



International Education: An Encyclopedia of Contemporary Issues and Systems (2-Volume Set)

By Daniel Ness, Chia-Ling Lin

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Editorial Review

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In this age of globalization, learners are likely to cross national and cultural borders. Therefore, it is important for educators and other personnel to know how education systems work in different countries. This two-volume reference work discusses educational topics that have international context, and then profiles education in different countries. More than one-third of the academic contributors teach at the University of California, Santa Barbara. Most of the contributors are from the U.S. or Japan. This is noted because such concentration might impact the quality of international coverage. The writing is clear, although somewhat uneven in terms of international bias. Volume 1 covers topics such as sociopolitical and cultural issues, gender, formal education, informal education, intellectual and motor development, technologies, and institutions. Within each topic, several articles focus on specific aspects, such as child labor or linguistic development. Chapters reflect different approaches—some are more theoretical, while others use a historical lens; some give a generic overview, and others give instances from sample countries. Although one cannot expect the volume to be exhaustive, it is striking that administration is omitted. In addition, only one page is dedicated to libraries (mainly talking about New York City public libraries), and no mention is made of school libraries whatsoever. Volume 2 covers each country separately, with a short introduction for each clustered geographic region. Entries range from 1 to 10 pages. The structure for each country's entry is similar, but some entries have omitted sections. An "Education at a Glance" box accompanies each entry. Some entries are based largely on international and national government documents, which can limit the depth of knowledge. The Brazil entry, for example, doesn't mention private schools, which most pre-college students attend. Nor is any mention made of information educational institutions, such as the national bilingual centers, which play a significant role (and safety net for some students). All chapters are signed and include references. A few cross-country tables and figures provide statistical information, although the legends are not always clear. The second volume also includes the glossary and index. Layout is two-column, which facilitates reading the dense text. This reference work represents a useful one-stop introduction to some international educational issues as well as individual country educational systems. It must be cautioned, though, that coverage is incomplete. --Lesley Farmer

Review

"*International Education* has no current print competitors. It fills an important niche in comparative education reference collections. Highly recommended. Lower-division undergraduates through researchers/faculty." --*Choice*

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