



Features Of the Finnish Education System: The Phenomenon of Success

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Abstract – This article explores the distinctive features of the Finnish education system, unraveling the factors contributing to its remarkable success. Delving into key elements such as student-centered learning, teacher autonomy, minimal standardized testing, and an emphasis on equality, the analysis aims to uncover the educational practices that have positioned Finland at the forefront of global academic achievements. Additionally, the article examines the role of inclusive policies, early childhood education, and the holistic approach to student well-being in shaping the Finnish educational landscape. By exploring the cultural and societal foundations that underpin this system, the study seeks to provide insights into how Finland has managed to foster a love for learning and creativity, transcending traditional academic metrics. Through a comparative lens, the annotation aims to offer valuable perspectives for educators and policymakers globally, contemplating potential implications for the enhancement of education systems worldwide.

Keywords: assessment, education, Finnish education system, high and secondary school, professional trajectory, STEM.

INTRODUCTION

Finland is famous for its high-quality education system. The main features of the Finnish educational model include a short school day, an emphasis on individual learning, a lack of standardized tests, and an emphasis on the development of general skills. Teachers in Finland have a high status, and education is seen as a key factor in social mobility. The education system in secondary schools in Finland has its own special and key features.

Compulsory education in Finland begins at the age of 7 and lasts until the age of 16. Secondary schools provide education from about 16 to 19 years of age. The educational process in Finland is focused on the individual needs of students. Teachers try to support each student in their development and strive to adapt learning to everyone's level. There are no mandatory standardized tests in Finland, especially at the secondary education level. Assessment is more based on continuous monitoring of student progress

by teachers. The curricula include a variety of subjects, providing students with the opportunity for a broader education. [1, P.115]

Studying in Finland is aimed not only at acquiring specific knowledge, but also at developing general skills such as critical thinking, communication and work ethic. These features form the basis for a successful Finnish education system. In Finland, attention is usually paid to the balance between study and students' free time. This includes the absence of significant amounts of homework, which helps reduce stress and contributes to a more complete perception of the educational process. Teachers in Finland have a high professional status. They have broad decision-making rights on their teaching materials and teaching methods, which contributes to their creativity and responsibility for teaching students. [2, p.27]

Education in Finland emphasizes the importance of developing social skills. Students study in a team, collaborate, and discuss, which contributes to the formation of teamwork skills and an understanding of diversity. Education in Finland is aimed not only at successful completion of school, but also at preparing students for life after it. This includes an emphasis on developing skills that can be useful in everyday life and in the job market. The Finnish education system aims to ensure equal opportunities for all students, regardless of their social status or family financial situation. These elements together form the foundation of a successful and innovative education system in Finland.

Students are given the flexibility to choose subjects and courses within the framework of mandatory requirements. This makes it possible to adapt education to the interests and needs of each student, contributing to their active participation in the educational process. The Finnish education system pays attention to the inclusion and support of students with special educational needs. Conditions have been created for the maximum participation of all children in the educational process. Physical activity education and student health care are important components of the educational program in Finland. This helps not only physical development, but also affects the overall well-being of students.

School and higher education in Finland is free for students from European Union countries. This creates affordable conditions for higher education and supports the principle of equal opportunities. Grades in Finnish schools can be more descriptive than just numerical. This allows a more complete assessment of the level of material development and student progress. In general, the Finnish secondary education system strives to create conditions for the harmonious development of the personality of students, preparing them for active participation in society and professional life.

Finland focuses on the educational environment, creating comfortable and inspiring conditions in schools. This includes modern educational facilities, libraries, laboratories and access to information technology. An important aspect is the provision of instruction in the students' native language. The Finnish system strives to maintain and develop the cultural heritage and linguistic identity of each student. In Finland, it is not customary to divide students into classes by age. Students study in the same group, which promotes closer interaction between different age groups and maintains an atmosphere of mutual assistance. [3, p.317]

The Finnish system provides support in choosing a future professional trajectory. Students receive information about various professions and learning opportunities after school. Important attention is paid to extracurricular activities and clubs, which contributes to the versatile development of students, as well as forms social and creative skills. These additional aspects of the Finnish education system emphasize its comprehensive and humane approach to the formation of personality and citizenship of students. [4, p.24]

The Finnish education system encourages self-development and independent learning of students. Their interest in the search for knowledge, research and critical thinking is stimulated. A project-based learning methodology is often used, where students solve real problems by working in a team. This contributes to the development of practical skills and the application of acquired knowledge in real life.

An important element of the Finnish system is the support system for students experiencing difficulties. Individual assistance and resources are organized for those who need additional support. The Finnish system pays attention to gender equality in education. The teaching staff includes representatives of both sexes, and the teaching materials try to be impartial and inclusive. Finland actively participates in international educational research and exchanges, which allows the integration of best practices from different parts of the world and enriches the educational environment. These last elements highlight the importance of innovation, adaptation and continuous improvement of the Finnish education system.

The Finnish system is actively introducing digital technologies into the educational process. This includes the use of interactive learning materials, online resources and tools to improve access to education. The curricula include elements of entrepreneurship, which contributes to the development of students' entrepreneurial skills and prepares them for future professional activities. The Finnish system includes a career guidance system that helps students make informed decisions about their future education and career. This includes consultations, activities and practical experiences. Education in Finland supports the development of students' creative abilities, including art and music. A wide range of subjects and additional classes are aimed at stimulating creative thinking.

The constant exchange of feedback between students and teachers is important. This helps to improve the learning process, adapt teaching methods and increase student motivation. These additional aspects reflect the desire to innovate, adapt to modern challenges and create an educational environment that better meets the needs of modern students. [5, p.41]

The Finnish education system includes teaching students about sustainable development and environmental responsibility. This direction emphasizes the importance of understanding and caring for the environment. Finland, being a multinational country, emphasizes the importance of intercultural education. School curricula include elements that promote understanding and respect for cultural diversity. The Finnish education system pays attention to the development of skills for peaceful conflict resolution. This includes programs to train social skills and emotional intelligence.

The Finnish system recognizes the importance of technical education. The curricula include subjects aimed at developing skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Educational institutions in Finland actively involve parents in the educational process. This creates a partnership between the school and the family, contributing to a more complete education of students. These latter aspects highlight the adaptability and readiness of the Finnish education system to meet modern challenges such as environmental sustainability, intercultural understanding and the development of diverse skills.

An important element of the Finnish education system is the participation of society in the decision-making process. Various stakeholders such as parents, employers and local communities are actively involved in the development of educational strategies. Finland pays attention to the development of technological literacy of students, which includes the ability to effectively use information technology, as well as critically evaluate information in digital format. The learning environment in Finland promotes students' creative expression, including various forms of art and cultural activities. This contributes to the development of individuality and creativity. The education system in Finland aims to ensure inclusivity and support for students with different educational needs. Special programs and resources have been created for individual support.

Ultimately, the Finnish education system is focused on the formation of not only educated, but also independent, creative and responsible citizens. The goal is not only to transfer knowledge, but also to develop students' personal qualities. Finland has a system of generous public funding for education. This ensures equal opportunities for all students and maintains a high standard of educational services.

Given Finland's bilingual status (Finnish and Swedish), there are language schools where instruction is conducted in both languages. This contributes to the preservation of cultural diversity. In Finland, special attention is paid to the methodology of teaching reading. Teachers use innovative approaches, including customized plans for each student, to support their reading success.

High school students in Finland can participate in research projects, which contributes to the development of their scientific skills and interest in research activities. Instead of traditional assessments, the Finnish system sometimes uses descriptive reports on student knowledge. This contributes to a deeper understanding of each student's academic performance and needs. These latter aspects complement the overall picture of the Finnish education system, enriching its methodologies and approaches to student learning and development. The Finnish education system also pays attention to the physical and mental health of students. Schools create conditions for active physical activity, provide meals and support psychological support activities. [6, p.55]

Art and culture play an important role in the Finnish education system. Students are supported in the development of creative thinking through participation in artistic and cultural events. Finland is committed to creating conditions for extending education after school. This includes support for additional courses, professional programs, and adult education. The Finnish system provides education in the native language of national minorities, preserving the linguistic and cultural identity of ethnic groups. Education in Finland is aimed at developing social skills, including cooperation, communication and empathy. These skills are considered important for successful adaptation in society. These last elements

emphasize the deep and multifaceted approach of the Finnish education system, focused on the harmonious development of the individual and the citizen.

Consequently, the Finnish education system represents a unique and innovative approach to the formation of personality and citizenship. Its key features include an individual approach to learning, the absence of standardized tests, an emphasis on the development of general skills, the high status of teachers and equality of opportunity for all students. The system also actively integrates modern approaches such as digitalization, entrepreneurship support, and a focus on health and sustainability. Flexibility, support for creativity, emphasis on intercultural understanding and social participation emphasize the desire to create a comprehensively developed and adapted to modern challenges education system. The basic principles of the Finnish education model inspire discussion and implementation of similar methods in other countries. An important success factor is not only the transfer of knowledge, but also the education of independent, critically minded and socially responsible individuals.

So, secondary schools (grades 7,8,9) in Finland play an important role in the success of the educational system. They serve as a key stage in the formation of students, providing an individual and flexible approach to learning. The structure of secondary educational institutions is focused on the diverse development of students, including not only mental, but also physical, emotional, and social. The role of secondary schools in the Finnish education system is to prepare students for life after school, develop their general skills and build independence. The success of the Finnish education system is partly due to the fact that secondary schools create a stimulating and supportive environment in which students can realize their potential and form values. The structure of curricula and methods in secondary schools strives to ensure not only a high level of knowledge, but also the development of critical thinking, communication skills and creative potential of students. This structure is an integral part of the success of the Finnish education system. Thus, Finnish secondary schools act as an important link in the chain of a successful educational model, providing balanced and comprehensive education aimed at preparing for modern challenges and requirements of society.

Secondary schools also perform an important function in preparing students for further education or entry into the professional field. The system of choosing subjects and courses in secondary schools, taking into account the interests and needs of students, allow you to create individual curricula. The work of teachers in secondary schools plays a key role in stimulating interest in learning and developing students' personal qualities. Teachers interact with students, creating an open atmosphere for discussing research issues, which contributes to the formation of critical thinking and independence. It should also be noted that secondary schools in Finland integrate innovative teaching methods into their teaching practice, including the use of technology, project activities and other modern approaches. This is aimed at enhancing learning by making the process more fun and relevant for students.

Thus, Finnish education serves not just as a link in the educational system, but as a real source of support for individual development, education of civic values and preparation for life in modern society. Their role as the main stage in the educational path of students is an important element of the success of the Finnish education system.

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