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The Role of the Private Sector in Public Education: A Manawatu Region Based Case Study

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the role of the private sector in public education. It uses a Case Study based on a questionnaire of primary Principals in the Manawatu Region of New Zealand to generate its findings. This study identifies the extent to which Principals are pressurised into filling the funding gap created by the lack of Government funding to cover the full cost of running a school. Policy changes in education initially started by the Labour Government in 1984 and continued by the National Government in 1990 have been based on values that promote individualism, personal responsibility, and a belief in the market as a way of allocating resources in society. This thesis argues that the forms of alternative funding schools have been forced to enter into are a deliberate move to normalise school/business relationships. Promotion of these relationships severely disadvantages low socio-economic schools and families and will only lead to wider disparity between rich and poor and thus a less fair and equal education system.

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