

Globalisation and privatisation: The impact on childcare policy and practice ^[1]

Working Paper 38

Author: Vandenbroeck, Michel

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Abstract:

This paper concentrates on the impact of globalization on childcare since the late 1970s, particularly in the last two decades. It looks at how views about children, parents and public services have changed as a result. In particular, the paper examines the case in Belgium, where the consequences of globalization are also analyzed in terms of quality and accessibility of services and the shifting power relations between the state, childcare providers, parents and experts in the field of early childhood education.

In order to understand our present-day views on the services provided to young children and their families, it is necessary to have some historical context. The paper therefore also investigates how childcare institutions have emerged over the history of western Europe, with special emphasis on Belgium, before examining their evolution in a more international context, looking at recent research from different countries.

The paper concludes by distilling the situation into three apparently contradictory situations, and asking if they can be resolved.

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- Childcare in Belgium
- First childcare initiatives: industrialisation and moral welfare
- The post war consensus in social welfare
- The impact of developmental psychology
- The growth of globalisation
- Neo-liberalism in Belgium
- Autonomy and negotiation as educational norms
- Conclusion: A global and local perspective
- The quality debate
- Reconceptualising quality
- References

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