

Institute of Education Archives Subject Guide No. 2 Comparative Education



Introduction

Comparative education is an academic and interdisciplinary subject which applies historical, philosophical and social science theories and methods to classify and explain characteristics of different national education systems. It studies why educational systems and processes vary and how education relates to wider social factors and forces. Comparative education grew from international education, which analyses and fosters international orientation in knowledge and attitudes, and, brings together students, teachers and scholars from different nations to learn about and from each other.

Comparative education first appeared in the early 19th century along side the rise of national education, though it did not develop as an academic subject until the 20th century. Its early development was hampered by the two World Wars, where it was used for ideological competition. One of the most important books of the inter-war period was *Comparative Education* (1933) by Isaac Kandell, who also edited the *Educational Yearbook* from 1924-1944. Other important yearbooks were published in this period, including the *Yearbook of Education* and the *International Yearbook of Education*. The first academic courses and programs were also developed at this time, including a course at the Institute of Education.

The Second World War was a catalyst for the development of comparative education. The field developed to include not only school systems but understanding the role of education in shaping social structures and influencing economic development. Professional associations were also founded including The Comparative Education Society in 1956, followed in 1961 by the Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE). National and international organisations, such as the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Organisations for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the World Bank, were also influential in the development of comparative education. The yearbooks were also large replace with academic journals, such as the *Comparative Education Review*, after the War.

Historically, the Institute of Education has been one of the leading centers of comparative and international education research since the 1930s, and has employed many important figures in the field, including Brian Holmes, Joseph Lauwerys, and Nicholas Hans. Today the Institute offers a MA in Comparative Education and the subject is taught by academic staff across the Institute.

Related Collections

Click on name of each collection for more information.

Brian Homes Papers (DC/BH)

Brian Holmes, Professor of Comparative Education at the Institute of Education, 1975-1985, was instrumental in the development of a number of national and international comparative education societies. His papers, 1950s-1980s, include unpublished writings; off-prints, papers and articles; correspondence with colleagues; and files about the activities of comparative education societies.

[Records of the British Association for International and Comparative Education \(formerly the British Comparative and International Education Society\) \(DC/CES\)](#)

The British Section of the Comparative Education Society in Europe (CESE). In 1997 it merged with the British Association of Teachers and Researchers in Overseas Education (BATROE) to form the British Association for International and Comparative Education (BAICE). The Association encourages the growth of comparative and international studies by organising conferences, visits and publications. The collection contains the administrative papers of the Association, 1977-1996.

Records of the CESE (Comparative Education Society of Europe) (DC/CSE)

Comparative Education Society of Europe (CESE) was founded in 1961. The purpose of the international organisation is to encourage and promote comparative and international studies in education. The collection contains the administrative papers of the Society, 1978-1991.

[Papers of Sir Fred Clarke \(DC/FC\)](#)

Sir Fred Clarke was an influential figure in the development of colonial and comparative education. He held a number of posts in teacher education and university departments across the world. He was the Adviser to Overseas Students at the Institute of Education from 1935 and was Director of the Institute, 1936-1945. His papers, 1899-1962, include publications; papers relating to his work in South Africa and Canada; correspondence; papers relating to broadcasting work; subject files, on various topics including comparative education; and scrapbooks about Clarke's career.

[Papers of Joseph Lauwerys \(1902-1981\) \(DC/JL\)](#)

Joseph Lauwerys, Professor of Comparative Education at the IOE from 1947-1970, held many visiting professorships around the world and travelled as a consultant and observer of educational conditions. He was involved in many organisations for promoting international co-operation and understanding and comparative education. His papers, 1920s-1980s, include personal and working papers reflecting many aspects his career, including international co-operation and understanding and comparative education; material about post-War reconstruction and the founding of UNESCO; files relating to overseas visits and tours; and papers on the educational in different countries.

[Papers of Nicholas Hans \(DC/NH\)](#)

Nicholas Hans worked on the *Yearbook of Education*, 1920-1939. He was appointed as lecturer at King's College, 1946, becoming a Reader in Comparative Education in 1948. He collaborated with Joseph Lauwerys at the IOE in supervising higher degree students and arranging overseas trips.

His papers, 1906-1969, include drafts of published works and manuscripts of unpublished essays and other writings; notebooks; correspondence; teaching notes papers relating the Russian Revolution.

[Papers of Margaret Read \(1889-1991\) \(DC/MR\)](#)

Margaret Read was an early woman social anthropologist and applying social anthropology and ethnography to the education and health problems of developing countries. She was the head of the Department for Education in Tropical Areas at the Institute of Education, 1940-1955. Her papers, 1900-1982, include papers regarding her travels and overseas tours from 1919 and her writings.

[Records of the World Education Fellowship \(DC/WEF\)](#)

Founded in 1921 as the New Education Fellowship, this international organisation central focus is on child-centred education, social reform through education, world citizenship and international understanding. The collection contains papers regarding the activities of the Fellowship, 1921 - [1995], including correspondence with branches around the world and international conferences.

[Records of the Institute of Education \(IE\)](#)

The records of the IOE cover every aspect of the business of the Institute including its contribution to comparative and international education. The Institute collection also contains the records of the Colonial Department and its successors, (IE/COL); Department of International and Comparative Education; biographies of staff at the Institute including those involved in comparative and international education, (IE/PC/1); publications by staff on comparative and international education, (IE/PUB).

Bibliography and other printed sources

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