

Aiming For More Inclusive Societies through Education: A Comparative Study between Iran and Italy

Mohajeri Zahra Sadat¹, Rossella D'Agostino², Pace Erika Marie³

^{1, 2, 3} University of Salerno, Italy

Abstract

This study provides an in-depth analysis of two education systems which, at first glance, differ widely both culturally and historically. This initiative stems from the desire to share knowledge and practices between countries to respectively improve levels of inclusion in schools. In Italy, inclusive education, a cultural and political priority within the education sector since the 1970s, aims to ensure equal opportunities for development and access to education for all students, regardless of their individual characteristics such as gender, origin, religion, and ability. In Iran, on the other hand, although in recent years there has been more awareness regarding inclusive education, few measures have taken place. These have generally been initiatives from teachers, school principals and other stakeholders aimed at ensuring access to education for all students. Both countries recognise the importance of a student-centred approach and consider collaboration among educational actors fundamental. Iran and Italy also face similar challenges, even if at different levels and perspectives, related to the need for further teacher education and broader awareness of diversity and the risks of exclusion. In line with the principles underpinning the inclusive paradigm, these differences and similarities between the two contexts represent a wealth of opportunities for those seeking reflections through comparison to address emerging needs in the respective countries. This paper highlights the benefits of intercultural education to promote inclusive and equitable quality education for all in both countries.

Keywords: inclusive education, intercultural education, education systems, comparative study, diversity