrument to effect intercultural tolerance and intercultural sensitivity in a multicultural society?

Application: Education system planning and reform

Comparative Education is also used to design a new education system, to plan education, and to reform education systems. In reforming or in improving the education system or in grappling with an educational issue, challenge or problem, one country could benefit from the experience of other systems.

Application: Improvement of teaching practice

Comparative Education can assist the teacher to improve his / her teaching practice. Comparative Education research can assess the track record of particular teaching methods in particular contents, it can also sensitise the teacher to contextual forces and education system-related forces impinging on his / her classroom practice.

Application: Serving other fields of Educational Studies

Comparative Education is also of use to other fields of educational scholarship (and even beyond, to related fields of social sciences); e.g., for Philosophy of Education, Comparative Education offers a show-case of the track record of the implementation of various philosophies of education in particular places at particular times in history.

The philanthropic ideal

The original inspiration source of the scholarly field of Comparative Education, the philanthropic ideal of the time of Jullien, remains the most noble cause of Comparative Education, i.e. serving and improving the state of humanity.

Comparative Education at universities in Lithuania

It was only after gaining independence from Russia's rule in 1918 that Lithuania could reestablish its own university. The University of Lithuania was established in Kaunas in 1922 (since 1930 the name of the University is the Vytautas Magnus University). It was at this university where Comparative Education was first introduced as a university discipline. The most prominent person in this regard was Pranas Dielininkaitis. He worked at this university from 1933 till his death in 1942. Another comparativist was Jonas Laužikas, who became director of Vilnius Pedagogical Institute (which was established in 1935) in 1940. The major publication of Jonas Laužikas in the field of Comparative Education was his book "Educational Reform" (Laužikas, 1934). This book presents the Austrian school reform plan as an example for Lithuania to follow. It also provides descriptions of the education systems of Switzerland, England, the United States of America, Latvia, and Germany as other positive examples to be followed. Laužikas and his colleagues who worked at the University of Lithuania and at the Pedagogical Institute were graduates or conducted their research in German-speaking universities. Moreover, the education system developed in Lithuania between the two World Wars was mainly developed in accordance with the education model of German-speaking countries.

The subject of Comparative Education was not taught in Lithuanian institutions of higher education after the incorporation of the formerly independent country into the Soviet Union in 1940. The reason for such an ignorant outlook was evident – for ideo-

logical reasons the Soviet system of education was considered to be “the best”, and it was assumed that the Soviet Union had nothing to learn from education in other countries.

There was, therefore, an urgent need for the revival of Comparative Education as an academic discipline after the restoration of independence in 1990. It was evident that the former Soviet system of education had to be dismantled and replaced by a different model; therefore, comparative studies became vitally important in order to choose the further way of development of national education. With the collapse of the planned economy, the sector of vocational education underwent major changes; in this respect, there was an urgent need for illumination provided by international comparative perspectives. A comparative analysis of the integration of information and communication technologies into the system of education in Lithuania and other European countries was done by a group of researchers (Dagienė, Kurilovas, 2009). Higher education is another critical area of the reconstruction of education in Lithuania. In the field of higher education, a comparative analysis of higher education visions in Lithuania, Norway, Slovenia, Finland, and Hungary was done by a group of researchers (Morgan, ed., 2007). The process of joining the European Union contributed to the further development of comparative European studies as the theme of a European dimension in education became increasingly important. A number of publications focus on this issue, e.g., Želvys (2005), Ališauskas and Dukynaite (2005).

The Lithuanian Education fraternity rather quickly reacted to the changing needs of teacher education and educa-

tion training. Courses on Comparative Education were included into the teacher education programmes at major Lithuanian universities. In 1993, Lithuania introduced the three-level Bologna model of university studies (Bachelor, Masters, Doctorate). The Bologna process increasingly encourages a comparative analysis of higher education systems in order to ensure compatibility, credit transfer, and mutual recognition of higher education degrees. Comparative Education courses are mainly concentrated on the Masters level. Some universities, e.g., Vilnius University, have introduced elements of Comparative Education in an integrated History of Education and Comparative Education module for Bachelor students. A number of doctoral theses in Comparative Education were also defended.

The academic discipline of Comparative Education is currently being taught to masters and doctoral students at Vilnius University, Lithuanian University of Educational Sciences, Kaunas University of Technology, Vytautas Magnus University, Šiauliai University, and Klaipėda University. The typical structure of the course is as follows: the definition and development of Comparative Education, methodology and methods of Comparative Education, educational systems in different countries, recent trends and developments in Comparative Education (Dautaras, 1994). A number of textbooks covering this curriculum were also published.

Comparative perspective on Comparative Education at universities in Lithuania

The trajectory of Comparative Education at universities is that of Comparative

Education in the countries of the erstwhile Eastern Bloc. After having been kept out of academia for ideological reasons during almost half a century after the Second World War, it made a forceful return after 1990. This return is visible in undergraduate and post-graduate courses where Comparative Education is taught, research agenda, doctoral theses, and production of Comparative Education textbooks.

As most of the countries of the erstwhile Eastern Block, the confluence of circumstances in the past decades resulted in Comparative Education being strongly and visibly present in courses taught at the pre-graduate and postgraduate levels at universities in Lithuania. What is absent are research institutes of Comparative Education, also established chairs of Comparative Education, Comparative Education departments and academics exclusively occupied with (teaching and conducting research in) Comparative Education. Furthermore, Lithuanian comparativists do not seem to interact very actively with their counterparts in the rest of the world, especially outside Europe. At the recent world conference of Comparative Education (WCCES — World Council of Comparative Education Societies), no Lithuanian delegate was present. Ditto for the last conference of the Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE) in Salamanca, June 2012. There appear to be a need for the Comparative Education fraternity in Lithuania to organize themselves into a society (i.e. a Lithuanian Society of Comparative Education, or a Baltic Comparative Education Society) becoming a constituent society of CESE and of the WCCES. The research agenda of Comparative Education in Lithuania is broad and filled with

very topical focal points and supported by an active community of researchers. What could well be added, though, are equity issues (including gender equity), quality and quality assurance, internationalization of higher education, the societal effects of education (e.g., effect of education on values including the political values of students, on economic development, or on social mobility) and research on the learning of students.

Conclusions

1. Courses in Comparative Education were taught at universities since 1900 and reached a zenith during the 1960s.
2. A number of factors resulted in Comparative Education at universities falling on hard ground in the 1970s and 1980s.
3. Despite the increasing influence of globalization in the 2000s, Comparative Education did not win back an explicit place in university programmes and courses.
4. In Lithuania, the field of Comparative Education started to develop during the first half of the 20th century; however, during the years of Soviet occupation it was to a large extent neglected.
5. Therefore, there was an urgent need to restore Comparative Education as an academic discipline since the 1990s.
6. However, Lithuanian comparativists do not seem to interact very actively with their counterparts in the rest of the world.
7. There appears to be a need for a Comparative Education fraternity in Lithuania to organize themselves into an academic society.

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LYGINAMOSIOS EDUKOLOGIJOS RAIDA PASAULYJE IR LIETUVOS UNIVERSITETUOSE

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S a n t r a u k a

Straipsnyje aptariama lyginamosios edukologijos plėtra Lietuvos universitetuose tarptautiniame kontekste. Apžvelgiama istorinė lyginamosios edukologijos raida pasaulyje ir Europoje. Lyginamosios edukologijos disciplina atsirado XX amžiaus pradžioje JAV ir Kanadoje, kurioje ryškų pėdsaką paliko mūsų tautietis, Otavos universiteto profesorius Antanas Paplauskas-Ramunas. Pirmaisiais XX a. dešimtmečiais lyginamoji edukologija pradėta dėstyti ir Vakarų Europos universitetuose. Penktajame dešimtmetyje lyginamosios edukologijos plėtra pasiekė savo zenitą. Dėl įvairių priežasčių šėstuojų ir septintuoju dešimtmečiais dėmesys lyginamajai edukologijai sumažėjo. Nepagerino padėties ir XXI amžiaus pradžioje sustiprėjusi švietimo globalizacija. Lietuvoje lyginamosios edukologijos ištakos taip pat siekia XX amžiaus pradžią. Ketvirtajame praėjusio amžiaus dešimtmetyje lyginamosios edukologijos srityje dirbo tokie žinomi Lietuvos mokslininkai, kaip antai

P. Dielininkaitis, J. Laužikas ir kt. Sovietiniu laikotarpiu lyginamoji edukologija aukštosiose mokyklose nebuvo dėstoma; apsiribota „buržuazinio švietimo“ kritika. Lyginamosios edukologijos atgimimas Lietuvoje prasidėjo po nepriklausomybės atgavimo. Šiuo metu lyginamoji edukologija dėstoma daugelio šalies universitetų pedagogų rengimo programose. Kita vertus, Lietuvos lyginamosios edukologijos mokslininkai vis dar mažai bendrauja su užsienio kolegomis ir yra nepakankamai matomi tarptautiniame kontekste. Lietuvos atstovai kol kas nedalyvauja Europos lyginamosios edukologijos draugijos veikloje. Tam tikslui lyginamosios edukologijos specialistai turėtų susiburti į akademinę bendriją. Didesnio šalies mokslininkų dėmesio taip pat turėtų sulaukti lyginamieji švietimo kokybės, lygybės ir socialinio teisingumo, švietimo kokybės užtikrinimo, socialinio mobilumo, švietimo ryšio su ekonomikos plėtra ir kt. aspektai.

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