

Achieving quality early childhood education for all: Insights from the policy innovation diffusion research ^[1]

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AVAILABILITY

Full paper in pdf ^[3]

Description:

Inadequacies both in the provision and the quality of early childhood education in the United States are well documented. Over the past three decades, behaviors and expectations within society have changed dramatically so that there is growing parity among women and men in their participation in the paid work force. Nonetheless, attitudes towards early childhood care and education too often derive from assumptions that no longer hold.

Underlying many workplace practices and relevant public policies is the premise that young children are raised in a family where one adult (typically, the male) is the economic breadwinner, that there is a second adult (typically, the female) available in the family to provide care for children during the day, and that gaps in child care can be filled by extended family, by friends, or by neighbors (typically, other females).

To the extent that influential members of society, employers, and policymakers act and make arguments based on such assumptions, they send a powerful message to families. That is, the care and education of preschoolers is a private matter.

Of course, it is not. The material well being, the care, and the education of the very young in this society -- as in any other -- will have a direct material bearing on the future well being of us all. It is deeply troubling that the quality of early childhood education in the United States continues to be treated as a matter that is more-or-less peripheral to other societal, workplace, and governmental concerns.

Region: United States ^[4]

Tags: public opinion ^[5]

demand ^[6]

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