



Call for Papers:
Special issue for the Nordic
Journal of Comparative and
International Education
(NJCIE)

Title:

***Contesting practices and ideologies in
Early Childhood Teacher Education***



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Rationale and framing

In contrast to the growing international interest in education as a means to address economic, social and political crises (Ellis et al., 2024), early childhood teacher education (ECTE) has low professional attractiveness (Guitart-Escudero et al., 2026) and decreasing number of students in several national contexts like Norway (Gulbrandsen et al., 2026), China (Zhou et al., 2025), and Iceland (Björnsdóttir & Jóhannsdóttir, 2020). In addition, a global trend is emerging in which education is narrowed to evidence-based practices with predefined, measurable outcomes (Biesta, 2023). In such an approach, complex and intertwined values embedded in social, economic, institutional, and societal practices are often reduced to the (perceived) individual competencies of teacher educators.

In this special issue, however, teacher educators are understood as part of entangled, systemic enterprises (Davis & Sumara, 2014). These enterprises comprise complex interactions within interconnected, constantly changing systems, such as systems for teaching, for in-service training and administration. Many actors beyond classroom teachers and supervisors, e.g. administrative staff, researchers, teachers in ECTE, in-service teachers, and student teachers, are involved in different, overlapping and entangled local and global systems that contribute in the ongoing struggle to improve ECTE. Yet processes of change or innovation are seldom examined scientifically (Ellis et al., 2023).

Grounded in the view that understanding existing practices and the systems in which they are woven is crucial to changing or preserving ongoing practices (Snow et al, 2023), this special issue aims to visualise, challenge and theorise entangled practices, to advance a just and solidaristic ECTE. Specifically, the issue seeks to illuminate the complexity of educational

practices, to challenge taken-for-granted assumptions, and to identify conditions and practices that might be challenged, replaced, or maintained to improve ECTE. By bringing together contributions from international researchers, we aim to examine contesting ideologies and practices – for example, tensions between policy-practice, competing pedagogical traditions and institutional pressure – across entangled national and international contexts. Such comparative insight can also reveal how similar problems are addressed differently across cultures.

Focus and Scope

We invite contributions that investigate ECTE practices with attention to the range of actors and levels involved (e.g., administrative staff, researchers, teachers in ECTE, in-service teachers, and student teachers). Submissions that examine tensions within and between practices, raise new questions, or explore ways of conceptualising change and methodology, are welcome. All papers should include a comparative and / or international dimension. Topics should be situated in the field of ECTE and may include, but are not limited to:

- ❖ Practices in ECTE as enacted by and among various participants like student teachers, researchers, teachers in ECTE, in-service teachers, administrative staff, leaders, and/or cross-sectoral collaborators
- ❖ Conflicting perspectives and practices relevant to qualitative changes within ECTE, e.g., conflicting perspectives and practices between politics and teacher educator's professional ethics, between globalisation and localisation, between administrative tasks and demands for research, between public and private institutions, between digital artefacts and teacher educator's competences, etc.
- ❖ New research methods for making visible taken-for-granted practices in ECTE
- ❖ Ways to improve practices in ECTE that promote justice and solidarity across gender, physical ability, socioeconomic status, and/or religious background
- ❖ Approaches to theorising changes in ECTE that support a just and solidaristic education across gender, physical ability, socioeconomic status, and/or religious background.

Submission Guidelines

We welcome high-quality scholarly contributions aligned with the themes of this special issue. Please note that all contributions must be in line with the [NJCIE Focus and Scope](#).

Authors interested in contributing to this special issue should submit a full manuscript on the NJCIE platform by

March 31, 2027

Please ensure compliance with the [NJCIE Author Guidelines](#) in your submitted manuscript.

Upon submission, please make a comment that the manuscript is considered for this special issue. Papers will undergo a double-blind review process. The authors are encouraged to suggest two or three potential peer reviewers in their Cover letter. Accepted manuscripts will

be published as soon as they are ready through the production phase. Publication of the complete special issue is expected by March 31, 2028.

Inquiries

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