



Selecting inclusive teacher candidates

Validity and reliability issues in admission policy and practice

Article Summary

Promoting educational inclusivity has been a central priority of research, policy, and practice in recent years throughout countries with high levels of diversity. Literature recommends that preservice teacher education programs focus on selecting teacher candidates with a propensity for inclusive teaching and that programs promote inclusivity as a fundamental pedagogical principle. Admission policy plays a dominant role in the systematic selection of teacher candidates and serves as the primary gate-keeping structure for entry into the teaching profession in jurisdictions where teacher education is a university-based program of study. To date, research on admission processes has largely focused on either selection trends or on determining the predictive and concurrent validity of admission indicators. Unfortunately, comparatively little research has examined the subjective processes used in the selection of personal dispositions related to inclusivity and the impact of these processes on the validity and reliability of admission decisions. A qualitative research design involving in-depth interviews with selection committee members and senior program administrators was used in this study to examine issues in the assessment of prerequisite personal dispositions to contribute to understandings of the validity of teacher candidate selection decisions. Specifically, the purpose of this research was to examine how indicators of applicants' propensity for inclusive teaching were considered and integrated into admission and selection decisions for entry into one teacher education program. The findings from this research point to issues and challenges in promoting inclusivity in teaching and teacher education through current admission policy and practice..

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