



2nd Online Conference on Multidisciplinary Academic Research  
(OCMAR-2020), Australia  
ISBN (eBook): 978-0-6482404-6-4  
Asia Pacific Institute of Advanced Research (APIAR)  
[www.apiar.org.au](http://www.apiar.org.au)

## COMPARATIVE STUDY AMONG SEWDEN, NEW ZEALAND AND JAPAN ON EFFECTS OF NATIONAL CURRICULUMS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION ON RESOLVING SOCIAL DISPARITY

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### Abstract

Improving early childhood education (ECE) would protect children from lives of downfall in future (Heckman). Principles, aims, and contents of ECE are written in each country's ECE national curriculum. We picked up three countries: Sweden (social disparity is quite small), New Zealand (child poverty and social disparity are serious social issues), and Japan (recently such issues have arisen). The purpose of this study is to verify the effects of characteristics of the ECE curriculum on students' academic ability and the academic gap between these three countries. We analyzed these countries' ECE national curriculum using the text-mining qualitative research method. Results suggest that Swedish ECE curriculum characteristic was round and holistic. New Zealand ECE national curriculum, although advocated to be holistic, was not round; however, the components created some independent sub-groups. Japanese ECE national curriculum was similar to that of New Zealand. We concluded that for ECE, fostering non-cognitive skills would be important; a round and holistic educational method would be effective for children's future outcomes, resolving academic gap and the social disparity brought by it.

**Keywords:** Early Childhood Education Curriculum, Academic Gap, Social Disparity.

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