

South Korean pre-service primary school teachers' opinions about acceleration for gifted students

ABSTRACT

This study explored South Korean pre-service primary school teachers' attitudes toward acceleration for gifted students. Researchers employed surveys, focus groups, and a review of literature in this mixed methods study. In total, 481 South Korean pre-service primary teachers participated in the survey and 13 out of the 481 survey participants joined the focus-group interviews afterward. Results of the survey analysis suggested that South Korean pre-service teachers showed slightly negative attitudes toward acceleration. In the follow-up focus group interviews, most of the participants had negative attitudes toward acceleration and related their attitudes to the competitive educational atmosphere in South Korea and possible detrimental social and emotional effects. They illustrated these concerns by citing the story of a famous figure in South Korea who had experienced a radical academic acceleration and experienced very poor outcomes. Recommendations are provided for university teaching programs and future study exploring how to best support gifted students.

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