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Diversity in Coherence: Strengths and Opportunities of Three Programs

Although teacher educators may perceive their program and courses to be coherent, the question remains to what extent student teachers also are able to perceive the linkages within their programs. Coherence within teacher education programs is important for teacher candidates to build understanding of teaching. Our study draws upon survey data from 269 teacher candidates, in three different teacher education programs, located in three different countries (Norway, Finland, California [US]) and compares these candidates' perceptions of the coherence of their teacher education programs. Candidates from a program which has explicitly been working on constructing a coherent program over a period of 15 years do report significantly more coherence, yet, across the programs there remains room for improvement regarding the coherence between field placement and campus courses. We conclude with the suggestion that potential improvement of program coherence lies within greater communication and collaboration between the various stakeholders within teacher education.

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