INTRODUCTION

Lack of a current and credible estimate of the number of Montessori schools globally hinders researchers, policymakers, and Montessori advocates because the method’s scope is unclear.

Recent AMI efforts:
• 22,000 Montessori schools estimated worldwide in 2006 (AMI, 2021)
• 154 countries identified as having Montessori schools in 2020 (AMI, 2020)

NCMPS reports:
• 2,935 Montessori schools in the USA Montessori Census (NCMPS, 2023)
• 585 publicly funded programs (NCMPS, 2023)

Key challenge is diverging views on defining Montessori in practice.
• Generally accepted definition is lacking
• Any school can use name regardless of practices
• Problem has deep roots in Montessori history

OBJECTIVES

The research questions behind this study are:
1. What is the most reasonable current estimate of the global count of Montessori schools based on a broad definition of what constitutes the method?
2. Where is there agreement about what constitutes authentic practices among national Montessori organizations around the world?
3. To what extent is Montessori education available through publicly funded schools globally?

METHODS

Data triangulated from multiple sources to obtain a best estimate for each country:
• Survey of national Montessori organizations
• Knowledgeable leaders in countries where national organization estimates were unavailable
• Other historic and documented sources to triangulate the counts for each country

Multiple organizational standards analyzed to identify consistent definitions of authentic practices.

RESULTS

Map below illustrates school counts per country showing how Montessori education has spread worldwide with concentrations in large countries on almost all continents.

Countries with largest number of Montessori schools are:
• United States
• Tanzania
• Germany
• Thailand

The countries with the highest proportion of Montessori schools per person, for countries with more than 5 million people, are:
• New Zealand
• Norway
• Canada

REFERENCES


Mire Debs can be reached at mira.debs@yale.edu.
Angela Murray can be reached at amurray@ku.edu.

MORE INFORMATION

Further details about this study are available here: