

Comparative Education

Comparative education is a field of study that focuses on the provision of organized learning activities across international and intercultural boundaries and utilizes comparative methods of study. Comparative education is a fully established academic field of study that examines education in one country (or group of countries) by using data and insights drawn from the practices and situation in another country, or countries.

What is Comparative Education?

Comparative education is a vast field of study. It does not only study the educational systems of other countries or confine itself to a single strict definition because it covers disciplines such as the sociology, political science, psychology, and anthropology of different countries.

“Comparative Education is the detailed study of educational systems to find out how a people’s values and beliefs affect their educational system and how to provide suitable education for those people. “

The field is a deep, critical examination of societal values and educational systems of other countries for the purposes of evaluating one’s own system and refreshing one’s own culture by adopting progressive aspects from elsewhere on the basis of comparison.

According to Noah and Eckstein, “Comparative Education is an intersection of social sciences, education, and cross-national study which attempts to use cross-national data to test propositions about the relationship between education and society and between teaching practices and learning outcomes” (AIOU, 2009). There is a close relationship between Comparative Education and other social sciences; it is the discipline where information about education and other social sciences intersects.

Programs and courses in comparative education are offered in many universities throughout the world, and relevant studies are regularly published in scholarly journals

Comparative education has four purposes:

1. To describe educational systems, processes, or outcomes.
2. To assist in the development of educational institutions and practices.
3. To highlight the relationships between education and society.
4. To establish generalized statements about education that may be valid in more than one country.

Kidd (1975) provides the following detailed list of purposes. According to Kidd the most **common goals** for engaging in comparative education are:

1. To become better informed about the educational system of other countries;
2. To become better informed about the ways in which people in other cultures have carried out certain social functions by means of education;
3. To become better informed about the historical roots of certain activities and use this to develop criteria for assessing contemporary development and testing possible outcomes;
4. To better understand the educational forms and systems operating in one's own country;
5. To satisfy an interest in how other human beings live and learn;
6. To better understand oneself; and 7. To reveal how one's own cultural biases and personal attributes affect one's judgment about possible ways of carrying on learning transactions

Educational System:

An **educational system** refers to a structure of operation for the provision of education. Educational systems are influenced by philosophies of policy makers. Educational systems are normally classified around countries, e.g. the Zambian education system, Zimbabwean education

system and Ugan-dan Education System; or levels of education, e.g. primary education, secondary education, and tertiary education; or around regions e.g. African educational system, Asian educational system, European educational system, and American education system. International education: is a process as well as a systematic study of the process of organized learning that is designed to increase people's knowledge and skills and that takes place across international boundaries.

Activity: Introduction to KWL

Introduction (10 minutes)

Give Student Teachers a brief overview of the course. Let them go through the syllabus. Explain and clarify any points that are unclear in the syllabus.

KWL (15 minutes)

Tell Student Teachers to draw the table below in their copies. In column K, let them write what they know about comparative education, and in column W what they want to know about it. Let them leave the L column blank, because at the end of the lesson they will write in it what they have learned.

K (Know) W (Want to know) L (Learned)

After the mini-lecture, ask Student Teachers to fill in the L column of the previous activity and share their work with the whole class.