



Joanne McHale, Ramazan Sak, İkbal Tuba Şahin Sak ,
Jean Plaisir & Tim Rohrmann

**Challenges in Men's Vocational Careers.
The MoMEC Study.**

Paper presented on the EECERA SIG Gender Online Conference, 5.3.2026.

Background

- Much research on the dearth of Men in ECEC internationally.
- Studies have pointed to the need for ongoing institutional support and effective mentoring strategies for men in ECEC
- Mentoring seen as a positive mechanism for retention in the ECEC workforce generally (ET2020 Working Group, 2020).
- Small scale or short-term projects on mentoring men in ECEC internationally (Plaisir & Quansah, 2024).
- Paucity of large-scale implementation projects at national and international levels and long-term collaborative research initiatives and evaluation strategies (despite recommendations for same).



Literature

- Low participation of men in ECEC internationally (Rohrmann, 2020; Brody et al. 2021)
- Much focus on the factors impacting recruitment:
 - Visibility & opportunity (Warin et al., 2020)
 - Gender norms & stereotyping (Coles et al., 2026; Warin et al., 2020; Wright & Brownhill, 2019)
 - Perception of risk (Wright & Brownhill, 2019; Eidevald et al., 2018)
- Research on experiences suggest:
 - Gendered expectations & biases (Brody et al. 2021; Warin et al. 2020)
 - Need for gender-sensitive professional development, institutional support, and mentoring (Brody et al. 2021; Warin et al. 2020)



MoMEC Project Research Team

Led by Prof. Dr. Tim Rohrmann HAWK University of Applied Sciences, Hildesheim, Germany

Prof. Dr. İkbal Tuba Şahin-Sak Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, Türkiye

Prof. Dr. Ramazan Sak, Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, Türkiye

Prof. Dr. Jean Plaisir, City University of New York, USA

Dr. Joanne McHale, Technological University of Dublin, Ireland

Prof. Kari Emilsen, Queen Maud's University College, Trondheim, Norway

Research Aims

To foster development of a gender-mixed workforce.

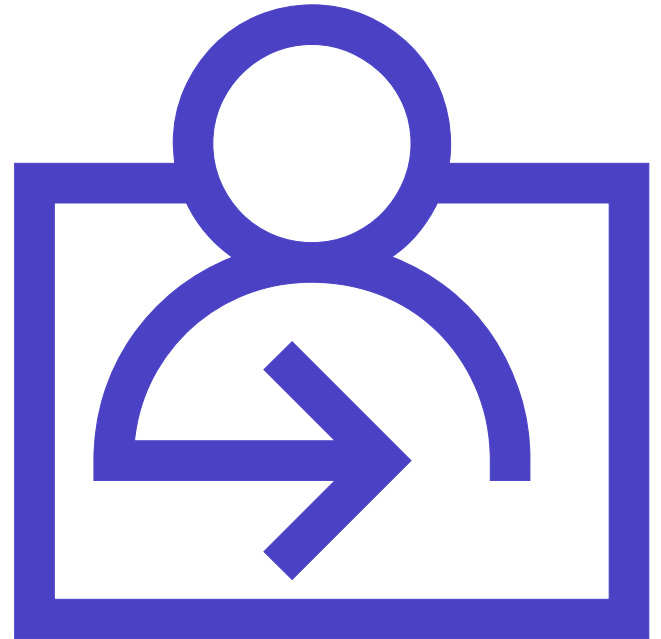
To support the further qualification of male educators.

To retain male workers in the field of ECEC.

Through implementation and evaluation of existing mentoring measures in participating countries.

Research methodology

- Multi-method
 - Short Quantitative Questionnaire on experiences and mentoring needs
 - Drawing on previous research and knowledge on men's experiences
 - Document analysis
 - Review previous and existing mentoring programme literature to identify common effective approaches.
 - Implementation of existing measures in participating countries
 - Qualitative follow-up interviews



Developing the questionnaire



- Initial draft: Jean Plaisir & Joanne McHale
- Project team review & discussion
 - Applications for data collection and analysis (MS Forms/Google/Qualtrics/Excel/SPSS)
 - Definitions and language: 'mentoring' vs 'mentorship'
 - Consideration of contextual differences
 - Terminology
 - Translation
 - Demographic questions
 - Cultural and geographical characteristics
 - Professional qualifications
 - Stages of study in ECEC
 - Career progression in ECEC

Features of the questionnaire



- Likert scale questions
 - ECEC work satisfaction
 - Factors impacting experiences
 - Gendered experiences as male educators
 - Importance of supports experienced
 - Range of supports that would benefit
- Demographic questions
 - Stage of career (pre, early or long)
 - Current role
 - Geographical area/country
 - Level of education
- Two open ended questions:
 - Would you like to add a comment about your experience in ECEC?
 - Please share a comment about what kind of support and/or mentoring would be helpful for men studying or working in ECEC.

Current status of data collection



- Data collection commencement (questionnaires)
 - Türkiye - Data collection commenced
 - USA - Data collection commenced
 - Norway - Data collection commenced
 - Germany - Data collection commenced
 - Ireland - Data collection commencing

**MOMECC – MENTORING MEN IN ECEC – SURVEY –
CHALLENGES FOR MENTORING MEN**

Preliminary Findings



How satisfied are you with the following features of working in ECEC?



	Countries	Very Dissatisfied n (%)	Somewhat Dissatisfied n (%)	Somewhat Satisfied n (%)	Very Satisfied n (%)	Not Applicable n (%)
Interactions with female colleagues	Türkiye	21 (10,2)	15 (7,3)	78 (37,9)	84 (40,8)	8 (3,9)
	Germany	2 (1,8)	10 (8,9)	66 (58,9)	32 (28,6)	2 (1,8)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	2 (28,6)	4 (57,1)	1 (14,3)
Interactions with male colleagues	Türkiye	13 (6,3)	7 (3,4)	36 (17,5)	140 (68,0)	10 (4,9)
	Germany	3 (2,7)	5 (4,5)	32 (28,6)	51 (45,5)	21 (18,8)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	1 (14,3)	5 (71,4)	1 (14,3)
Professional development opportunities	Türkiye	23 (11,2)	27 (13,1)	103 (50,0)	49 (23,8)	4 (1,9)
	Germany	7 (6,3)	30 (26,8)	43 (38,4)	28 (25,0)	4 (3,6)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	3 (42,9)	1 (14,3)
Gender-mixed teams	Türkiye	14 (6,8)	7 (3,4)	60 (29,1)	115 (55,8)	10 (4,9)
	Germany	14 (12,5)	42 (37,5)	37 (33,0)	18 (16,1)	1 (0,9)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	6 (85,7)	1 (14,3)
Different expectations towards me as a male ECEC worker.	Türkiye	24 (11,7)	32 (15,5)	87 (42,2)	58 (28,2)	5 (2,4)
	Germany	4 (3,6)	20 (17,9)	60 (53,6)	18 (16,1)	10 (8,9)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)
Support in my workplace	Türkiye	21 (10,2)	22 (10,7)	89 (43,2)	66 (32,0)	8 (3,9)
	Germany	5 (4,5)	14 (12,5)	55 (49,1)	37 (33,0)	1 (0,9)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	4 (57,1)	0 (0,0)
Parent reactions to me as a male educator	Türkiye	22 (10,7)	30 (14,6)	56 (27,2)	82 (39,8)	16 (7,8)
	Germany	4 (3,6)	8 (7,1)	42 (37,5)	55 (49,1)	3 (2,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	3 (42,9)	1 (14,3)
Experiences with mothers	Türkiye	14 (6,8)	29 (14,1)	87 (42,2)	58 (28,2)	18 (8,7)
	Germany	3 (2,7)	8 (7,1)	55 (49,1)	43 (38,4)	3 (2,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)



How satisfied are you with the following features of working in ECEC?

Experiences with fathers	Türkiye	18 (8,7)	25 (12,1)	76 (36,9)	69 (33,5)	18 (8,7)
	Germany	3 (2,7)	7 (6,3)	42 (37,5)	56 (50,0)	4 (3,6)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)
Work-life balance	Türkiye	16 (7,8)	21 (10,2)	77 (37,4)	80 (38,8)	12 (5,8)
	Germany	8 (7,1)	22 (19,6)	41 (36,6)	38 (33,9)	3 (2,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	1 (14,3)	2 (28,6)
Professional networking	Türkiye	14 (6,8)	12 (5,8)	79 (38,3)	94 (45,6)	7 (3,4)
	Germany	11 (9,8)	26 (23,2)	46 (41,1)	22 (19,6)	7 (6,3)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	5 (71,4)	0 (0,0)	2 (28,6)
A sense of purpose in life	Türkiye	15 (7,3)	13 (6,3)	70 (34,0)	100 (48,5)	8 (3,9)
	Germany	7 (6,3)	14 (12,5)	27 (24,1)	63 (56,3)	1 (0,9)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	5 (71,4)	2 (28,6)	0 (0,0)
Gender-specific professional development	Türkiye	18 (8,7)	33 (16,0)	92 (44,7)	51 (24,8)	12 (5,8)
	Germany	11 (9,8)	43 (38,4)	34 (30,4)	12 (10,7)	12 (10,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	5 (71,4)	0 (0,0)	2 (28,6)
Support from leaders in my organisation	Türkiye	19 (9,2)	25 (12,1)	51 (24,8)	94 (45,6)	17 (8,3)
	Germany	9 (8,0)	18 (16,1)	44 (39,3)	38 (33,9)	3 (2,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	3 (42,9)	1 (14,3)



How satisfied are you with the following features of working in ECEC?

- In Türkiye, 78.7% of participants were satisfied with their interactions with female colleagues, while 85.5% were satisfied with their interactions with male colleagues. In Germany, the satisfaction rate with female colleagues (87.5%) is higher than in Türkiye. However, the "Not Applicable" response rate of 18.8% regarding interactions with male colleagues in Germany indicates that male educators in kindergartens have more limited opportunities to work together (isolation) compared to Türkiye.
- While 84.9% of participants in Türkiye reported high satisfaction with working in mixed teams, this figure dropped to 49.1% in Germany, with half of the participants (50%) reporting dissatisfaction. This reflects the greater challenges faced by male educators in Germany regarding gender balance within teams.
- In both countries, parental satisfaction rates regarding male educators are quite high (Germany 86.6%; Türkiye 67%).
- Male educators in Germany show a more stable and higher level of satisfaction with their experiences with both mothers (87.5%) and fathers (87.5%) compared to their counterparts in Türkiye (70.4% and 70.4%, respectively).



How satisfied are you with the following features of working in ECEC?

- While 83.9% of male educators in Türkiye reported satisfaction with professional networking, this rate was 60.7% in Germany.
- Dissatisfaction rates increase when it comes to "gender-specific professional development opportunities." 48.2% of participants in Germany are dissatisfied in this area. This indicates that training programs are insufficient to meet the specific needs of male educators (e.g., communication with boys, dealing with gender stereotypes).
- Regarding support received from corporate leaders, Türkiye (70.4%) and Germany (73.2%) present a similar and positive picture.
- Male educators' responses to whether their work "gives meaning/purpose to their lives" indicate the strongest sense of professional belonging. 82.5% reported "satisfaction" in Türkiye, compared to 80.4% in Germany. This demonstrates that, despite the challenges they face, male educators pursue their profession with intrinsic motivation.
- In summary, the data shows that male educators in Türkiye are more active and satisfied with social networking and team interaction, while men in Germany are more harmonious in their parent-child relationships but experience more difficulties with gender balance within the team and finding male colleagues. The dissatisfaction, particularly in the area of "gender-specific professional development," clearly indicates the need to develop specific support policies and mentoring mechanisms for male educators in both countries.



How much do the following factors impact your experience working in early childhood education?

	Countries	No impact n (%)	Little impact n (%)	Some impact n (%)	Significant impact n (%)	Not Applicable n (%)
Perceptions of gender roles (e.g., societal expectations and stereotypes)	Türkiye	28 (13,6)	28 (13,6)	93 (45,1)	55 (26,7)	2 (1,0)
	Germany	7 (6,3)	28 (25,0)	52 (46,4)	23 (20,5)	2 (1,8)
	USA	0 (0,0)	2 (28,6)	4 (57,1)	1 (14,3)	0 (0,0)
Support from family and friends (e.g., whether family members and friends support your decision)	Türkiye	42 (20,4)	34 (16,5)	74 (35,9)	50 (24,3)	6 (2,9)
	Germany	11 (9,8)	19 (17,0)	38 (33,9)	41 (36,6)	3 (2,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	1 (14,3)	1 (14,3)	5 (71,4)	0 (0,0)
Career advancement opportunities (e.g., promotions and professional development)	Türkiye	23 (11,2)	27 (13,1)	79 (38,3)	65 (31,6)	12 (5,8)
	Germany	11 (9,8)	36 (32,1)	39 (34,8)	19 (17,0)	7 (6,3)
	USA	0 (0,0)	2 (28,6)	0 (0,0)	5 (71,4)	0 (0,0)
Compensation and benefits (e.g., salary, health benefits, and job security)	Türkiye	12 (5,8)	22 (10,7)	56 (27,2)	106 (51,5)	10 (4,9)
	Germany	16 (14,3)	25 (22,3)	46 (41,1)	20 (17,9)	5 (4,5)
	USA	0 (0,0)	1 (14,3)	2 (28,6)	4 (57,1)	0 (0,0)
Working in isolation (e.g., being the only man at work)	Türkiye	41 (19,9)	26 (12,6)	61 (29,6)	67 (32,5)	11 (5,3)
	Germany	21 (18,8)	26 (23,2)	25 (22,3)	35 (31,3)	5 (4,5)
	USA	0 (0,0)	5 (71,4)	1 (14,3)	1 (14,3)	0 (0,0)



How much do the following factors impact your experience working in early childhood education?

- The table presents a comparative analysis of the impact of five main factors (gender roles, peer support, career opportunities, economic conditions, and loneliness) on the professional lives of male educators in Türkiye (n=206), Germany (n=112), and the USA (n=7).
- 71.8% of participants reported that their perceptions of gender roles had "some" or "significant" influence on their careers. This indicates that being a male kindergarten teacher in Türkiye is still a position that requires struggling against strong social norms. Similarly, in Germany, this rate is 66.9%. The influence of stereotypes remains a dominant factor in the construction of men's professional identities in both countries.
- Family and friend support has a "significant impact" on career (36.6%), which is significantly higher than in Türkiye (24.3%). For male educators in Germany, approval from their immediate environment is a key motivator for the decision to remain in the profession.
- In Türkiye, 20.4% of participants stated that social support had "no effect" on their careers. This can be interpreted as Turkish men exhibiting a more individualistic or resilient stance against peer pressure in their career choices.
- This is the most striking finding of the table. While 51.5% of participants in Türkiye stated that economic conditions had a "significant impact" on their careers, this rate was only 17.9% in Germany. For male educators in Türkiye, low wages and economic insecurity are the biggest obstacles to professional sustainability.



How much do the following factors impact your experience working in early childhood education?

- The impact of career advancement opportunities in Türkiye (31.6%, significant) is approximately twice as high as in Germany (17.0%, significant). This indicates that Turkish men have higher expectations for vertical mobility (management, etc.).
- In both countries, the situation of being the only male in the organization (isolation) has a "significant impact" of around 30%. However, the percentage of those who say it has "no impact" in Türkiye (19.9%) is similar to Germany (18.8%). This finding proves that men being "alone" in a female-dominated environment negatively affects their sense of professional belonging on a global scale.
- In summary, while economic conditions and career hierarchies are the primary factors shaping professional experience for male educators in Türkiye, social support and societal roles are more decisive for men in Germany. In particular, the 51.5% economic impact rate in the Turkish data indicates that the main reason behind the risk of attrition for men leaving the ECEC sector is financial hardship rather than social pressure. In Germany, however, the profession is experienced as a matter of social integration and identity rather than an economic concern.



Please state the degree to which you have experienced the following as a male ECEC worker.

	Countries	No experience n (%)	Little experience n (%)	Some experience n (%)	Significant experience n (%)	Not Applicable n (%)
Gender specific expectations of colleagues	Türkiye	24 (11,7)	29 (14,1)	76 (36,9)	65 (31,6)	12 (5,8)
	Germany	6 (5,4)	27 (24,1)	47 (42,0)	31 (27,7)	1 (0,9)
	USA	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)	0 (0,0)
Distrust from colleagues	Türkiye	63 (30,6)	37 (18,0)	63 (30,6)	26 (12,6)	17 (8,3)
	Germany	37 (33,0)	37 (33,0)	27 (24,1)	8 (7,1)	3 (2,7)
	USA	6 (85,7)	1 (14,3)	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)
Gender specific expectations from parents	Türkiye	44 (21,4)	27 (13,1)	72 (35,0)	49 (23,8)	14 (6,8)
	Germany	18 (16,1)	32 (28,6)	46 (41,1)	14 (12,5)	2 (1,8)
	USA	1 (14,3)	3 (42,9)	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)	0 (0,0)
Distrust from parents	Türkiye	54 (26,2)	44 (21,4)	60 (29,1)	33 (16,0)	15 (7,3)
	Germany	26 (23,2)	43 (38,4)	35 (31,3)	5 (4,5)	3 (2,7)
	USA	4 (57,1)	1 (14,3)	1 (14,3)	1 (14,3)	0 (0,0)



Please state the degree to which you have experienced the following as a male ECEC worker.

- The table presents gender-based expectations and potential experiences of exclusion/insecurity faced by male educators in Türkiye (n=206), Germany (n=112), and the USA (n=7). The general trend shows that social "expectations" are a more dominant experience than physical "insecurity."
- 68.5% of male educators in Türkiye and 69.7% of educators in Germany stated that their colleagues have "male-specific" expectations of them (e.g., physically demanding jobs, providing technical support, or maintaining discipline) ("Some" and "Significant").
- The percentage of people who experience parental gender-based expectations at a "meaningful level" is 58.8% in Türkiye, while this figure is 53.6% in Germany.
- In Türkiye, 43.2% of educators experience "some" or "significant" levels of distrust from their colleagues, while in Germany this figure is 31.2%. It appears that men in Türkiye face more doubt during the professional acceptance process. This is the most critical area of "emotional labor" for male educators. In Türkiye, 45.1% experience distrust from their parents, compared to 35.8% in Germany. Male educators in Türkiye report approximately 10% more distrust from both colleagues and parents compared to their counterparts in Germany. This situation may be related to the fact that in Türkiye, it is still considered "unusual" for men to work in this field and may be perceived as a potential risk.



Please rate the importance of the following types of support for men in ECEC.

	Countries	No importance n (%)	Little importance n (%)	Some importance n (%)	Much importance n (%)	N/A n (%)
Support during the training period	Türkiye	14 (6,8)	6 (2,9)	31 (15,0)	143 (69,4)	12 (5,8)
	Germany	7 (6,3)	21 (18,8)	34 (30,4)	42 (37,5)	8 (7,1)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	1 (14,3)	6 (85,7)	0 (0,0)
Mentoring opportunities in the workplace	Türkiye	15 (7,3)	6 (2,9)	30 (14,6)	143 (69,4)	12 (5,8)
	Germany	8 (7,1)	14 (12,5)	47 (42,0)	35 (31,3)	8 (7,1)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	4 (57,1)	0 (0,0)
Same gender mentoring opportunities in the workplace	Türkiye	16 (7,8)	11 (5,3)	41 (19,9)	121 (58,7)	17 (8,3)
	Germany	10 (8,9)	18 (16,1)	42 (37,5)	34 (30,4)	8 (7,1)
	USA	0 (0,0)	1 (14,3)	2 (28,6)	3 (42,9)	1 (14,3)
Connections with other male educators	Türkiye	8 (3,9)	9 (4,4)	49 (23,8)	131 (63,6)	9 (4,4)
	Germany	9 (8,0)	18 (16,1)	31 (27,7)	51 (45,5)	3 (2,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	2 (28,6)	2 (28,6)
Men in ECEC support groups	Türkiye	10 (4,9)	7 (3,4)	45 (21,8)	136 (66,0)	8 (3,9)
	Germany	14 (12,5)	18 (16,1)	24 (21,4)	54 (48,2)	2 (1,8)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)



Please rate the importance of the following types of support for men in ECEC.

- The table compares the importance male educators in Türkiye (n=206), Germany (n=112), and the USA (n=7) place on support during the training period, mentoring in the workplace, and relationships with female colleagues. The high "Much Importance" rating in the Turkish data reflects the sample's need for structural support.
- Türkiye: 69.4% of participants consider the support during their training period "very important." This rate reflects the anxieties experienced by prospective teachers in Türkiye when transitioning to the sector.
- Germany: In Germany, this rate remains at 37.5%. This difference can be explained by the fact that the vocational training system (Erzieher training) in Germany is more practical and structured, leading candidates to feel more secure.



Please rate the importance of the following types of support for men in ECEC.

- In Türkiye, 69.4% of men place "great importance" on mentorship, while in Germany this figure is 31.3%.
- In Türkiye, 58.7% of participants stated that working with a male mentor is very important. In Germany, this figure is 30.4%.
- In Türkiye, 63.6% of participants consider it very important to be in contact with other male educators. In Germany, this rate is 45.5%. The importance given to "Men's Support Groups in ECEC" is 66% in Türkiye, while it is 48.2% in Germany.
- In Türkiye, mentoring and support groups are not considered a luxury but a core need for male educators to remain in the profession. The 60-70% "very important" responses in the Turkish data indicate a significant gap in the system in this regard.
- While data from Germany shows a more balanced distribution, the fact that approximately one in two educators still consider support groups (48.2%) and male colleague relationships (45.5%) very important demonstrates that male professional isolation is a global problem and that "male solidarity networks" are a critical strategy for professional retention.

Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements based on your academic journey, professional development training, and work experiences as a male educator in ECEC.

	Countries	Strongly Disagree n (%)	Disagree n (%)	Agree n (%)	Strongly Agree n (%)	Not Applicable n (%)
Institutional support could motivate preservice men to pursue careers in ECEC.	Türkiye	5 (2,4)	6 (2,9)	90 (43,7)	92 (44,7)	13 (6,3)
	Germany	7 (6,3)	15 (13,4)	49 (43,8)	40 (35,7)	1 (0,9)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	4 (57,1)	0 (0,0)
Inclusive advertisement could boost men's participation in the ECEC workforce.	Türkiye	6 (2,9)	20 (9,7)	93 (45,1)	73 (35,4)	14 (6,8)
	Germany	7 (6,3)	24 (21,4)	47 (42,0)	32 (28,6)	2 (1,8)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	3 (42,9)	0 (0,0)
Professional development could prepare men to handle hostility in ECEC.	Türkiye	4 (1,9)	15 (7,3)	97 (47,1)	62 (30,1)	28 (13,6)
	Germany	4 (3,6)	9 (8,0)	57 (50,9)	39 (34,8)	3 (2,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	3 (42,9)	1 (14,3)
Professional support could motivate men in early career stages in the ECEC workforce.	Türkiye	4 (1,9)	12 (5,8)	98 (47,6)	78 (37,9)	14 (6,8)
	Germany	4 (3,6)	13 (11,6)	41 (36,6)	50 (44,6)	4 (3,6)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	1 (14,3)	2 (28,6)
Gender-specific mentoring would support men's retention when entering the ECEC field.	Türkiye	2 (1,0)	18 (8,7)	96 (46,6)	62 (30,1)	28 (13,6)
	Germany	6 (5,4)	23 (20,5)	49 (43,8)	29 (25,9)	5 (4,5)
	USA	0 (0,0)	1 (14,3)	3 (42,9)	1 (14,3)	2 (28,6)
Gender-specific networking would help promote gender balance in the ECEC workforce.	Türkiye	5 (2,4)	19 (9,2)	97 (47,1)	59 (28,6)	26 (12,6)
	Germany	8 (7,1)	19 (17,0)	43 (38,4)	39 (34,8)	3 (2,7)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	3 (42,9)	4 (57,1)	0 (0,0)
Men would appreciate ongoing professional development while working in the ECEC workforce.	Türkiye	2 (1,0)	12 (5,8)	111 (53,9)	65 (31,6)	16 (7,8)
	Germany	3 (2,7)	13 (11,6)	44 (39,3)	48 (42,9)	4 (3,6)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)
Men would welcome support networks to navigate gendered issues in the ECEC workforce.	Türkiye	3 (1,5)	7 (3,4)	117 (56,8)	62 (30,1)	17 (8,3)
	Germany	6 (5,4)	18 (16,1)	42 (37,5)	42 (37,5)	4 (3,6)
	USA	0 (0,0)	0 (0,0)	4 (57,1)	2 (28,6)	1 (14,3)



Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements based on your academic journey, professional development training, and work experiences as a male educator in ECEC.

- This study presents the levels of participation of male educators in institutional support, mentoring, networking, and professional development strategies, specifically in Türkiye (n=206), Germany (n=112), and the USA (n=7). The overwhelming majority of participants responding "agree" and "strongly agree" to the proposed interventions indicates a shared demand for structural change in the system.
- In Türkiye, 88.4% of participants believe that institutional support will be effective in guiding male candidates towards the profession. In Germany, this rate is 79.5%. This finding proves that men's decision to enter the ECEC field is sensitive not only to individual but also to institutional incentives.
- Agreement on the importance of support given in the early years of the profession is over 80% in both countries. This confirms that the early years of a career are the most critical period for reducing the risk of "early departure" (attrition) for men in the sector.
- A large majority of participants (77.2% in Türkiye; 85.7% in Germany) believe that vocational training can prepare men to cope with hostility they may encounter in the workplace.
- The fact that the rates in Germany are higher than in Türkiye indicates that male educators in Germany are more adept at overcoming such social challenges through "pedagogical preparation."



Please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the following statements based on your academic journey, professional development training, and work experiences as a male educator in ECEC.

- Support for "gender-specific mentoring" is provided by 76.7% of professionals in Türkiye and 69.7% in Germany. This is a strong indicator that men receiving guidance from experienced male colleagues will increase their retention rates in the profession.
- In both countries, over 70% believe that gender-balanced networking activities will improve workforce balance.
- The idea that inclusive advertising will increase male participation is accepted by 80.5% in Türkiye and 70.6% in Germany. This finding represents a concrete demand for a change in the "female-centered" language used in preschool educational visuals and communication.
- This table reveals that male educators want not only to be "hired" but also to be "protected by an institutional shield and mentoring network." While the need for institutional motivation and networking is a more urgent demand for participants in Türkiye, participants in Germany place more emphasis on pedagogical support such as "strategies for coping with hostility" and "continuous professional development."
- In conclusion: The data statistically demonstrates that instead of one-off campaigns for a gender-balanced ECEC workforce, a sustainable ecosystem woven with mentoring and support networks, starting from the candidacy period and continuing through the expertise phase, needs to be established.



Participants' background characteristics

Variable	Characteristics	Türkiye (n=206) n (%)	Germany (n=112) n (%)	USA (n=7) n (%)
The Current Stage of Career In ECEC	Pre-service	78 (37,9)	8 (7,1)	1 (14,3)
	Early career	57 (27,7)	22 (19,6)	1 (14,3)
	Long-term service	71 (34,5)	81 (72,3)	4 (57,1)
	Not answered	-	1 (0,9)	1 (14,3)
Current Role	Placement/in training	78 (37,9)	9 (8,0)	0 (0,0)
	Classroom assistant	0 (0,0)	41 (36,6)	3 (42,9)
	Lead teacher or Group leader	128 (62,1)	21 (18,8)	2 (28,6)
	Supervisor	0 (0,0)	30 (26,8)	0 (0,0)
	Other	0 (0,0)	11 (9,8)	2 (28,6)
Geographical Area	Urban	127 (61,7)	58 (51,8)	7 (100,0)
	Suburban	48 (23,3)	31 (27,7)	0 (0,0)
	Rural	31 (15,0)	23 (20,5)	0 (0,0)
Highest Level of Education In ECEC	No diploma or degree (yet)	78 (37,9)	7 (6,3)	1 (14,3)
	Assistant Qualification	0 (0,0)	7 (6,3)	0 (0,0)
	Diploma or Associate Degree	0 (0,0)	68 (60,7)	4 (57,1)
	Bachelor's Degree	99 (48,1)	14 (12,5)	0 (0,0)
	Master's Degree or above	29 (14,1)	9 (8,0)	2 (28,6)
	Other	0 (0,0)	7 (6,3)	0 (0,0)



Participants' background characteristics

	Characteristics	Türkiye (n=206) n (%)	Germany (n=112) n (%)	USA (n=7) n (%)
Pursuing Higher Education While Working In ECEC	Yes	25 (12,1)	15 (13,4)	0 (0,0)
	No	181 (87,9)	95 (84,8)	0 (0,0)
	Not answered	0 (0,0)	2 (1,8)	7 (100,0)
If you answered "yes" to The Question above, how long have you been studying	One Year	10 (4,9)		
	Two Years	8 (3,9)		
	Three Years	1 (0,5)		
	Four Years	6 (2,9)		
	Not answered	181 (87,9)	112 (100,0)	7 (100,0)





Participants' background characteristics

- Table shows the demographic and professional characteristics of male early childhood education (ECEC) workers participating in the study from Türkiye (n=206), Germany (n=112), and the USA (n=7). The data reveal significant structural differences between countries in terms of both career paths and education systems.
- Türkiye: Participants in Türkiye exhibit a balanced distribution across career stages; however, the largest group, at 37.9%, consists of pre-service teachers. Similarly, 62.1% of participants hold the role of "Responsible Teacher/Group Leader." The absence of assistant teacher or supervisor levels in the Türkiye data indicates that the employment model in the country is largely focused on direct classroom teaching.
- In Germany, the vast majority of participants (72.3%) are experienced employees with "long-term service." Furthermore, the participation rate of 26.8% in "Supervisor/Manager" positions demonstrates that the German data also reflects an administrative perspective.
- Educational levels reflect the differences in teacher training models across countries. In Türkiye, 48.1% of participants hold a bachelor's degree, while in Germany this figure is 12.5%. In Germany, 60.7% of participants hold an associate's degree. This percentage contrasts sharply with the academic (university-focused) model in Türkiye, which favors the "Erzieher" (vocational training-focused specialization) model in Germany.



Participants' background characteristics

- When looking at postgraduate education (master's and above) rates, it is seen that male educators in Türkiye (14.1%) have higher academic career motivation than those in Germany (8.0%).
- In all three countries, male educators are predominantly employed in urban areas (Türkiye 61.7%; Germany 51.8%; USA 100%). The low representation in rural areas indicates a stronger tendency for male educators to seek employment or pursue careers in urban areas.
- Participants in Türkiye (12.1%) and Germany (13.4%) show similar rates of continuing higher education while working. Data specific to Türkiye indicates that 72% of those continuing this education are in their first two years, meaning that men newly entering the sector have a fresh interest in academic specialization.
- In summary, this demonstrates that the profile of male educators in Türkiye consists of more "academically focused and younger candidates," while the profile in Germany is comprised of more "experienced, professionally trained individuals holding management positions." This situation indicates that strategies developed to increase male participation in the sector should focus on "institutional support and career advancement" in Türkiye and on "the sustainability of existing experienced personnel" in Germany.

References

- Brody, D.L., Emilsen, K., Rohrmann, T. and Warin, J. (Eds.) (2021). *Exploring Career Trajectories of Men in the Early Childhood Education and Care Workforce: Why They Leave and Why They Stay*. Abingdon, Oxon; New York, NY: Routledge. Available at: <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9781000284300>.
- Coles, L., Xu, Y., Sullivan, V. & Thorpe, K. (2026) 'At the margin and in the centre: how men working in early childhood education and care frame their role', *Community, Work & Family*, DOI: [10.1080/13668803.2026.2621909](https://doi.org/10.1080/13668803.2026.2621909)
- Eidevald, C., Bergström, H. and Broström, A.W. (2018). 'Maneuvering suspicions of being a potential pedophile: experiences of male ECEC-workers in Sweden'. *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal*, 26 (3), 407-417. DOI: [10.1080/1350293X.2018.1463907](https://doi.org/10.1080/1350293X.2018.1463907)
- ET2020 Working Group (2020) *Early Childhood Education and Care How to recruit, train and motivate well-qualified staff*. Brussels: Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture. Available at: https://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/EInfancia/documentos/early_childhood_and_care_-_how_to_recruit_train_and_motivate_well-qualified_staff.pdf
- Rohrmann, T. (2020). 'Men as promoters of change in ECEC? An international overview'. *Early Years*, 40 (1), 5-19. DOI: [10.1080/09575146.2019.1626807](https://doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2019.1626807)
- Warin, J., Wilkinson, J., Davies, J., Greaves, H. and Hibbin, R. (2020). *Gender Diversification of the Early Years Workforce: Recruiting and Supporting Male Practitioners*. End of Project. Lancaster: Lancaster University, ESRC, Fatherhood Institute. Available at: <https://gendereye.files.wordpress.com/2020/10/gendereye-final-end-of-project-report-28-oct.pdf>
- Wright, D. and Brownhill, S. (2018). *Men in Early Years Settings: Building a Mixed Gender Workforce*. London, United Kingdom: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. Available at: <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ucl/detail.action?docID=5573908>

Thank you!

