
Abstract

This book collects studies with a ‘critical education policy orientation’, and presents itself as a handbook of matters of public concern. The term ‘critical’ does not refer to the adoption of a particular theoretical framework or methodology, but rather it refers to a very specific ethos or way of relating to the present and the belief that the future should not be the repetition of the past. This implies a concern about what is happening in our societies today and what could or should be happening in the future. As a consequence, the contributors to the book rely on a general notion of public policy that takes on board processes, practices, and discourses at a variety of levels, in diverse governmental and non-governmental contexts, and considers the relation of policy to power, to politics and to social regulation. Following the detailed introduction that aims at picturing the landscape of studies with a ‘critical education policy orientation’, the book presents re-readings of six policy challenges; globalization, knowledge society, lifelong learning, equality/democracy/social inclusion, accountability/control/efficiency and teacher professionalism. It seeks to contextualise these in relation to issues of current global concern at the start of the 21st century. Despite the diversity of approaches, this collection of critical education policy studies shares a concern with what could be called ‘the public, and its education,’ and represents a snapshot of education policy research at a particular time.

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