

THE IMPACT OF THE OECD ON
EDUCATION WORLDWIDE

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

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INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION AND
SOCIETY VOLUME 31

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Emerald Publishing Limited
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2017

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-78635-540-9 (Print)
ISBN: 978-1-78635-539-3 (Online)
ISBN: 978-1-78714-727-0 (Epub)

ISSN: 1479-3679 (Series)



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ISO 14001:2004.

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ISO 14001



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PREFACE

The impact of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) on education around the world has been dramatic and increasing in scope since the 1990s. The role that the OECD plays in the development of educational policy, and its influence on the development and reform of curriculum and instruction in classrooms, the distribution of resources for teaching and learning, and the transition of youth from school to their life beyond graduation is, therefore, important to investigate and understand. As one of only a few multinational organizations to have widespread impact on decision-making related to education among policymakers and practitioners alike, the OECD's particular influence is relatively under-examined. Other more overt financial organizations, like the World Bank, or development organizations, like UNESCO, tend to bear the brunt of scrutiny. While the OECD does have its share of critics, as a global organization it is relatively unscathed by persistent or pointed critiques. This volume does not have as its goal to provide an overt or agenda-driven critique of the OECD, nor does it plan to provide a summary of all the positive impact the OECD is having on education worldwide. Instead, the goal of this volume is to provide a balanced perspective on one of the most impactful global organizations on education: the OECD.

The volume is presented in three parts. Part I includes chapters related to the OECD's history and context related to education. Part II specifically addresses the educational impact of the OECD, and Part III focuses on the OECD's impact on national education systems. As a whole, these chapters address the ways that the OECD impacts education worldwide by looking at the past, present, and future of the OECD's education work.

Part I, which is dedicated to the history and context of the OECD's work in education, begins with a chapter by Bernard Hugonnier, who is the former Deputy Director for education at the OECD in Paris. In this chapter, "France and PISA: An Unfinished Dialogue," Hugonnier analyzes and contrasts France's use of PISA since 2000. This close look at one nation's critical approach to international standardized assessment

provides a foundational case study for the ways that the OECD has historically influenced national educational systems through PISA. Next, Seong Won Han's chapter, "From Achievement to Non-Test Outcomes in PISA: National Trends in STEM Career Expectations," looks across three cycles of the OECD's PISA at student background data. Specifically, Han examines students' occupational expectations in terms of the expected career paths of students and changes in these expectations over time, by gender, and in conjunction with educational policy changes within countries. This chapter challenges the OECD's stated goal of supporting member state economic development by directly examining the historical data and impact of the OECD's PISA on occupational expectations. The last chapter in this part, "Pedagogical Orientations and Foundations in the Discourse Emanating from the OECD's TALIS Initiative," by Anthony Cerqua, Clermont Gauthier, and Martial Dembélé, examines the link between the socioeconomic development of nations and educational performance. These authors conduct analyses that compare and contrast the pedagogical influences of international organizations, like the OECD, on teacher education and development. These three chapters suggest that the history and context of the OECD's impact on education involves national accommodation and compromise (Hugonnier), shifting occupational expectations and transitions from school to work (Han), and a delicate balance between international organization agendas and teacher pedagogy (Cerqua, Gauthier, and Dembélé).

Part II investigates the educational impact of the OECD broadly speaking. The first chapter in this section is by Beatriz Pont. Her chapter, "School Leadership for Equity: A Comparative Perspective," focuses on policies that support equitable school leadership in education for disadvantaged students in schools across OECD countries. In particular, Pont discusses the various equity reforms implemented in different OECD member states. Next, Oren Pizmony-Levy's chapter, "Big Comparisons, Little Knowledge: Public Engagement with PISA in the United States and Israel," examines public opinion surveys to analyze the general knowledge and perception of one of the OECD's signature education initiatives, PISA. He finds that in spite of the misinformation about PISA present in the public community, there is a surprising amount of support for international standardized tests and the OECD's PISA, specifically, among the public. Pablo Fraser and William C. Smith's chapter, "The OECD Diffusion Mechanisms and Its Link with Teacher Policy Worldwide," presents a historical account of the OECD's mechanisms for influencing teacher policy in educational systems participating in TALIS and PISA, and belongs in

Part II because of the educational impact that these diffusion mechanisms have worldwide. In particular, Fraser and Smith's findings suggest that the OECD's large scale survey studies impact teacher professionalization broadly, which is a significant influence on education in countries around the world. The last chapter in this part, "PISA for Schools: Respatializing the OECD's Global Governance of Education" by Steven Lewis, looks at how the OECD's educational agenda specifically targets schools rather than students or systems of education. In this way, the OECD impacts education worldwide by using comparative pressure in the form of "lessons" from PISA, the OECD, and aggregate data on other schools to indirectly govern education.

The chapters in Part III address the OECD's impact on national education systems both in specific countries, and also from a wider perspective. Hitoshi Sato's chapter, "The Structure of PISA Penetration into Education Policy in Japan and Norway," investigates how the OECD influences national education policy by emphasizing PISA results as the "norm" and practicing "governance by comparison." The chapter "PISA and Its Impact on Education Space of South Korea" by Ji-Hye Kim considers the ways that the OECD uses international assessments to re-territorialize the education space for specific countries, like South Korea, through curriculum reform. Kim's chapter problematizes this process and examines how South Korea's educational policy, curriculum, and student experience are influenced by the international organization. Finally, Meg P. Gardinier's concluding chapter, "Looking Back toward the Future: Reflecting on the OECD's Global Educational Influence," provides a discussion of the OECD as a key global education policy actor, critically examines the chapters included in this volume as a whole, and discusses the implications of the analysis of the OECD's educational impact worldwide in relation to theory-building, policymaking, research, and educational practice.

This volume addresses the ways in which the OECD has been an active international influence in the assessment, development, and reform of national economic systems worldwide since 1948 as the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) and since 1961 as the OECD. Since the 1990s and then definitively in 2000 with the introduction of the OECD's flagship international educational assessment, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), the OECD has shifted its influence more toward educational comparison as a motivator and tool for economic development. The volume has provided additional information related to the history and context for the OECD's educational agendas, development, and initiatives. Second, the chapters in this volume

provide further investigation into the impact that the OECD has had on educational reform and the resultant outcomes worldwide. Finally, the educational impact of many multilateral global organizations has been investigated independently, but this is the first volume to include a collection of specific work addressing the OECD's impact on education in terms of educational agenda, development, and impact.

Alexander W. Wiseman
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