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Gender and professionalization in the Danish ECE work force

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Despite one of the highest proportions of men in ECEs, the percentage of men in Danish ECEs has not risen over the last 15 years. Main policy focus has been on possible strategies of professionalization. In the international literature, gender equal recruitment and strategies of professionalization are often considered as being two sides of the same coin. Nevertheless, research sheds light on the difficulties of linking the two strategies. In an ongoing research project, experiences of men and women in ECE institutions are explored through the analysis of narratives of male and female workers at the beginning of their transition to practice. Consequences for training and the transition to practice are discussed. The research highlights the importance of reflecting gender aspects at an important step of vocational careers. ECE research, practice and policy have to regard gender equity as a basic aspect of diversity and equality in ECE. The aim is to discuss future possibilities of policies targeted at recruiting men.

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