

**Inclusive education for
students with special
educational needs
across the
Asia Pacific**

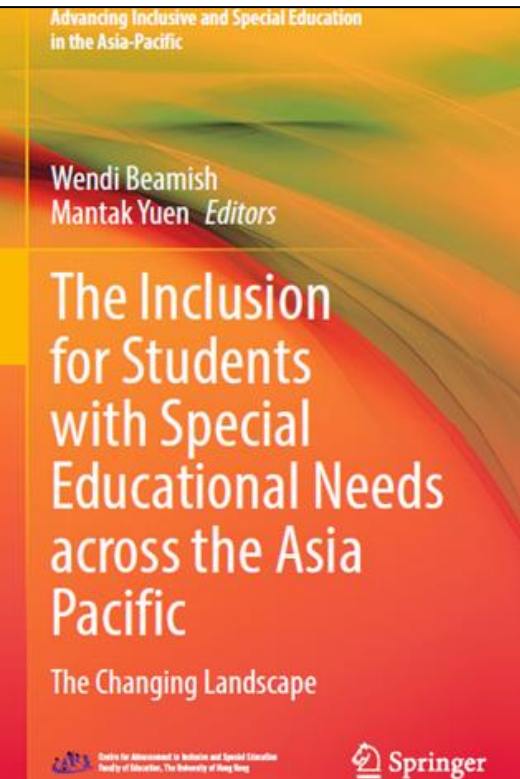
*What researchers from
10 diverse jurisdictions reported*



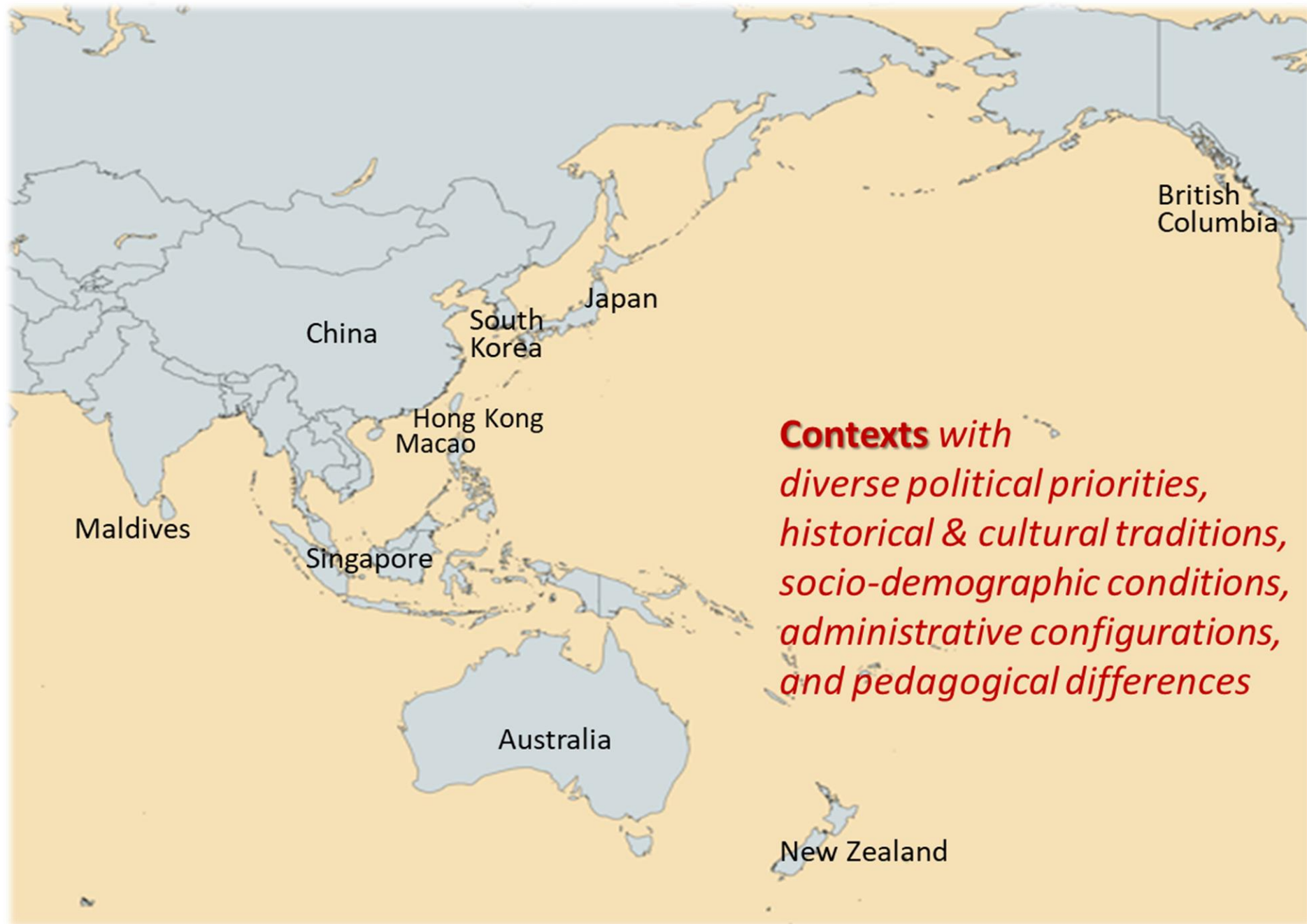
Dr Wendi Beamish



Context



Contexts with diverse political priorities, historical & cultural traditions, socio-demographic conditions, administrative configurations, and pedagogical differences



Chapter 12
Beamish, Hay, & Yuen (2022)

Overview

- ❖ **Students with Special Educational Needs (SEN)**
- ❖ **Policy-related documents** guiding inclusion
- ❖ **Implementation challenges** to inclusion
- ❖ **Recommendations** to advance inclusion

Students with SEN

a broad array of
disabilities
disorders
other difficulties

Jurisdiction	Disabilities					Disorders				Other difficulties
	HI	VI	PI	ID	LD	Autism	LSI	Behav	Mental Health	
Australia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			acquired brain injury
British Columbia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	gifted
China	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	multiple disabilities
Hong Kong SAR	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	ADHD
Japan	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓		ADHD
Maldives	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				multiple disabilities
Singapore	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓				ADHD
South Korea	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	developmental delay

Policy-related documents

United Nations Conventions and Declarations

❖ **Salamanca Statement & Framework for Action on Special Needs**

UNESCO, 1994

Australia, Maldives, & Singapore

❖ **Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**

UN General Assembly, 1989

Australia, Maldives, & Singapore

❖ **Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)**

UN General Assembly, 2007

Australia, British Columbia, Maldives, Singapore, & South Korea

Policy-related documents

Key Acts & Policies

❖ Action plans?

❖ Teacher Efficacy for Inclusive Practices scale

Item: confident in informing others about laws & policies

McGarrigle, Beamish, & Hay (2023) findings

Jurisdiction	Educational Acts & Policies		
	Disability Rights-Based Legislation	Requirements for Students with Disabilities	Inclusive Education Policy
Australia	✓	✓	✓ some states
British Columbia		✓	
China			✓
Hong Kong SAR	✓	✓	
Japan	✓	✓	
Macao SAR		✓	
Maldives	✓		✓
New Zealand	✓		✓
Singapore		✓	
South Korea	✓	✓	

Implementation challenges with recommendations



Implementation Challenge 1

Inadequate teacher education and training

- ❖ **All jurisdictions**; lack of adequate initial teacher education and ongoing professional development for practising teachers
- ❖ **Several jurisdictions**; stressed need for deeper teacher training in areas such as curriculum differentiation and behavioural support
- ❖ Forlin & Lian (2008), Van Mieghem et al. (2020), OECD (2021)
- ❖ Australian Gov. (2023, p. 9) Priority Reform 1- beginning teachers unprepared to teach in 5 areas including *supporting diverse learners*

Recommendation 1.

Improving teacher preparation & training

- a) That initial teacher education programs commit to producing “work-ready” graduates with the essential attitude, knowledge and competencies for including and teaching students with SEN. The relevant authority in each country should monitor initial teacher education programs for effective inclusive education content.
- b) That education systems afford a minimum specified amount of ongoing professional development for classroom teachers and specialist teachers to promote their understanding, efficacy, and practice in including and teaching students with SEN. Additionally, teacher registration bodies (or equivalent) in each country should monitor this ongoing professional development for their teaching workforce.

Implementation Challenge 2

Under-resourcing of mainstream schools

- ❖ **British Columbia**; diminishing government funding has led to a reduction in classroom and specialist teachers, increased numbers of students with SEN, and rising student waiting lists at schools
- ❖ **Macao SAR & Maldives**; concerns about the inequitable distribution of resources among schools
- ❖ **Australia** viewed lack of support for teachers as a resourcing issue
- ❖ Ebersold & Meijer (2016), OECD (2021)

Recommendation 2. Increasing targeted funding

That governments and education systems prioritise funding to mainstream schools that are supporting students with SEN and monitor the impact on student outcomes and teaching quality.

Implementation Challenge 3

Policy formulation and implementation issues

- ❖ Lack of system-level policies
Australia; differences among states
Anderson & Boyle (2019) need for
“National Framework for Action”
South Korea; insufficient attention to
practical action plans for reform
- ❖ Lack of policies addressing school-level
practices
Macao SAR

Recommendation 3. Redressing the policy-to-practice gap

That governments develop robust rights-based policies and action plans focused on equity principles that enable students with SEN to achieve their potential in the mainstream. Additionally, governments should then authorise an independent body to monitor the implementation of these policies at the school level, to prevent policy slippage over time.

Implementation Challenge 4

Restricted stakeholder engagement

- ❖ **South Korea**; shared sense of responsibility between policy makers and school administrators
- ❖ **Japan**; increased collaboration between teaching professionals & associated organisations
- ❖ **Macao SAR**; called for
 - all parties involved to be accountable
 - increased parental participation in how inclusion is enacted at school level
- ❖ Australian Gov. (2023), Subban et al. (2023)

Recommendation 4. Expanding stakeholder engagement

That education systems support schools in implementing effective processes for enlisting and maintaining the engagement of all stakeholders (teachers, parents, students, peers, and potential employers) and encouraging their input into the inclusive education model for students with SEN.

Implementation Challenge 5

Limited local research to inform practice in schools

- ❖ Reporting differences
 - Australia – scoping review
 - Japan & South Korea – published reviews
 - Hong Kong SAR, Macao SAR, & Singapore – academic & system level reviews
- ❖ 2 Major themes
 - **teacher attitudes, beliefs, & efficacy** regarding inclusion
 - **implementation challenges** relating to inclusive education viewed from different stakeholder perspectives
- ❖ Hummel (2018)

Recommendation 5. Extending the inclusion research agenda

That a partnership be established between researchers and staff in local education systems and schools to establish a needs-based research agenda and enlist broad stakeholder input when undertaking agreed-upon studies. It is also essential that a mechanism be put in place that will enable details of positive approaches found to work well in some schools are disseminated to all other local schools.

Challenges summary

❖ All challenges

- well-documented in literature
- significant implications for this student group

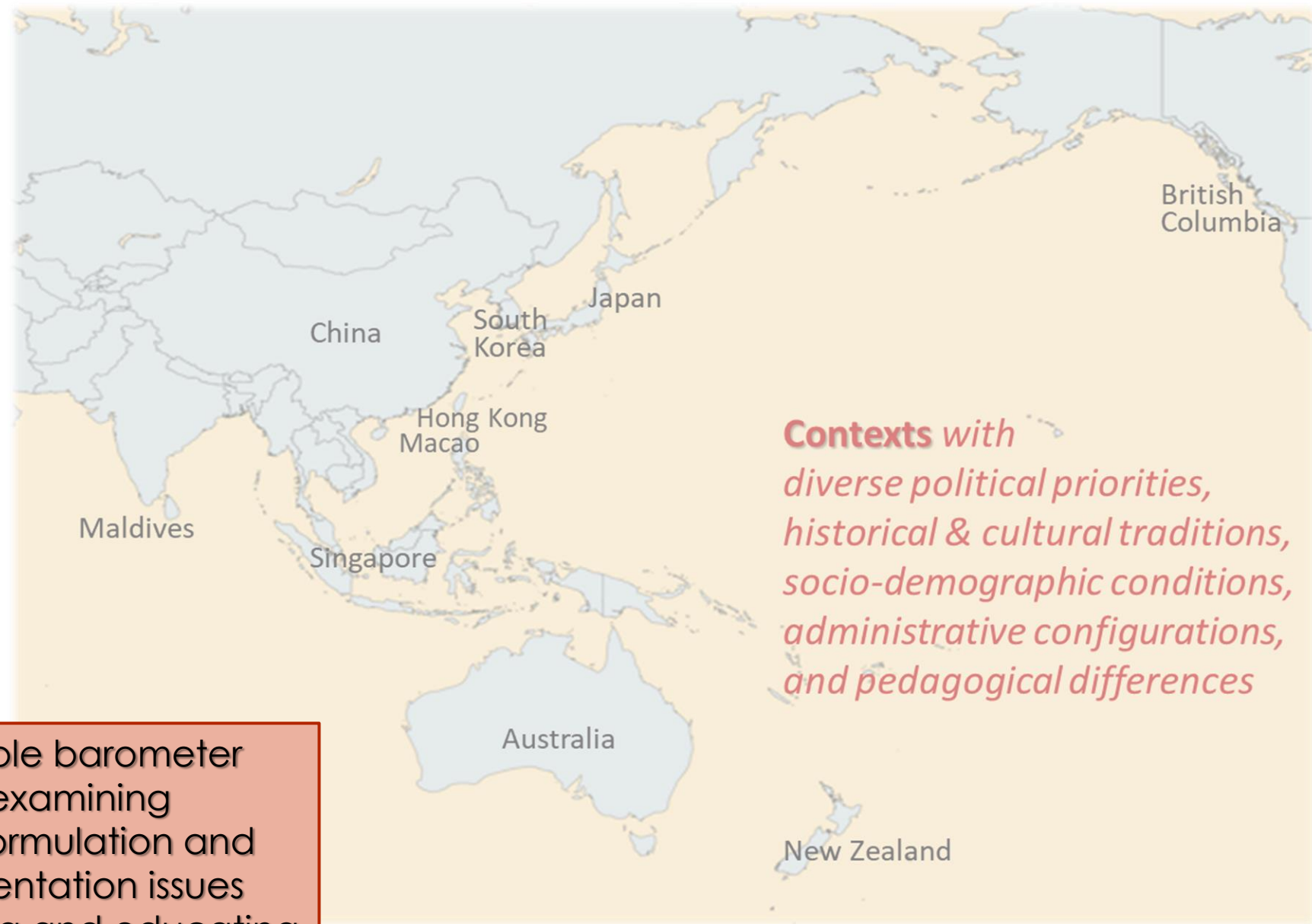
❖ **Teacher preparation & training** is a universal obstacle which urgently needs to be addressed

❖ **Challenges 1, 2, & 3** Hosshan et al., 2020

❖ Need to gather more empirical data on **levers for change** in specific countries

Jurisdictions	Inadequate teacher education & training	Under-resourcing of mainstream schools	Policy formation & implementation issues	Restricted stakeholder engagement	Limited local research to inform practice
Australia	✓	✓	✓		✓
British Columbia	✓	✓			
Hong Kong SAR	✓				
Japan	✓			✓	✓
Macao SAR	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Maldives	✓	✓		✓	
Singapore	✓				✓
South Korea	✓		✓	✓	✓

Conclusion



Contexts with
*diverse political priorities,
historical & cultural traditions,
socio-demographic conditions,
administrative configurations,
and pedagogical differences*

A credible barometer
for examining
policy formulation and
implementation issues
for including and educating
students with SEN

Advancing Inclusive and Special Education
in the Asia-Pacific

Wendi Beamish
Mantak Yuen Editors

The Inclusion
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Pacific

The Changing Landscape

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Queries & Comments

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Thank you