

Impacts of managerial systems on early educators' job satisfaction in five countries ^[1]

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Source: Issues in Educational Research

Format: Article

Publication Date: 13 Dec 2024

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Access online [PDF] ^[3]

Abstract

The work of early childhood educators is conducted in highly regulated environments in many Western nations. This is due to managerialism, the right arm of neoliberal-inspired policies. To explore educators' work within these contexts, our international study highlights the impacts of these systems on educators and the children they teach. This paper presents findings from five countries, namely, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Georgia and Italy. The results reveal the experiences of educators in these countries, impacted by neoliberal-inspired policies that are manifested in two different ways. They are dealing with increased managerial regulation or with the neglect of the sector in the pursuit of higher profits. Educators' job satisfaction is impacted when they perceive they are not able to adequately educate and support children due to these constraints. Using a critical neoliberal framework, we employed a mixed-method approach. The participants were educators with various roles and qualifications in a variety of service types. To analyse the numerical/closed answer data we used cross tabulation. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. Despite their difficulties, educators provided many ideas on the ways their government can better support their work so that they can focus on supporting children's learning through play. This study will be of interest to researchers, educators, policymakers and teacher educators.

Related link: Early childhood workforce index 2024 ^[4]

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