

Transitioning Teacher Identity during COVID-19: An Australian Early Childhood Education Perspective

Authors : J. Jebunnesa, Y. Budd, T. Mason

Abstract : COVID-19 changed the pedagogical expectations of early childhood education as many teachers across Australia had to quickly adapt to new teaching practices such as remote teaching. An important factor in the successful implementation of any new teaching and learning approach is teacher preparation, however, due to the pandemic, the transformation to remote teaching was immediate. A timely question to be asked is how early childhood teachers managed the transition from face-to-face teaching to remote teaching and what was learned through this time. This study explores the experiences of early childhood educators in Australia during COVID-19 lockdowns. Data were collected from an online survey conducted through the official Facebook forum of "Early Childhood Education and Care Australia," and a constructivist grounded theory methodology was used to analyse the data. Initial research results suggest changing expectations of teachers' roles and responsibilities during the lockdown, with a significant category related to transitioning teacher identities emerging. The concept of transitioning represents the shift from the role of early childhood educator to educational innovator, essential worker, social worker, and health officer. The findings illustrate the complexity of early childhood educators' roles during the pandemic.

Keywords : changing role of teachers, constructivist grounded theory, lessons learned, teaching during COVID-19

Conference Title : ICECEC 2022 : International Conference on Early Childhood Education and Care

Conference Location : Vancouver, Canada

Conference Dates : May 23-24, 2022