

Saudi Teachers' Perceptions of Rough and Tumble Play in Early Learning

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Abstract : This study explored teachers' perceptions of rough-and-tumble (R&T) play in early childhood education in Saudi Arabia. The literature on rough-and-tumble play in Saudi Arabia is limited in scope, and more research is needed to explore teachers' perceptions on this type of play for early learners. The pertinent literature reveals that R&T play, which includes running, jumping, fighting, wrestling, chasing, pulling, pushing, and climbing, among other rough playful activities, can positively impact learning and development across psychosocial, emotional, and cognitive domains. Teachers' understanding of R & T play is key, and the attitudes of Saudi early childhood teachers who are responsible for implementing curriculum-based play have not been fully researched. Four early childhood teachers from an urban Saudi preschool participated in the study. The data collected in this study were interpreted through a sociocultural lens. Data sources included in-depth interviews, photo-elicitation interviews, and participant-generated drawings. Three overarching themes emerged: teachers' concerns about rough-and-tumble play, teachers' perceptions about the benefits of rough-and-tumble play, and teachers' expression of gender roles in R & T play as contextualized within Saudi culture. Saudi teachers' perceptions are discussed in detail, and implications of the findings and recommendations for future research are put forth.

Keywords : rough and tumble play, gender, culture, early childhood, Saudi Arabia

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