

Leadership Tasks in Early Childhood Education

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Content of the presentation

- General
- Research questions
- Key concepts
- Data collecting and analysis
- Results
- Further discussion

General

- Theoretical background: contextual leadership
- Cross-cultural comparative study
- Study was intended to provide some descriptive information regarding child care program leaders' perceptions of their work profiles, challenges, and sources of support
- Results from the survey are primarily reported in terms of frequencies and percentages

Research Tasks

- What centre leaders consider important?
- Do they have enough time to focus on the important tasks?
- What burdens them?
- What helps them succeed?
- What kind of support they have?

Key concepts

- Pedagogical leadership
 - Improving and developing educational and teaching practices...
- Service management
 - Services, customer needs, service quality...
- Human resource management
 - Managing and leading people, amount and quality of staff...
- Leading change
 - Implementing decision making, guiding staff through the change...
- Network management
 - Human interaction management, collaboration with stakeholder, advocacy...
- Daily management
 - Secretarial tasks, daily mechanical tasks...

Data collection

- Finland:
 - Data collected in 2012-2013
 - Centre directors (56), part-time centre directors (18), ECE leaders (16)
 - All centers were public and run by municipalities
- Japan (preliminary data analysis)
 - Data collected in 2013
 - Principals (91) and a vice-principal (1) of ECE programs
 - 66 public, 26 private centers

Questionnaire

- Questionnaire with 5 open ended questions and one percentage question
 - Which are the most important tasks in your leadership work?
 - Which are the leadership tasks you don't have enough time to complete?
 - What in your leadership work is difficult or problematic/wears you down most?
 - What skills and attributes have helped you to succeed as a leader?
 - How have your superiors and the management structure supported you as a centre leader?
 - As a leader, how do you divide your working time into different tasks? (%)

Data analysis

- Qualitative content analysis (categories)
- Quantification
- Japanese data was analysed by Japanese researcher

Leaders' time used in different leadership responsibilities (%)

	FINLAND			JAPAN
	Centre directors (n=50)	Part-time centre directors (n=13)	ECE leaders (n=13)	Centre directors (n=92)
Pedagogical leadership	18	32	18	13
Service Management	13	12	13	24
Human Resource Management	26	16	25	15
Financial Management	8	7	12	13
Leading Change	11	7	15	9
Network Management	8	5	11	9
Daily Managerial Tasks	17	19	16	15

The importance of leadership task vs. time resource

	FINLAND						JAPAN	
	Centre directors		Part-time centre directors		ECE leaders		Centre directors	
	Importance	Time resource	Importance	Time resource	Importance	Time resource	Importance	Time resource
Pedagogical leadership	2.	***	2.	***	2.	***	1.	***
Service Mgmt	3.		3.		4.		3.	*
HRM	1.	**	1.	**	1.	***	2.	**
Financial Mgmt	5.		5.		4.		7.	
Leading Change	6.	*	4.		5.	*	-	
Network Mgmt	6.		5.		3.		6.	
Daily Mgmt	4.		1.	*	6.		5.	
Security Mgmt	-		-		-		4.	

What in your leadership work is difficult or problematic?

FINLAND	JAPAN
1. Daily managerial tasks	1. Partnership with parents
2. Splintered nature of the work	2. Communication with colleagues
3. Human resource management	3. Professional development

What skills and attributes have helped you to succeed as in leader?

FINLAND	JAPAN
1. Communication skills and other personal attributes	1. Education, training and competence
2. Education, training and competence	2. Previous work experience
3. Peer support and work community's support	3. Communication skills and other personal attributes

How have your superiors and the management system supported you as a centre leader?

FINLAND	JAPAN
1. Support from other leaders	1. Mentoring
2. Support from superior	2. Nothing
3. Additional training and job improvement	3. Additional training and job improvement

Further discussion

- Are leadership tasks and job profiles in ECE ambiguous?
- Are the key concepts clearly defined?
- Is leadership in ECE reactive or proactive?



Thank you!

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