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Profiled kindergartens, a blessing or a curse?

Exploring profiled childcare institutions in modern Norwegian soceity.

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Abstract

As kindergartens once were a privilege and now have become a part of a “normal” Norwegian childhood, functioning as a multifunctional contribution to Norway´s welfare society. The phenomenon of profiled institutions need closer attention. Although researchers have conducted an extensive amount of research on institutional childcare, little knowledge exist on profiled centres.

This study aims to explore and develop a basic understanding of how profiled kindergartens differs from each other. To develop an understanding, this thesis applied a qualitative participatory research design. The methods used were two variations of interview techniques with twelve pedagogical leaders from seven different profiles. This thesis has drawn its theoretical framework primarily from social studies of children and childhood, and due to the little existing research on profiled kindergartens, literature from the pedagogical field on specific concepts is included.

The empirical material analysed with the concepts of *curricula* and *agency* indicates that there are variations in the profiles´ curricula which impacts the children’s identities. However, it appears as if these are more prominent in their intentions as opposed to their actions. The empirical findings further show that children´s social positions and opportunities for agency vary both amongst and within the profiled institutions. In our modern society where authorities have allowed the kindergarten field to become commercialised, it is necessary to pose questions concerning a standardisation of the pedagogical content or not, to understand the implications it might have for children and childhood.

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GENERALLY, THE BEST WAY TO UNDERSTAND AN EDUCATION IS BY REVIEWING OTHERS.

ONE WAY TO IMPROVE OR TO UNDERSTAND PRESCHOOLS
ARE TO INVESTIGATE OTHER TYPES OF PRESCHOOL SYSTEMS.

- BRUCE URHMACHER 1995

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1. Introduction

Working as an au-pair in England at the age of 19 became my first real meeting with a different culture and structure of childcare institutions[1]. However, early education and care centres were not a new phenomenon for me since my mother, sister, and three of my cousins are all educated within the field. However, the British educational system had a different structure than the one I was familiar with, and it was then my curiosity began to emerge towards how this institution could affect children. At the same time, I began to understand how childcare varies and is dependent on specific political and contextual understandings. Children and the concept of childhood have always been an interest of mine, which is why I have chosen to focus my education on this phenomenon. My curiosity towards the different profiles grew when I began to understand the complexity of the kindergarten phenomenon in Norway and how it varied between Norwegian municipalities. Therefore, how structures and constructions could make a difference in childhood began to develop into a research project.

1.1 Why researching profiled childcare institutions

One of the most important events of the 1970s within the childcare field in Norway was changes in family structures when mothers left their position as a housewife and entered the workforce, which also affected childhood. Traditionally, a proper and good Norwegian childhood has for a long time belonged to the home (Korsvold, 2005), where children could enact in self-governed play with their peers all over their neighbourhood (Gullestad, 1997). Today, childcare institutions have become a part of a "normal" Norwegian childhood, and a turn towards neoliberal and market-oriented orientations have exposed Norwegian childhood to an academisation (Kjørholt, 2012) within a fenced institution (Qvortrup, 2002). Also, a concern about the commercialisation of the kindergarten market have become a matter for political discussion in recent years (Sivesind, 2016).

The high demand for institutions created a new situation within the production of new childcare centres with the introduction of flexibility and user adjustment. Rantalaiho (2012) writes that although there was talk about the inclusion of the kindergarten´s user group in late

[1] This thesis uses various words referring to the same concept of *barnehager*, such as kindergarten or variations of childcare institutions or centres.

1980s[2], the 1990s framed it in another direction. Portrayed earlier as a homogenous group with fixed needs, the parental group received a new status as active co-constructers in the creation of new institutions. However, this inclusion created a paradox where it was no longer sufficient to produce new institutions which did not correspond with the parents' needs and wishes (Rantalaiho, 2012).

Since the expansion of the institution after 2003, a concern within this field has been the quality. The focus on quality is due to one of the purposes of Norwegian early childhood care centres: to give all children a universal and equal foundation before they enter primary school. To ensure the purpose the government created the Framework Plan, a legislative framework for the institution´s content and is a concretisation of the Kindergarten Act. However, private centres do not need to ground their values in Christian and humanist traditions as is the case in other religious profiles. This allow space for diversity within the field (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2009).

According to White Paper 27 it is private childcare institutions that mostly focus on alternative pedagogical content (St.meld. nr. 27 (1999-2000), 1999). After 2003, the massive expansion in childcare institutions opened for competition between the institutions. Since childcare centres have become children´s first step on their educational ladder (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009), a concern of mine is how the profiled institutions' pedagogical framework affects children´s childhoods. Frønes (1994) point out that a key aspect of institutions like kindergartens are their pedagogical framework, which affects all aspects of children´s lives and thus influence childhood´s general structure.

Before proceeding it is necessary to define the term profile. This concept has not a set definition and during my fieldwork some of the participants used the word concept instead of profiles. My definition of the concept arose during my practical training as an early childhood teacher, since then I have used it on institutions which meets one or more of the following criteria listed down below.

[2] The user group is the children´s parents.

- A kindergarten which has chosen to focus its pedagogical framework on one or more disciplines[3] related to the Framework plan.
- A kindergarten which is a part of a private enterprise with a specific pedagogical framework.
- A kindergarten which identifies with a pedagogical philosophy.
- A kindergarten which has a religious strand connected to their pedagogical framework.
- A kindergarten which has an interest related to their pedagogical framework such as farming or maritime life.

My definition of the concept is in line with how the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs (1999) define special childcare institutions: centres which has chosen to portray a different religious or outlook on life than what is rooted in the Christian objects clause. Their definition also accounts for centres with Montessori or Steiner pedagogics, or themes such as nature, environment, art or Sami (Meld. St. 24 (2012-2013), 2013; St.meld. nr. 27 (1999-2000), 1999). On another note, it is important not to confuse an institution´s profile with the corporate structure, such as family or open kindergartens. These two latter types have different guidelines and structures than what an ordinary institution has (Meld. St. 24 (2012-2013), 2013), which is why this thesis will not include them.

Seland (2009) has shown with her empirical findings how the previously mentioned turn towards a neoliberal orientation has affected children´s participation rights and how that have created dilemmas and paradoxes about adults' need for control. Furthermore, researchers have discussed how these orientations have affected children's social position from depending and vulnerable beings towards future working citizens (Grindheim, 2013; Kjørholt, 2004, 2010; Kjørholt & Tingstad, 2007). Several researchers have argued that by taking a look at a childcare institutions arrangements, it is possible to discover the institution´s diverse attitudes and pedagogical perceptions on children and childhood (Gulløv, 2003; Gulløv & Højlund, 2005).

[3] In this thesis, the term discipline refers to a subject area within the Framework Plan. The Framework Plan and its disciplines will be further elaborated on in chapter 2.

1.1.1 Little research on the field of profiled childcare institutions

It has been almost two decades since Gulbrandsen, Johansson, and Nilsen (2002) called for more research on profiled kindergartens, and almost a decade since Borg, Backe-Hansen, and Kristiansen (2008) had the same concluding remarks. Edwards (2002) compared Montessori, Waldorf /Steiner, and Reggio Emilia approaches in a short article, where she found common themes in their history and how they perceive children. For example, all three represent an evident idealism on improving human society, and they view children as authors of their development. Some of the differences she found were in their role as a teacher and how they interacted with the children, for example Montessori teachers act as active directors, Steiner teachers act as a subtle guide while the Reggio Emilia teachers balance a co-constructor role.

A preliminary research report from Lekhal et al. (2013) found variations between kindergartens pedagogical content in the preliminary results from the Norwegian Mother and Child Cohort Study (MoBa),where some of the participating childcare centres have a profile. However, the article did not specify which variations belong to which profile. Further, a study by Lysklett and Berger (2017) concluded that children in nature institutions spend more time in natural settings than children in kindergartens without this profile, which enables them to use the nature as a pedagogical playground. Chapter 2 further explains the two studies. Apart from the abovementioned studies, not much research has been done about comparing profiles, and this highlights the importance of providing new knowledge-based information to the field.

A concern of mine is how these profiles present themselves and what makes them different. By implementing the theoretical lens of social construction (Prout & James, 1990), I aim to explore the profiles' defining characteristics, how the profiles' curricula position children as social beings and how it affect children´s opportunities for agency.

1.2 Research motivation

When I went through practical training as an early childhood teacher, I acquired knowledge about the profiles of Norwegian childcare institutions. Since an institution has the opportunity

to choose more than one profile, I have experienced several which have both a nature unit[4] and which are inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach; a pedagogical approach from Italy[5].

Through practical training I worked in three different institutions and during the last period of training, I started to reflect upon their differences and similarities. Although profiled institutions seems to present themselves in diverse ways, they are all obliged to follow the Framework Plan and the Kindergarten Act (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017). Furthermore, the staff has also been educated in similar educational systems. Thus, questions started to emerge, such as how different are these profiled centres? Is it the people who work there that makes them different or is it the pedagogical framework?

During my first year in the Childhood Studies program, I read Montgomery´s (2003) article *Childhood in time and place*, where she discusses childhood as constructed within different cultures, history, places, time, and through discourses. With that in mind, I started to reflect further upon how childcare is organised and filled with content, and it appears to be few questions asked about the phenomenon of profiles. Eventually, my reflections led to this thesis.

1.3 Research aim and objectives

The main purpose of this thesis is to explore and develop a basic understanding of how profiled kindergartens differ from each other. Semi-structured life-mode interviews with twelve pedagogical leaders lay the foreground for the empirical findings.

Research objectives:

- To explore the profiles´ defined characteristics with the intention to understand their differences and similarities.
- To explore their curricula with the intention to look at the children´s social position and the children´s opportunities for agency.

[4] If a childcare institution is a traditional institution with departments and units, they might have a unit which specifically focus on nature. From my previous experience and the empirical findings, it is often an older children´s unit that is a nature unit.
[5] The Reggio Emilia approach will be further elaborated on in chapter 2.

Specific research questions:

- What are the profiles´ defining characteristics?
- In what ways do the profiles' curricula position children as social beings and shape children´s opportunities for agency?

1.4 Outline of thesis

The overall structure of this thesis takes the form of seven chapters, including this introductory chapter. The introductory chapter has served as an introduction to the topic, presented my motivation for doing the research and provided the aim, objective, and research questions which the fieldwork and thesis are grounded on.

Chapter 2 provides a necessary backdrop with information on historical and contextual knowledge of Norwegian early education and care centres, and a presentation of the seven profiles that I have chosen for this study.

Chapter 3 introduces the theoretical framework for this thesis. The theoretical framework presented in this chapter have framed the analysis of the data and inspired the research design.

Chapter 4 accounts for the methodological choices done before, during and after the field work. It also provides reflecting and reflexive thoughts, as well as ethical considerations and experiences acquired during the fieldwork.

Chapter 5 aim to answer the first research objective and question by presenting and discussing the empirical findings relative to the profiles' use of time, space, activities, perspectives on children, and their overall objectives and values.

Chapter 6 build on the previous analytical chapter with a focus on the second research objective and question.

Chapter 7 provides concluding remarks by connecting the two research objectives and questions, as well as suggest some further research.

2. Background

In order to have a good comprehension of the 21st century's childcare institutions in Norway and their diverse profiles, it is necessary to have some knowledge about how Norwegian childcare centres have developed throughout the years. Therefore, this chapter aims to give a brief outline of the key events which has led to the emergence of profiles, describe some popular images of a Norwegian childhood and present the chosen profiles for this thesis.

2.1 Historical overview of Norwegian kindergartens

In 1837, the towns elite in Trondheim funded the first children´s asylum in Norway, establishing the ground for the social root of our modern childcare system (Korsvold, 2005). This institution was free of charge and created for underprivileged children as a social place providing them with moral, religious, and academic knowledge. The intention was to supervise the working-class children to allow parents access to the workforce, which would eventually abolish poverty (Korsvold, 2005; St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009).

Later, in 1870, the first Fröbelian kindergarten were established in Norway, laying down the pedagogical root which our modern childcare system are grounded on. This pedagogical institution was rooted on thoughts from the German philosopher Friedrich Fröbel, whose ideas was to create a place, where play had an intrinsic value and not viewed as an activity done for entertainment purposes (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009). The intention was to supplement the housewives with childrearing and lead the children under a pedagogical leadership, open for three to four hours. Since the funding was provided by the parents, it was only affordable for privileged children (Korsvold, 2005).

During the 1920-1930s, the children´s asylums were reorganised into care-centres, and a clear distinction grew between kindergartens[6] and the care-centres[7]. At the same time, the institutional system did not adhere to Fröbel's ideas of creating one place for all children. Therefore, the municipality of Oslo established its first municipal kindergarten in 1920 (Korsvold, 2005; St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009). The kindergartens were still open for four hours with professional staff, while the care-centres had educated leaders, open for eight

[6] The Norwegian term is barnehager

[7] The Norwegian term is dag-hjem.

to nine hours with no particular educational requirements for the personnel (Korsvold, 2005). In 1975 these two distinctive institutions were unified, resulting in the use of the kindergarten terminology we use in Norway today, and regulated by law. The framework consists of the Framework Plan and the Kindergarten Act, which is the governing legislation of Norwegian childcare centres. The Framework Plan put the Kindergarten Act in concrete terms (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009). Thus, all Norwegian childcare centres shall ground their pedagogical content and organisation on the Framework Plan.

Norwegian childcare institutions have gone through several formal regulations, influencing and deciding essential premises for the organisation of content in the past 27 years. Due to the growing industrialisation and women´s emerging entry into the workforce, high demand for more kindergartens arose during the 1980-1990s with another massive expansion after 2003 (Korsvold, 2005). The following section aims to present some important institutional changes linked to public regulations:

- **1994** – The year private contributors developed significantly more centres than the municipals (Statistisk sentralbyrå, n.d.).
- **1996** – The Framework Plan became operative. Its content was a concretisation of the objects clause in the Kindergarten Act. The Framework Plan functions as legislative guidelines for every Norwegian childcare institution (St.meld. nr. 27 (1999-2000), 1999).
- **1999** – The government issued White Paper 27 (1999), announcing profiled and private kindergartens as important for the childcare market.
- **2003** – The government created the Kindergarten Agreement which induced several changes to the financial aspect and to the corporate structure of kindergartens (See the St.meld. nr. 24 (2002-2003), 2003). Also, the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child (1989) was implemented into Norwegian laws in 2003 (Barne- og likestillingsdepartementet, 2016)
- **2004** – A maximal parental fee were implemented (St.meld. nr. 24 (2002-2003), 2003).
- **2005** – This was the year Norway would reach its goal of a full institutional coverage (St.meld. nr. 24 (2002-2003), 2003). However, in 2017, 91% of 1-5-year -old children, which is the age group in Norwegian childcare centres, attended the institution (Statistisk sentralbyrå, 2017).

2006 – The government revised the Kindergarten Act of 95 and the updated version was put back into motion the same year. Kindergartens were placed under The Ministry of Education and Research and a new revised version of the Framework Plan was issued (Meld. St. 19 (2015-2016), 2016; St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009) with a higher emphasis on children´s participation.

2009 – The year when the government implemented children's right to a place within childcare institutions (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009).

2017 - Another revised version of the Framework Plan was issued this year, now it stated *shall* instead of *should.*

Regarding the Kindergarten Agreement of 2003, it induced several changes to the financial aspect of the institution. One particular change: equal financial treatment for municipal and private institutions with financial support from the government were issued (St.meld. nr. 24 (2002-2003), 2003). Before this law was issued, the municipalities decided how much financial funding private centres would receive. Since this funding varied amongst the municipalities, many private institutions had to rely extra on parental funding (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009).

2.2 Popular images of a Norwegian childhood

Norway is a country widely known for its breath-taking nature containing deep fjords and high mountains. According to Gullestad (1997) and Borge, Nordhagen, and Lie (2003), Norwegians are strongly attached to nature and perceive a good and proper childhood as being able to play outside most of the day regardless the weather, which is also endorsed by Nilsen (2008). The importance of being outside throughout the day has always been emphasised in Norwegian childcare centres. Throughout the decades it has been advocated that children should spend no more than two consecutive hours of playing inside without spending time outside (Korsvold, 2005).

Gullestad (1997) states that when children have learned to walk, they are able and strongly encouraged to play outside in the neighbourhood with their peers. Therefore, self-governed or free-play is emphasised within the notion of a good Norwegian childhood. Since children played outside in various landscapes Norwegian childhood were traditionally not linked with protected gardens. It was associated with rough play, freedom, and self-determination.

Also, Borge et al. (2003) note that parents seem to believe that happy children are children who spend most of their day outside, regardless of weather and season. Gullestad (1997) and Borge et al. (2003) further explain how nature is historically rooted into constructions of Norwegian nationality. This can also be viewed in the Norwegian White Paper 39 (2001) about Norwegian outdoor life. Nilsen (2008) draws the conclusion of childcare centres and especially nature institutions as being a part of reproducing this cultural notion of a good childhood and Norwegian nationality. Also, many of the seven disciplines in the Framework Plan are related to nature.

2.2.1 Towards a neoliberal orientation

The political decision regarding the full institutional coverage forced municipalities to implement flexible and modern solutions in order to succeed with the government´s goal of 2005 to establish full institutional coverage. Since it was the municipalities' responsibilities to establish childcare institutions, reducing the cost became a primary concern (Kjørholt & Seland, 2012). One way of doing this was to develop ordinary kindergartens with a nature unit or nature centres since these had less costs in relation to the ratio of number of children (Nilsen, 2012; St.meld. nr. 27 (1999-2000), 1999). Today, early childhood education and care centres are not just a welfare offer for families with young children, it is also an elective first step onto the children´s educational ladder and a social institution, which holistically benefits the community according to St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009) (2009).

Arguing from diverse empirical findings, Kjørholt (2004) state that children´s participation and citizenship in Norway since the 1990s is connected to the interplay between Norwegian cultural constructions of children and childhood, and the international children´s right discourse. The implementation of the UNCRC into Norwegian laws in 2003 (Barne- og likestillingsdepartementet, 2016) has had a major impact on cultural politics of childhood in Norway. Since then, the concepts of participation, independence, citizenship and individuality have been highly debated amongst researchers and practitioners[8] within, and outside the kindergarten field. Kjørholt (2004) claims that this interplay highlights a certain universality due to UNCRC being international and particularity due to explicit cultural ideas of children and childhood in respective contexts. However, it also exposes paradoxes and complexities

[8] The term practitioner in this thesis refer to everyone who works in the childcare centres.

related to the constructions of children´s social position as participating citizens, which is further elaborated on in the following section and in chapter 3.

Researchers have argued that the turn towards a neoliberal orientation has created an institutionalised fenced childhood (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005; Nilsen, 2012; Qvortrup, 2002). Children were once thought of as belonging to the private sphere at home with kindergartens architectural layout resembling a home (Korsvold, 2005). Whereas today´s flexible modern layout is argued by Kjørholt and Seland (2012) as resembling a bazar street from the Middle East. The two scholars argue from Seland´s (2009) empirical findings, advocating that children now belongs to the public sphere since a bazar street is different from a home in considerable ways. Seland´s (2009) empirical findings show how the new orientations towards neoliberalism with flexible solutions affect aspects of children lives in relation to children´s right to participation, which has created dilemmas on adult´s need for control and regulation, and what a child is.

2.3 The emergence of profiles

Historically, the financial funding of Norwegian child care institutions has come from both public and private contributors (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009). However, since 1997 to 2003, private institutions have grown significantly more than public childcare centres. Also, since the Kindergarten Agreement of 2003, private contributors from 2004 to 2006 increased with 350 institutions, while public institutions increased with 50 kindergartens (Sivesind, 2008). In 2017, 979 private profiled childcare centres existed, while profiled municipal centres had 438 centres (Udanningsdirektoratet, 2016b), indicating that the private organisations offer a necessary, futuristic contribution to the market (Sivesind, 2008). In recent years, the competing market between public and private (either non-profit or profit) welfare services have become an increased political discussion. Especially, with the augmented commercialised kindergarten market[9] (Sivesind, 2016). Although profiled institutions are a relatively new phenomenon, White Paper 27 confirm the existence of profiled childcare centres previous to the Kindergarten Agreement:

[9] https://www.utdanningsnytt.no/utdanning/artikler/2017/april/25-barnehageeiere-tok-ut-50-millioner-kroner-i-utbytte-pa-ett-ar/).

> Private contributors are deeply rooted within the Norwegian kindergarten system, and have played an essential part in reaching the goal of full institutional coverage(…)The government believes they hold a natural place within a variated [flexible and user-friendly] childcare field (St.meld. nr. 27 (1999-2000), 1999, p. 51 My translation).

It is clear from the excerpt above that private centres have been and still are important to the political and financial aspects of the kindergarten field. However, Rantalaiho (2012), shows how the turn towards neoliberal orientations and user adjustments created paradoxes on the way to a full institutional coverage, as is the case of the user group. Although user adjustments had been debated during the 1980s, the 1990s turned it in a different direction. The user group consisting of parents, portrayed earlier as homogenous and passive, were now constructed as individuals with individual needs and wishes. Paradoxically, a full institutional coverage seemed unrealistic since they had to accommodate these needs and wishes to sufficiently produce new services.

> It might be seen as a paradox that pedagogical innovation emerges, not as a process within the institution, on the basis of personal skills, interests and resources or related to new theoretical knowledge, but rather as a consequence of political decision to extensively increase the number of kindergartens in a short period of time (Kjørholt & Tingstad, 2007, p. 183).

A profile might be considered as a pedagogical innovation and a useful strategy to compete with in a market where many institutions exist in the same area. When the government issued White Paper 27 (St.meld. nr. 27 (1999-2000), 1999) it laid the foreground for a profiled kindergarten market. White Paper 27 encouraged a flexible and varied institutional offer in relation to pedagogical framework, corporate structure and retention period.

Having addressed how profiled institutions have appeared, it is time to present the chosen profiles. Although following the Kindergarten Act section 1 (described down below) and the Framework Plan is an obligation to all childcare centres, private funded institutions may choose to not ground their values in Christian and humanist traditions:

> Section 1. *Purpose* (…) The Kindergarten shall be based on fundamental values in the Christian and humanist heritage and tradition, such as respect for human dignity and nature, on intellectual freedom, charity, forgiveness, equality and solidarity, values that also appear in different religions and beliefs and are rooted in human rights. (…) **1a.** *Special purpose.* In their statutes, the owners of private kindergartens are at liberty to determine that the values referred to in Section 1 of the Act shall not be based on fundamental values of the Christian and humanist heritage and tradition (Kindergarten Act, 2011, p. 1).

Within the Framework Plan there are seven disciplines that the institution must base their activities on, as seen in the timeline in sub-chapter 2.1, it is within these disciplines the practitioners now *shall* and not *should* incorporate the different activities. The seven disciplines are:

- Communication, language, and text.
- Body, movement, food, and health.
- Art, culture, and creativity.
- Nature, environment, and technology.
- Quantities, spaces, and shapes.
- Ethics, religion, and philosophy.
- Local community, and society (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017).

Norwegian early childhood education and care centres which wish to portray themselves as different regarding specific purposes and aims, have chosen to endorse one or more of these seven disciplines such as music, sport or farming. Philosophical approaches in early childhood education like those developed from specific pedagogical ideas from Maria Montessori, Rudolf Steiner or the municipality of Reggio Emilia have already existed for an extensive amount of time in their respective countries.

The seven chosen profiles are two philosophical approaches: (1) the Montessori approach and (2) the Steiner/Waldorf approach. One pedagogical approach developed from a municipal project in Italy, (3) the Reggio Emilia approach. The final four profiles are thematically related to the Framework Plan: (4) music, (5) sports, (6) nature and (7) culture. The following

sub-chapters will give a brief introduction to the seven profiles. The following sections aim to provide the reader with some contextual and incipient knowledge about each of the profiles.

2.3.1 Montessori – the skilled and independent child

The Montessori approach has its name after the developer herself, Italy's first female physician Dr Maria Montessori (1870-1952).

The Montessori approach is highly facilitated for children's independence. Maria Montessori wanted to empower the powerless and disabled children by educating them (Montessori, 1991). Maria Montessori received an opportunity in 1907 to work with healthy children; this became her opportunity to study how children learned best and became the beginning of the world recognised Montessori approach (Montessori, 1991). Within the Montessori approach, learning occurs by doing in social environment. Development occurs as sensitive periods separated in stages of six years, from zero to twenty-four. For this thesis, the first six years is relevant; its name is the infancy stage, and it contains of two smaller groups: 0-3 and 3-6 (Edwards, 2002).

Maria Montessori (1991) believed that concentration was necessary for children and thus the environment is quiet and peaceful. A primary focus within the Montessori approach is practical and cognitive skills. Maria Montessori explains that she saw children who did not care to play with regular toys. Thus, she provided them with artefacts[10] which offered them something more than leisure pleasure; such as math, language, sensory skills, art, and science. Also, she wanted the children to assist themselves by creating an environment with child-sized furniture. Freedom to choose, repetition of a task, respect for other people and the environment are essential principles of the Montessori approach. Thus, adults should only observe and present materials to the child (Montessori, 1991).

The first Norwegian Montessori institution opened in 1969 (Oslo Montessoriskole, 2012). Although, according to Korsvold (2005) some institutions in Bergen practised her idea during the 1920s. Today, there are 46 Montessori kindergartens all over Norway (Udanningsdirektoratet, 2016b).

[10] The term artefacts refer to toys, materials, and objects meant for children.

2.3.2 Steiner – the individual developing child

The Steiner or Waldorf approach[11] was created by the Austrian philosopher and educator Rudolf Steiner (1861-1925). The approach builds on Rudolf Steiner's own philosophical approach called Anthroposophy[12] which means wisdom of man (Uhrmacher, 1995).

One of the principles of the Steiner approach is children's individuality. Uhrmacher (1995) points out that the strict and banal German education would educate children to meet the industrial world's needs, while Rudolf Steiner believed that children should develop freely. The section below concretise the concept of *develop freely* regarding play. Rudolf Steiner wanted his education to be available to all children regardless of financial or social background. This was a demand by Steiner when Emil Molt[13], in 1919, asked Rudolf Steiner to open a school for his employees' children (Uhrmacher, 1995).

Rudolf Steiner (1980) believed that children developed in three stages which each lasted seven years, going from zero to twenty-one. The first seven years is the relevant stage of this thesis, where children learn through imitation or doing and by empathy. He further notes that this is the time for imaginary play or free-play. Hence, the environment should nurture children's fantasy with ductile materials, songs, arts and crafts, nature and listen to stories. Such components are what develops the brain at this stage, as opposed to fixed materials, subject matters and unmoral actions would damage the brain´s development. Thus, adults should be acutely aware their behaviour.

To my knowledge, it is unclear when the first Steiner kindergarten opened in Norway. However, since the first Steiner school opened in 1928, as stated by Christensen (2008), it is possible to speculate that the first kindergarten arose around the same time. Today there are 47 Steiner kindergartens in Norway (Udanningsdirektoratet, 2016b).

[11] I am using the name Steiner as this is what the approach is known for in Norway.

[12] As Anthroposophy is not relevant for this thesis it will not be elaborated on. However, for further information Uhrmacher (1995) explain the concept.

[13] The factory owner of Waldorf-Astoria cigarette factory, which is why the Steiner approach is also named the Waldorf approach.

2.3.3 Reggio Emilia – a pedagogical and social experiment

The Reggio Emilia approach has its name after the municipality of Reggio Emilia located in Italy, and the approach was founded by Loris Malaguzzi (1920-1994) (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 2011). Dahlberg and Moss (2005) described this pedagogical approach as both a social and a pedagogical experiment.

The practitioners who work within this approach perceive children as active democratic citizens (Dahlberg & Moss, 2009). Loris Malaguzzi (in Gandini, 2011) states that this contemporary approach emerged as a response from the inhabitants of Reggio Emilia to the Catholic church´s monopoly of education and the strict Fascist regime, which Italy had been under for 20 years. The citizens of Reggio Emilia wanted city-run schools, schools with better quality and without discrimination of any kind. The Reggio Emilia approach is not grounded in one theory but has found inspiration from considerable theoreticians and disciplines such as Jean Piaget, Maria Montessori, John Dewey, architecture, science and literature (Dahlberg & Moss, 2009; Gandini, 2011).

Loris Malaguzzi believed that children have "hundred languages" and to understand and visualise them adults should utilise pedagogical tools like listening pedagogy, pedagogical documentation (Rinaldi, 2009b), the atelier or workshops and the environment[14] (Rinaldi, 2009a). This approach perceives knowledge as co-constructed by the relationships people have with each other, including the community, the city and children's families in a holistic way (Gandini, 2011). "Reggio is an interpretation of Reggio! We can only share our values, why and how we challenge ourselves (Dahlberg, Moss, & Rinaldi, 2009, p. 208 My translation)". According to Jonstoij and Tolgraven (2003), networking, changes in the pedagogues´ role and pedagogical documentation are areas Norwegian kindergartens found inspiration from the Reggio Emilia approach.

The first Norwegian Reggio Emilia network entrenched in 1994 (Norsk Reggio Emilia Nettverk, n.d) and recent statistic show 261 Reggio Emilia inspired childcare centres in Norway (Udanningsdirektoratet, 2016b).

[14] Also known as the third pedagogue.

2.3.4 Læringsverkstedet – the music profile and the sports profile

"Læringsverksted" or The Learning workshop centres were founded by the pedagogues Hans Jacob and Randi Sundby, in the municipality of Kristiansand (Læringsverkstedet, n.d).

According to their webpage (Læringsverkstedet, n.d), their vision is for the children who attend 'to become the best version of themselves' and that every child shall feel valuable. The founders have compressed the seven disciplines of the Framework Plan into five themes, which are nature, math, language, creativity and the heartprogram[15]. A weekly program incorporates the themes, and playful learning is considered a valuable tool when working with these themes. Kindergartens owned by this company have the opportunity to have an extra focus on subject areas such as nature, music, religion or sports.

The music care centre consists of improvisation, movement, song activities and drama, with shows/concerts arranged twice a year to display what the children have been doing. The sports institution consists of pedagogical athletics, where the children´s physical, psychological, social and cognitive development are focus areas. Motion joy and nutrition joy are also important aspects to the sports profile (Læringsverkstedet, n.d).

According to their webpage the first childcare centre opened in 2003. Today there exist approximately 160 childcare centres all over Norway, 70 childcare centres and schools in Sweden (Læringsverkstedet, n.d).

2.3.5 The nature profile

According to Borge et al. (2003), the idea of nature kindergartens arose from Denmark around 1985. The first Norwegian nature kindergarten opened in 1987 (Lysklett, 2013; Nilsen, 2008).

Since the 1900 century, Norwegians have used nature and the forest as a recreational place, before this Norwegians solemnly utilised nature for necessary purposes such as work and food (Lysklett, 2013). Thus, nature and outdoor life have been deeply rooted in Norwegian cultural, traditional and political discourses throughout the years. Hence, several researchers argues for nature care centres as reproducers of Norwegian cultural traditions (Borge et al.,

[15] The heartprogram focuses on social competence, where I, you, and we are themes.

2003; Nilsen, 2008). Borge et al. (2003) have attempted to explain where the idea of nature kindergartens in Norway came from with three ideas. Due to nature as a cultural and moral value, the scholars assume that parents wanted their children to gain outdoor experience from a young age. The Norwegian image of a good and proper childhood consisting of happy children are children who play outside regardless of weather and season further supports the scholars´ assumption. A third idea rests on parental choice and the attachment to nature many Norwegian families have, which might be why they choose this type of institutional childcare.

The nature approach is characterised by spending a considerable part of the day outside in nature regardless of the season to study bugs and insects. Also, it is used as a place to practise physical skills by utilising the nature as a pedagogical playground (Lysklett, 2013). To develop knowledge about nature and environment are important learning outcomes for this approach, as seen in Borge et al. (2003) and Lysklett (2013). A nature institution organises various field trips to their many reference areas[16], preferably with smaller groups of children. The nature approach does not have a set of legislative guidelines or an established pedagogy. Hence, the possibility of choosing how to structure the kindergarten such as having nature as one of several focus areas[17] or characterise themselves as a boat or bus centre (Lysklett, 2013). However, Lysklett (2013) also argues that the Framework Plan and the Kindergarten Act have a guiding framework for how to apply the nature approach.

Today, there are over 500 kindergartens who identify with the nature approach (Udanningsdirektoratet, 2016b), which makes it Norway´s most utilised profile for both municipalities and private institutions.

[16] A reference area is a place nearby the kindergarten, often an institution has several areas with different names (Lysklett, 2013).
[17] The culture profile had a nature unit and I have worked in several care centres which have a nature unit.

2.3.6 FUS – the culture profile

FUS[18] institutions were established in 2007 by Trygge barnehager (Safe kindergartens), which is a privately-owned company based in Norway established by Eli Særvareid and Sigurd Aase (FUS, n.d).

According to their webpages (FUS, n.d), the word FUS means 'first' in Norwegian, which implies that they place children first. Their aim is for the children to become the best version of themselves and have all the equipment's to continue their educational path, while their focus is not on academic subjects. They utilise play, especially role play as a tool for learning, which they call self-government in play and learning. Playing is also a tool for creating friendships and prevent bullying. Apart from this being a distinct profile on its own, each centre can have an additional profile or concept such as nature, sports, maritime, culture and international. To succeed with their objectives, play, friendship, happiness and everyday magic are their vision.

According to the culture participant, the term culture relates to music, drama, art, movement, literature, outdoor life, and their local surroundings. Learning about the children´s family cultures, other existing cultures and traditional Norwegian culture are a part of the institution's pedagogical framework. Recent statistics show the existents of 175 FUS centres throughout Norway (FUS, n.d).

PROFILES	SELF-REPORTED CHARACTERISTICS
Montessori	Toys offering more than leisure, freedom to choose, facilitated environment
Steiner	Imaginary play, ductile materials, nurture the fantasy.
Reggio Emilia	Co-constructive relationships, 'hundred languages', atelier.
Læringsverkstedet music	Shows/concerts, song activities, drama, improvisation, movement.
Læringsverkstedet sports	Physical, psychological, social, and cognitive development.
Nature	Outdoor life, field trips, reproducing cultural heritage.
FUS culture	Non-academic subjects, music, drama, movement, art, literature, outdoor life, play as a tool.

Table 2.1 Overview of some of the profiles' characteristics

[18] I use capital letters since they write their name with capital letters.

2.4 Summary

This chapter has provided a brief historical and contextual backdrop of Norwegian childcare and the important changes this institution has been through. These changes, especially in relation to the full institutional coverage has created the path for profiled centres. However, this has also exposed some dilemmas which chapter 3 further touches upon. Lastly, based mainly on how literature present the profiles, the chapter has provided necessary information about the seven chosen profiles in order to explore potential similarities and differences.

Having provided a necessary backdrop, the next chapter will account for the theoretical framework the research, analysis and discussions are grounded on.

3. Theoretical framework

During education in Childhood Studies, I gained perspective on how concepts and phenomenon are socially constructed (Montgomery, 2003; Prout & James, 1990). Indicating that people do not always understand or use concepts and phenomenon in the same way. The interdisciplinary field of social studies of children and childhood emerged out of a critique of the dominant family studies and child development paradigm during the 1980s and 1990s (Tisdall & Punch, 2012), which indicated a shift from seeing children as "human becomings" to "human beings" (Qvortrup, 1994). Researchers within the field have explained that human becomings conceptualise children and childhood as being natural, universal, and irrational; descending from Piaget´s view on child development and Parsons´s socialisation theory. Within such theories, childhood is the preparatory stage towards the desirable goal of adulthood. While the latter discourse, human beings, conceptualise children and childhood as inter-dependent social actors with agency, who actively take part in constructing their own lives (Jenks, 1982; Lee, 2001; Prout & James, 1990; Qvortrup, 2009).

My research interest lies in exploring kindergarten profiles´ diversities to get a better comprehension of the phenomena of profiles. The chapter begins with an introduction to the participating child in a review of pedagogical and sociological perspectives to the concept, followed by an elaboration of the concept of children´s citizenship. Before moving onto childhood as socially constructed, curricula, agency, and social position. Lastly, this chapter introduces some previous research that compares some of the profiles.

3.1 The participating child

When the Norwegian government revised the Kindergarten Act and the Framework Plan in 2006, children´s right to participation became a large part of the changes. During the same year, kindergartens were placed under The Ministry of Education and Research and from now on the rhetoric about children as future working citizens who would contribute with knowledge became highly emphasised. The argument was that the knowledge society demanded social competence and learning abilities from the individual child. Hence, a lifelong learning discourse was implemented into political field of institutional childcare (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009).

The background chapter touched upon some dilemmas related to children´s social position within institutional childcare, which also the thesis explores further throughout the other chapters. These dilemmas are about the institution being a place for learning (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009) and a place for children´s participation, at the same time, a place controlled and regulated by adults. The term participation is described by Bae (2006) as being able to take part in decisions without having full responsibility; the child actively takes part in collective choices where their voices contribute to change. Bae´s description is in line with the child as an agent concept within the social studies of children and childhood. According to Mayall (2002), the agent refers to when someone negotiates in a relationship with others and his or her interactions makes a difference, as opposed to the actor: where someone does something. The actor is what Bae (2006) describes as co-determination, which is one aspect of participation.

Nissen, Kvistad, Pareliussen, and Schei (2015) argue that how practitioners do participation varies between the institutions. Findings by Østrem et al. (2009) and Seland (2009) support the latter statement, which indicate that practitioners tend to focus on children´s participation as individual choice and self-determination. Researchers within the childcare field argue against an understanding of participation as an autonomous individualistic matter relating to an individual choice. For example, Bae (2006) stresses that a focus on participation as an individualistic matter separates from participation understood as a democratic relation between children and adults. Similarly, Eide and Winger (2006) point out that children might be accountable for their upbringing if adults understand participation as an individualistic matter. Adhering to the latter notion is in accordance with the UNCRC´s protection rights; where children have the right to not have the same responsibilities as adults.

Gulløv (2003) argues from her ethnographic studies that there is not a fixed social position in society for children to take when adults protect, control and simultaneously regarded them as self-managing individuals. Also, the institutions arrangements expose the existing diverse attitudes and concepts of how and what children ought to be. However, she argues that it is not just the understanding of children as either developing or independent that affects their social position. Also, the arrangements surrounding the institutions reveal how the many existing attitudes and perceptions on how children and childhood should be and what the purpose behind these institutions are affect their social position.

3.1.1 The participating child´s social position as a citizen

Kjørholt (2010) has argued how Norwegian childcare institutions are an arena managing specific values which shape children as beings, as well as their future becomings. Thus, viewing children as citizens or co-citizens. She further emphasises that being a citizen is not just about being able to make individual decisions, it is about taking part in relational democratic processes. Children were not commonly thought of as citizens within theory regarding citizenship, while researchers have advocated for children to be included with a different view on their citizenship (Kjørholt, 2008; Moosa-Mitha, 2005).

Participation understood in a broad sense as children´s different expressions of agency relate to Moosa-Mitha´s (2005) understanding of a difference-centred view on children´s citizenship. She argues for applying this view as a contribution to understanding children as active contributors in society, who responds, resists, mitigates, and take part in various relationships. Without being responsible like adults and who are allowed to or not able yet to make rational decisions, relating to the acknowledgment of childhood as a stage in life without comparison to adulthood and children being "less than" someone. Furthermore, she presents three other different discourses within the discursive field of children´s rights, these are:

- The child liberationists - who view children and adults of equal rights.
- The child protectionist - seeing children as different and in need of protection.
- The liberal paternalist - taking a middle path between the other two perspectives and where children´s maturity and competences are considered on a case by case basis

In her article, Kjørholt (2008) argues from empirical findings which show how the implementation of the UNCRC into Norwegian childcare institutions are linked to notions of play, self-determination, individual choice and certain understandings of a good childhood. She also relates the difference-centred view on children´s citizenship into the kindergarten field, by arguing that children´s citizenship can be considered different by connecting it to children's own culture and play. She further contends that, for toddlers to be acknowledged as competent social agents, practitioners need to account for the interrelationship between, on one side autonomy and the other side, vulnerability and dependency.

Since democratic practices are closely connected to participation within childcare institutions (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017), Bae (2009) has argued from studies of dialogues between children and practitioners. Children actively take part in democratic relations whether adults understand or not. From her findings she shows how children actively take part by using play as communication or acts of solidarity as participation techniques. Also, Grindheim (2013) shows with her empirical findings how children utilised play to take control and participate in democratic relations. Her findings also show how children utilise situations between organised activities to participate and take control such as hiding when it is time to go outside. In such situations the practitioners normally understand it as a form of resisting adult power. However, Grindheim (2013) argues that this is participation.

The above examples show a relational democratic understanding of the concept of participation. Kjørholt (2010) agrees while arguing that the right to participation is often in opposition to the right to protection and care. These are the right-bearers discourse and the developing child discourse. She argues that this dualistic construction of the two discourses is adverse for the children since the Framework Plan and the UNCRC does not emphasise participation as an individualistic matter, it is a relational democratic matter. Understanding the two discourses as not in opposition to each other opens up for a more holistic view on the UNCRC, where the three P´s: participation, protection, and provision rights, must be viewed with each other (Kjørholt, 2010; United Nations, 1989).

Kjørholt (2010) has researched how children´s participation with an emphasis on individual choices can be understood as negative freedom. Freedom, she argues, presupposes mastery and competence, which in turn neglects children who might not possess a large cultural capital and who needs different or extra support in their social processes. This might be a dilemma for the younger children´s social position. From her observational studies, Seland (2009) saw how "children´s meetings" as a pedagogical tool were utilised to ensure children´s participation; this method is especially used in kindergartens with multiple rooms for designated activities[19] and with large number of children. She notes that these meetings contain some dilemmas and paradoxes. Through children's "freedom" of choice dilemmas occur when children do not wish to choose, children who wants to choose together with their

[19] For a more thorough elaboration on the concept of children´s meeting see Seland (2009) and Kjørholt & Seland (2012).

friends, or who wants to make choice based on where they feel safe (Seland, 2009). On the one hand, the meeting was creating to ensure children's participation. On the other hand, due to adults' increased need for control and regulation of the rooms these meetings becomes participation within a framework

Seland (2009) notes that it becomes problematic if adults present the children´s meeting as a place where children can choose freely between activities and rooms, and at the same time implements this into their annual plan as for how they do participation. It becomes a paradox and a dilemma of children´s self-determined play when the facilitation has restrictions on children´s choices and movements. Her view is in line with Bae (2009), who stress that participation reduced to an understanding as an individualistic choice might satisfy the owners´ need to show the municipality or parents their implementation of participation; this has implications for the children as it might give the children a false view of what democratic processes entails.

The Framework Plan (2017) emphasise that participation should be facilitated for age, maturity, experience, and diverse modes of communication shall be due weighted in regards to toddlers´[20]participation. Findings by Østrem et al. (2009) show that how participation is practised with toddlers differs among the practitioners, where the practitioners who understand participation regarding self-determination and individual choice find it difficult to do participation with the toddlers. Brattrud, Sandseter, and Seland (2012) understand toddlers' participation as a relational; where core principles are adults who acknowledge, understand, and are considerate towards the young child.

Brattrud and colleagues' (2012) abovementioned understanding is also in line with Sandvik (2006). She points out that participation relates to active adults, who observes what activities and objects are interesting to the children and who plans the content accordingly. The practitioners must be "in the here and now" with the children, actively taking an interest in how the toddlers are using their body language and gestures to communicate. This act towards the toddlers is related to Reggio Emilia´s "listening-pedagogy", where hearing is a metaphor for being open and susceptible to others (Rinaldi, 2009b). Dahlberg and Moss (2005) state

[20] The term toddler is used to characterise one to two year old children, the term points to the young children´s distinct bodily behaviour and expressions (Løkken, 2004).

that the concept is based on respecting otherness, which involves adults who respect what the child is saying and doing by taking them seriously.

Positioning the child within a relational understanding of participation offers the young children considerable ways to influence their day, they have opportunities exercise their agency.

3.2 Childcare institutions are shaped by society's beliefs

Before continuing the elaborations of agency and introducing the concept curricula, I find it necessary to define the theoretical perspective of children and childhood as socially constructed.

Each adult on the planet have once been a child. However, although children occupy the space of childhood, it is argued that childhood as a concept did not exist until the 15th century. Ariés (1962) was the first to shake the traditional understanding of childhood as universal with his historical research, highlighting children and childhood as constructed. He argued that in the Middle Ages, childhood as a concept did not exist, as it has become to exist in our modern times. Once the children were weaned, they took part in society according to their abilities and competences such as adults did. The socially constructed child, implies according to James and James (2004), an understanding of childhood as a developmental stage of life; a space which all children inhabits at a point in their life, but also different from the children´s various everyday life. At the same time, Jenks (1982, 2008) and Montgomery (2003), argue for the existence of multiple childhoods which are constructed by the local context, culture, history, politics, economy, geography, gender, and education. Within these concepts there exist a diverse range of discourses and it is these discourses that create childhood in diverse and conflicting ways (James, Jenks, & Prout, 1998; Prout & James, 1990).

Since kindergartens in Norway are a part of a "normal childhood", the organisation as a structure has a major impact in the shaping of childhoods. This is due to most children aged between 1-5 years old attend such institutions in Norway (Udanningsdirektoratet, 2016a). It is an institution that exists in a specific time and space. What people believe childcare institutions are, determines what goes on within them and what these centres do (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). Adults, politics, culture, and context regulate this institution; it is the

cultural politics of childhood. However, it is also constructed by the children who inhabits this social space as a part of their childhood (Dahlberg et al., 1999).

Before proceeding, it is necessary to define the term space. According to Clark (2013), *space* is more abstract than the term *place*. Place becomes of space after people have invested meaning to it. To some point, the two concepts seem to merge such as with a child´s bedroom. It is the child´s place, while being a space within the family home. Within the kindergarten field, the institution is a space in children´s institutionalised childhoods which holds various places to do activities. Both Clark (2013) and Dahlberg and Moss (2005) mention how it is not just about physical place, however, it is about cultural practices, values, and social relationships which takes place in these different spaces.

3.3 Agency and curricula

Within the social studies of children and childhood paradigm, children´s participation in a broad sense is understood as the concept of agency. Robson, Bell, and Klocker (2007, p. 135) define the term agency as the capacities, activities, and competences of an individual, which the individual must use to navigate through their lifeworld and fulfil economic, cultural, and social expectations. Participation and independence as children´s capacities are manifested in the Framework Plan and the Kindergarten Act (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017).

The paradigm have contributed with an understanding of children as social agents who actively contribute to their own lives and their surroundings (Prout & James, 1990). Conceptualising children as having agency is to view them as social agents or human beings, as opposed to human becomings or a powerless actor (James, 2009; Qvortrup, 1994; Robson et al., 2007). Children´s exercise of agency is not this thesis´ focus, as I have not conducted research with children or on their agency. However, the concept is used as an analytical concept to understand how structures shape and influence children´s opportunities to exercise agency and their social positions. In the literature, agency and structures are often seen as a dichotomies, while this thesis understands the two concepts as dependent on each other. Lee (2001) argues that agency understood as an individuals' self-possession pertains a question of where it come from, self-possession understood as competencies, activities, and capacities as Robson et al. (2007) explained in the previous section. Lee (2001) perceives agency from the Actor-Network Theory (ANT), where the agent is never independent, people are inter-

dependent. The agent's dependencies, extensions, and supplements must be considered to understand where agency comes from, the agent must build a network from which he or she can do social actions.

From Robson et al. (2007) agency appear dynamically. For example, in a childcare institution, where and how children exercise their agency depends on who they are with and what they are doing. Children might experience little to almost none agency in some areas and exercise public agency in other areas, depending on the present people, their personal biography such as age or ability, the spatial relations/activities or the context they are acting in. Thus, how a kindergarten's daily structure promotes children´s agency and ensure children´s differences are important questions to ask. Since time, structure, and space can either open or restrict children´s opportunities for agency (Nissen et al., 2015).

Agency is always present, while it is influenced by societal structures and must be viewed in relation to the complexity of it and how the structures constrain agency (James et al., 1998; Mayall, 2002). Hence, resisting upon power is also considered agency. In her article, Nilsen (2009) states that hidden resistance is a way for children to engender knowledge and exercise their own power. Hidden resistance is when children, for example, smuggle forbidden small objects in their pockets into the kindergarten and play with them when the practitioners are not watching. By contrast, children can also exercise open resistance such as saying no or argue.

Robson et al. (2007) note that it is important to understand that there exist diverse types of agency and that it is embedded in a continuous process throughout life, comprehending the contradictions and ambiguities of children as synchronously being both dependent and competent. Since developing "a thorough understanding of the decision-making processes behind actions in order to conceptually develop the links between context, agency, and young people´s position within and negotiation of unequal power relations (Robson et al., 2007, p. 145)". They argue that children´s daily lives are formed through discursive landscapes or social/gender relations which positions the children in diverse and dynamic ways.

Interwoven with agency are the concept of peer culture. Through children´s intra-generational relationships[21] they create peer groups with peer culture. Corsaro (2009) explain peer culture as what children do together such as routines, activities, plays, artefacts, and values. It contain two key themes; children actively tries to acquire control and wants to share that control with the other children within the peer group.

As my theoretical point of departure is from an understanding of our ideas, values, and laws about kindergartens are socially constructed, I have chosen to explore some of the profiles´ characteristics. These are their overall objectives, values, perspectives on children, activities, use of space and time, which will be analysed through the umbrella term: curricula. James and colleagues (1998) point out that the curricula might be viewed as the collection of school activities, where an activity is defined as just something that is being done, without considering the purposes behind the activity. To my knowledge, the curricula is not a commonly used term within early childhood education and care centres in Norway. However, schools use the concept where it refers to the classes' timetables and learning outcomes. The curricula term from James and colleagues' perspective is fruitful to understand and view the profiles' characteristics in a holistic way, as this thesis view them as connected to each other.

The group of scholars broadens the term and understand it as both political and social structures, which holds assumptions and discourses on how children ought to best to be; it contains choices, questions of power, rules, and conventions (James et al., 1998). This part explained earlier the thesis's understanding of agency and how it is in connecting to the curricula as a structure. Structures offer people a framework for social action and simultaneously, it is from those actions that structured is formed (James & James, 2004). Lee (2001) point out that "instead of asking whether children, like adults, possess agency or not, we can ask how agency is built or may be built for them by examining the extensions and supplements that are available to them (p.131)". Hence, the profiles' curricula are understood as the structure which frames the children's social positions and their opportunities for agency, and with reference to Clark (2013) and Dahlberg and Moss (2005) the curricula is a spatial relation.

[21] The relationship amongst children.

James et al. (1998) explain that an analysis of a curriculum allows "exploration of control within the social space of childhood (p. 42)". Exploration of control is possible since the knowledge that constitutes the curriculum instances certain selections and exclusion of how humankind perceive the world. Through its repetitions and changes, it controls others by shaping the children´s mind and body into an educational identity. In other words, an institution´s curricula are the technical practices for delivering predetermined outcomes (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005).

The following sub-chapter will account for the theoretical understanding of how the curricula influence children and childhood.

3.3.1 The curricula´s impact on children and childhood

Gulløv and Højlund (2005) point out that children´s institutions have specific cultural classifications regarding predetermined tasks, especially in relation to the institution´s spatial options and artefacts. The two scholars state that various places guide our status and behaviour. It is not because a certain place demands a particular behaviour, people´s conduct tend to correspond with what people believe is expected or think is proper behaviour within the place. An institutions spatiality with its diverse artefacts and furniture has consequences for our social roles, social relations, and activities. This is exemplified by Kjørholt and Tingstad (2007), Nordtømme (2012, 2015) and Seland (2009), which will be presented in the following sections.

Kjørholt and Tingstad (2007) engage in a critical discussion on the increased focus on neo-liberal and market-oriented discourses aimed towards kindergarten, in relation to the children´s right discourse. The implementation of the new architectural layout with flexible places indented to increasing children´s participation and individuality. The two scholars explore how these discourses have accounted for how children should be viewed, and not how the children actually act in the here and now. This notion is exemplified by a paradox where the intention of children´s increased freedom has become matters of increased regulation, control, and strict time structure. In these controlling situations, as described by the three scholars, the practitioners´ close certain rooms during the mornings and afternoons, arguing for the necessity of adult supervision in every room (Seland, 2009). This section is an

example of how the Framework Plan's intention of children's participation and choice in practice means control and regulation.

However, it is not just the rooms which belongs to a discourse of control and regulation. Gulløv and Højlund (2005) discuss how an institutions furniture and artefacts have implications for children´s social status and discourses on the free and autonomous child. Where objects are placed, and which are present depends on discourses of control and regulations. Artefacts considered dangerous such as scissors or which demands adult help is usually placed higher than materials like paper, colour pencils or toys such as cars and dolls. This is also documented by Brattrud et al. (2012) where, books were visible and out of reach for the toddlers. Such placings have implications for children´s social status, where taller children gain more authority than lower children (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005). Nordtømme (2016) show how different rooms and artefacts have implications for children´s play and the institutions pedagogical values in relation to what is considering appropriate play and behaviour.

Kjørholt and Tingstad (2007) present the recent discourse on children and childhood by looking critically on the new architectural layout. The discourse is different from the previous and traditional ways of seeing children who need care, small groups, and stability. Towards the competent child who is independent, participating, and who has rights. The two scholars´ argument are in line with Dahlberg and Moss (2005), who state that childcare institutions now has become a site for producing predetermined outcomes. A site where the autonomous and flexible child is created and nurtured for future development, employability, and educational attainment. As was briefly mentioned in chapter 2 by Kjørholt and Seland (2012), the new kindergarten buildings are resembling a bazar street from the Middle East. These rooms which only focus on one specific activity, neglecting the space for free-play has exposed how play as an intrinsic value is gradually overshadowed by play as a tool for learning (Kjørholt & Seland, 2012; Seland, 2009).

"The transformed space of the new kindergarten reveals how, from an early age, children are prepared for future life, being brought up to be flexible and competent workers in a market-oriented society (Kjørholt & Seland, 2012, p. 182)". Dahlberg and Moss (2005) argue that there are consequences for dualistic thinking in relation to this institution as either valued as a preparatory stage for the future or a space for children´s free-play and culture. The two

scholars wish to encourage thoughts about and for people to contest the dominant discourses about education and childcare. Since society needs both, a dualistic thinking excludes the other and adheres to an extreme version of either or as the two scholars argue.

Kjørholt (2012) state, that an academisation of the curricula is a trend in several countries, which is documented by Seland´s (2009) empirical findings. Academisation is nurtured by the specialised and fixed rooms that dominates kindergartens. She documents how the math room was once called the building room, where wooden blocks were the primary activity, while this is now being used for more formal mathematic activities. She further points out how the rooms reveal a lifelong learning discourse on childhood, which this chapter touched upon earlier. Gulløv and Højlund (2005) emphasise that the various rooms reflects society's perspectives, and the available artefacts are chosen based on the institution's overall objective.

In her article, Nilsen (2012) is inspired by the neo-liberal influenced concepts of choice and flexibility. She relates the two concepts to her ethnographic study of a nature institution. She argues for the existence of a different childhood space in the nature institution where "daily life is located in publicly accessible and non-fenced natural environments (p. 204)". In ordinary childcare centres children cannot play or reside outside the fenced outdoor area without the presence of an adult. Although nature kindergartens has fences around the institution's outdoor area, Nilsen (2012) observed openings in the participating institution's fence. With permission, the children were allowed to play outside the kindergarten's outdoor area, her participants call this "freedom with responsibility (p. 213). Also, she found that children gain the social position as learning subjects while being in nature. During a social meal situation, the adult turned it into a learning situation, this type of gathering is not commonly used as a place for learning. In contrast to childhood in ordinary childcare centres, Nilsen (2012) argues for children attending such centres partly break with the idea of a fenced childhood and the nature centre as a place for reproducing Norwegian cultural heritage. Fjørtoft´s (2004) findings can to some extent support Nilsen´s idea. Although she did not conduct research in a nature institution, she found that playing in natural landscapes enhanced the children´s motor development which was a contrast to play on the institution´s outdoor area.

Through a childcare institutions architectural layout, artefacts, and furniture it is possible to detect their pedagogical thoughts and how children and childhood are perceived (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005; Punch, Bell, Costello, & Panelli, 2007). Gulløv and Højlund (2005) emphasise that there are also ideological thoughts present regarding societies general values and thoughts about children, childhood, generation, development, and authority. These thoughts become visible in the kindergarten's work with the child´s civilisation process. A human being who understand societies social codes, who are emotionally and physically balanced and at the same time ready to take its place in society with its own opinions and thoughts (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012).

Gilliam and Gulløv (2012) further states that it is not just societies´ ideological thoughts that influence the work with socialising the child, the process is also influences by the practitioners. Although the practitioners´ actions are both influenced and restricted by the Framework Plan and laws, their moral values, experiences, childhood, and education will also have an impact on how the child is socialised. The fact that these institutions are a place where people shall work together in a community influence how children are socialised. What is perceived as acceptable behaviour and how routines are created are influenced by the institutions size, number of children and practitioners (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012)

Lastly, we must keep in mind that how kindergartens work with socialising the child depends on the present moral values, constituted in time and history. Although childcare centres space has some predetermined aims and tasks, the spaces meanings and abilities are not transformed passively to the children. While the spaces create a context, it is not a determinant context due to children´s agency (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012; Gulløv & Højlund, 2005). All the aspects mentioned above constitute the complex socialising process children go through during their institutionalised years, and the aspects contribute to the institutions different standards for what is considered normal (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012).

3.4 Previous research on kindergarten profiles

To supplement the introduction and background chapter, this final sub-chapter aims to give a more in-depth overview of the existing research which compares some of the profiles.

3.4.1 Comparing Montessori, Steiner and Reggio Emilia

There exists considerable secondary literature on the philosophical and educational approaches to education as is the case with Montessori, Steiner, and Reggio Emilia. The following sections present some of the articles which has done comparisons.

Edwards (2002) offers a brief comparison between the Montessori, Steiner, and the Reggio Emilia approach. Her findings state that all three approaches offer an educational alternative to traditional education. In addition, their aim is to help children grow into their full potential as creative, free, intelligent beings with a vision to improve human society.

She emphasises what she understands as a mutual image of the child. Each approach view children as active beings who authors their own development, influenced by dynamic, self-righting, and natural forces within themselves. In Montessori classrooms, the child is introduced to self-correction materials which focuses on practical life tasks, mathematics, oral and written language, science, geography, sensorial, music, and art. In a Steiner classroom, Edwards (2002) explains that the educational focus is on children´s imaginary play, exploring with their bodies, oral language, song, and stories. Edwards (2002) further states that the Reggio Emilia approach do not have defined methods or teacher certification standards like the abovementioned approaches. Therefore, it is not a formal model. However, in their classrooms, their focus is for children to express themselves through their "hundred languages" such as words, movement, dramatic play, building, painting, singing, and drawing.

Since the approaches have some differences in their curriculum, Edwards (2002) explain that their role as a teacher also differs. Whereas, Montessori pedagogues acts as an unobtrusive director, Steiner pedagogues emphasise a subtle guidance, while a Reggio Emilia pedagogues balances between roles of engagement, guiders, and recorders. Common to their roles are the goal of being a guide, partner, and a nurturer to the children, who emphasise an aesthetically pleasing environment which is to be utilised as a pedagogical tool. In addition, they all emphasise a good relationship with parents and offers descriptive information about children´s daily life instead of assessing them with traditional tests.

In an abbreviated article from 1991, Coulter (2003) argues for the Montessori and Steiner approach as reverse symmetries. In her discussion, she notes that Montessori is offering what

she interprets as a masculine service by building up cognitive skills first and imagination second to children who used imagination to escape from the world. The intention was to help children take their place in society. Montessori believed that imagination was based on understandings of the real world. Therefore, fantasy had no place in education for children under the age of six. She further argues that Steiner offers what she understand as a feminine service by rekindling the imagination and the arts to overly hardened children before proceeding with cognitive skills when the children enters school.

In sum, Montessori emphasised the need to teach children about the physical world before imagination, would call for an inner transformation, with a hope for children to bring peace to the world. By contrast, Steiner´s goal were for the children to contribute to develop our culture, by emphasising a rich "inner life" first before proceeding with knowledge about our constructed world, as discussed by Coulter (2003).

3.4.2 Comparing profiles in Norway

A study by Lysklett and Berger (2017), comparing 56 nature kindergartens to 52 other kindergartens who had a different profile or no profile at all, found nature childcare centres definitely to be different from other institutions. They differed in terms of being smaller in size and have fewer children and staff. By organising their unit into smaller groups for daily activities, enabled the staff to supervise the children and remain closer to them.

In their discussion, Lysklett and Berger (2017) state that nature centres use areas outside the institutions outdoor area, especially reference areas[22] and spend more time in nature on a regular basis more frequently than the other centres did. Also, a nature institution´s daily routine allows for more flexibility than in ordinary institutions. This freedom gave the staff opportunities to improvise with routine activities and children´s participation. The nature kindergartens had different rules and organisational structures, building on mutual trust from the child and adult. In other terms, this trust gives children a different kind of freedom and responsibility, they argue.

[22] A reference area is a place outside the institution, which the staff and child uses as their fixed fieldtrip destination. Each childcare centre can have several fixed fieldtrip destinations (Lysklett, 2013, p. 62).

Lysklett and Berger (2017) conclude their discussion by stating that children spend more time outdoors in nature centres. The way they have organised and adapted their daily routine enables them to use nature as a pedagogical playground.

The next chapter aims to present the thesis' methodological framework, before continuing to the empirical chapters.

4. Methodology

This chapter aims to account for the methodological choices done in the present thesis, to make the research process transparent. This entails an outline of the research process from idea to analysis. The chapter will also reflect upon the researcher´s position, obstacles and challenges encountered on during this journey, as well as experiences I have achieved.

4.1 Qualitative research

Since the aim is to explore diverse profiled kindergartens by looking at their differences and similarities based on interviews with pedagogical leaders, it seemed appropriate to use a qualitative research study design.

Within qualitative research, researchers use a set of interpretive material practices to make the world visible. To do this, researcher attempts to study people or a phenomenon in their natural setting; researchers enter their worlds (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008) while attempting to understand complex realities, where the aim is to understand different meanings and perceptions of the social world (Mayoux, 2006). In doing so, researchers focus on small-scale topics with an in-depth approach and often with a triangulation of different methods such as interviews and participant observations (Gudmundsdottir, 1992; Mayoux, 2006).

Qualitative research does not aim for quantification or any measuring; it focuses on the relationship between participant and researcher, how social experiences are created and given meaning, as noted by Denzin and Lincoln (2008). In respect to the relationship built between researcher and participant, the researcher must be aware that knowledge is co-constructed (Hatch, 2002). Therefore, Mayoux (2006) states that the researcher´s objectivity becomes a question. According to Denzin and Lincoln (2008), the research's ontological, epistemological and methodological understandings influences a significant aspect of qualitative research, Grieshaber (2010, p. 179) also supported their statement. Therefore, an awareness of reflexivity is important in qualitative research (Edwards, 2010; Hatch, 2002), with examples from fieldwork this is explained and, it shows transparency.

4.2 Sample and access

The sampling of data was carried out in two municipalities in Norway during the fall semester of 2017. For my study, I excluded profiles who facilitated for children with special needs, profiles that did not exist in the two municipalities or were vague on their profile, religious profiles, family and open childcare centres, and childcare centres I was personally familiar with. The background chapter aimed to introduce the seven selected profiles. Table 1 shows an overview of the number of participants and their pseudonyms. Since the number of private profiled institutions is higher than the amount of municipal profiled ones, I had to invite more private childcare centres to get the desired diversity.

PRIVATE PROFILES	PSEUDONYMS	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Montessori	**M1 & M2**	**2**
Steiner	**S**	**1**
Music	**MU1 & MU2**	**2**
Sport	**SP1 & SP2**	**2**
Culture	**C**	**1**
MUNICIPAL PROFILES		NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
Reggio Emilia	**R1 & R2**	**2**
Nature	**N1 & N2**	**2**

Table 4.1 Overview of the included profiles and pseudonyms

Since the aim was to recruit pedagogical leaders for the research, I began with sending out invitations[23] by email to leaders in the seven institutions. When some time had passed, it seemed appropriate to call the leaders who had not responded to my emails. I was successful with two places, where they had two pedagogical leaders that wished to participate. However, I experienced some obstacles gaining access to the remaining childcare centres, as one of them withdrew after consenting to access and the rest declined.

I have spent some time reflecting on why it proved to be difficult to gain access. Firstly, the fall semester is a delicate semester for the institutions with new children, new plans and new employees, and then Christmas with all the issues to deal with. Secondly, some might simply

[23] Appendix 1.

not want to participate. Thirdly some might see this as a burden to their busy schedules. Also, sick leaves which require substitutes might be a forth reason for why it was somewhat difficult to gain access. However, I decided to call the remaining options instead of emailing because calling proved to be a sufficient way to get answers. After a considerable amount of phone calls, where I presented myself and the research project, I was successful in gaining access to the institutions that represented the seven chosen profiles.

Regarding the recruitment of pedagogical leaders, I chose this them because I believe they can provide rich descriptions concerning the research question. Based on the fact that each participant is an individual subject and expected to have its own perspectives and interpretations of the profile (Willis, 2006) is where the idea on targeting two pedagogical leaders per centre from different units or bases[24]. The chosen sampling approach is in line with Patton´s (1990) description of stratified purposeful sampling, where the purpose is to gain information-rich cases and capture major variations instead of commonalities. However, commonalities will emerge in an analysis when one is searching for variations.

4.2.1 Participants, applying a structural approach

According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), one should include as many participants as necessary to find an answer to the research question. The study consists of seven profiled institutions with twelve pedagogical leaders. Three of the participating centres had a traditional architectural layout, with departments, units and play areas, as opposed to two other participating centres which resembled a bazar street with defined rooms[25] (Kjørholt & Seland, 2012). The two remaining institutions had a combination of a bazar street and units.

Initially, I invited one to two pedagogical leaders from two different units or bases, one unit or base who had children under the age of three and one with children aged three to five. As seen in table 1, two of the seven institutions only had one pedagogical leader that wished to participate and, in another centre, the two participants came from the same base with children under the age of three. However, one of them had several years of experience from a base

[24] Each childcare centre in Norway were commonly divided into two departments. One department for the children under the age of three (toddlers) and the other of children over the age of three (older children). Within the departments, some centres have chosen to organise into several units. A base is an alternative to the latter model where all the toddlers are together, and all the older children are together (Kjørholt & Tingstad, 2007)
[25] The concept `defined rooms´ refer here to a room which has one specific activity, or a themed activity assigned to it. For example, it could be a drama room or a car room.

with children aged three to five, which became the backdrop of that interview. All the participants are between the ages of 25-55, with higher pedagogical education on a bachelor level, some had acquired a master's degree, and they all had various range of experience in the work field. Also, both genders participated in the study.

4.3 Methods

The study applied semi-structured life-mode interviews, with the case study method (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015) to collect the empirical material. To prepare the interview guide and to figure out which profiles to include, I conducted a short document analysis. In qualitative research, an interview is a frequently used method (Mann, 2016). Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) emphasise that interviews are well suited to understand the world from the interviewee´s[26] point of view. At the same time, they also emphasise that this is a professional conversation and not an everyday conversation between equals since it is the researcher who controls the setting. This statement is also in line with Gudmundsdottir (1996), who states that by adding a theoretical framework a conversation is altered into a research tool and by attempting to strip away some of the cultural aspects of a conversation.

The following sections account for how I collected the empirical material.

4.3.1 Document analysis

According to Bowen (2009), documents might provide data to the research context, suggest questions for the interview guide and provide supplementary data. However, usually documents are written for different purposes than research, and sometimes documents can be difficult to retrieve, which is something the researcher must be aware of when document analysis is applied (Bowen, 2009). Therefore, I considered and read public documents and website presentations according to their purpose.

To narrow down the included profiles and preparing the interview themes/questions, I utilised a short document analysis of multiple documents. Documents such as annual plans, information for new parents and about the institutions retrieved from their webpage created a backdrop for selecting the seven profiles. All the documents utilised in the study, are

[26] The term interviewee is used when I refer to interview subjects in a general way, the word participant refers to the people who took part in the study.

documents created for parents, the municipality and employees´ in the kindergartens. The purpose of annual plans is to function as a work tool for the staff, and it documents the childcare centres pedagogical practices, intentions, and decisions. This plan provides stakeholders and the other authorities with information such as aim, objectives, and intentions (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017). Some of the yearly plans were difficult to retrieve and I had to ask the kindergartens to receive them.

The annual plans provided useful knowledge regarding factual information about their chosen profile, aims, priorities, and intentions. This information proved useful when creating the interview themes and questions, making sure that I did not ask questions I could obtain elsewhere. In her article, Willis (2006) emphasise that researchers should be careful about wasting the participants time, for example: asking questions where the answer can be obtained in a document. Although Willis has a point, the yearly plans are created within a contextual framework, with the intention of portraying each childcare centre in the best possible way. Therefore, it is interesting to ask questions which already had an answer to get their personal perceptions and interpretations of for example the profiles' aim, and not just what their plan says.

Before proceeding to my primary method, I would like to address the use of sources in the presentation of the profiles in chapter 2. The aim of presenting each profile is to provide the reader with key knowledge of each profile, which I believe is important to have before diving into the empirical part of this thesis. Regarding the established pedagogical profiles like Montessori, Steiner, and Reggio Emilia there exist extensive academic literature. However, to my knowledge, there does not exist any academic literature on the other chosen profiles, except for the nature profile. Thus, I had to utilise their web pages, which is an advertisement space. Utilising the established pedagogical profiles' web pages would have exposed their kindergarten identity, and their networks' webpages only offered a brief introduction, while the academic literature offered a thorough review.

4.3.2 Semi-structured life-mode interviews

I designed the interview to be conducted in two parts. Part one would be a 30-minute individual sit-down semi-structured interview and part two as a 30-minute life-mode inspired interview[27]. The first part of the interview consisted of themes and possible questions, themes like the pedagogical profile and questions like *"can you tell me about this kindergarten´s pedagogical aims and intentions?"*. Having themes is in line with how Willis (2006) describe a semi-structured interview. Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) also endorse this and state that this method is highly suitable when the aim is to extract knowledge from the lived worlds of the participants. In respect to the study, the aim was to gain knowledge about the profiles based on the participants lived worlds within the different profiles.

The life-mode inspired part is a method originally developed by Haavind (1987). The aim of this method was for researchers to explore how a family´s daily life is organised, interpreted and experienced, by having the participant recalling and reflecting about everyday happenings without conducting observations. However, it has since been applied to children and youths as shown in Jansen (2015) and Tingstad (2007). In the study, the main objective of utilising this method was to gain knowledge about the daily life within the units or bases, by asking for a detailed description of the previous day. When the participants had talked me through their day, I asked follow-up questions about furniture, materials, and if the actions they took was something that happened regularly. Also, a few of the profiles had a very structured and organised week. Therefore, it became somewhat difficult for them to pick a day since different activities happened during different days, when that happened, I asked if they could recall one of the days and then tell me what other activities they did during the week.

Since I am familiar with some of the chosen profiles, I first decided to conduct a pilot interview with one of the profiles I was not familiar with in order to be well prepared. As both pilot interviews gave rich data, it seemed appropriate to include them in the analysis. Also, the pilot interviews provided experiences which led to alterations for the upcoming interviews. Originally, a life-mode interview consists of a guided tour as seen in Andenæs (1991); Tingstad (2007). However, this became problematic since I could not bring the audio-recorder into the unit, as the children were still there, which is reflected further upon in section 4.3.3.

[27] Appendix 2.

Despite looking at interviews as a professional conversation, Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) emphasise that it requires a high level of skills to conduct a good interview. This is due to the few structures in how to conduct a qualitative interview, which means that decisions must be made on the spot. The two scholars also state that the craftsmanship of interviewing and the art of extracting knowledge from a conversation is only retrievable through practice. The difficulties in deciding when it was the right time to ask questions, coming up with follow-up questions, and probing good answers, was something I experienced during fieldwork. However, I also experienced progression during the fieldwork, after having done half of the interviews I realised that I had memorised the interview guide[27] and was getting better at asking follow-up questions.

Mann (2016) argues form the same perspective as Brinkmann and Kvale while adding that conducting a good interview is often taken for granted with few critical views. Since interviews are a standard method within qualitative research, which is why reflections and reflexivity are important. On reflection, I realised that by memorising the interview guide it became easier to listen while thinking of what to probe for and to ask questions at the right time. Also, how I spoke and phrased my sentences also made a difference to how the participants responded. For example, "pedagogisk målsetting" which translates to *"pedagogical aim",* was a word I had to explain to a few of the participants who did not know how to answer it. On reflection, this might be because the word has a complex definition, which is why I chose to phrase it as *"what are your profiles objectives and values".* In hindsight, it occurred to me that perhaps some of the profiles had not viewed themselves as having a profile. Thus, it becomes difficult to explain such complex definition when it might confuse the participants.

4.3.3 Timing and location

The context and timing of the interviews are an important aspect to consider while designing the research. Therefore, the pedagogical leaders´ workspace seemed appropriate, because it is important that the participants´ feel safe and comfortable. As well as it provides important insights and contextual knowledge (Willis, 2006). The participants or the institutions leader decided the timing of the interviews, and both interviews took place in the same day. It was important for me to show flexibility since the pedagogical leaders already have a busy schedule, which is why I did not have any preferences regarding time. In hindsight, the level

of flexibility was something I regret, and the next section reflected upon this topic. Despite interviewing in the participants´ workspace may seem straightforward, it can also be problematic regarding privacy, anonymity, and flow of the interview. For example, multiple interruptions in one of the interviews during day five show how it can offer problems. At one point, we had to change location, going from a conference room to a shared office space with new types of interruptions. Not only was I and the participant distracted by the interruptions, it also affected the participant's anonymity and privacy. A misunderstanding regarding booking of the conference room caused the interruptions, and the shared office space had a printer and personal belonging which several staff members needed due to lunch break. In hindsight, I realised that I could have ensured the rooms were available or without disturbances.

As mentioned in section 4.3.2 it became problematic to conduct the life-mode interview in its proper way with the guided tour. However, the majority of participants gave me a guided tour of the kindergarten and their unit after the interview was over. While guiding me around, several participants recalled activities and other happenings which had not occurred to them during the interview. It occurred to me after reading about context in Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) that the room might have affected how the participants´ recalled their everyday routine. As further reflected upon in sub-chapter 4.5.3, the audio-recorder might have been a reason for why some of the participants recalled activities later, when the audio-recorder was not present. In hindsight, I wish I had planned this better by asking for an interview time when the children were outside, as the majority of children are outside at least one or two times a day.

4.3.4 Audio-recordings

Upon my encounters with the participants´, I decided to use audio-recordings. Audio-recordings allows the researcher to concentrate entirely during the interview, guarding against the possibility of losing vital details (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Mann, 2016; Willis, 2006). Willis (2006) state that some people might feel more at ease with a recorder, than if the researcher were too occupied with writing. At the same time, she emphasises that transcribing interviews are time-consuming, as well as noisy environments might make it impossible to record or make it difficult to hear what the interviewer and participant said afterwards. On

that note, I experience that audio-recordings had been crucial to my memory, and although transcribing was time consuming, I will use it in the future.

4.4 The relationship between researcher and participants

Ontological and epistemological assumptions where knowledge is co-constructed where multiple realities exist (Hatch, 2002), lays the foundation for the thesis. For that reason, I have reflected upon some factors that may have had an impact on the interactions between me as a researcher and the participants; with the intention of addressing the matter of reliability.

4.4.1 Insider or outsider? Is it possible to be both?

During the interview, the constructed knowledge depends on who is doing the interview. Miller and Glassner (2011) argue that positionality of the researcher as an outsider might provide misleading answers or the right knowledge of the phenomena considering how to ask the right questions. Since I share the same bachelor degree with the participants, I counted myself as an insider. However, possessing knowledge of the researched field is both an advantage and a disadvantage.

I had insider knowledge since I understood their work context, their busy schedules. We shared common understandings of challenges and general knowledge about Norwegian kindergartens, knowledge regarding pedagogical activities, and we spoke the same language. All these features proved to be beneficial in respect to how the participants spoke to me since it might be possible that the participants would have spoken in a different way if we did not share some commonalities; which is a reliability question (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). However, my knowledge might affect the analysis and the interpretation of the findings in ways it would not have if the researcher possessed a different background. On another note, we did not share the same age, work experience, master´s degree or the way of living, and I did not know the children or their parents, or the rest of the personnel. All of this made me an outsider and will also affect the analysis and interpretation.

On reflection, I realised that I had designed some of the questions in the interview guide with theoretical knowledge about different perspectives on children, when I initially thought that my questions were open, exploring, and without biases. Since this theoretical knowledge is something I acquired during my first year of childhood studies and not from my bachelor

degree this also makes me an outsider. In sum, I believe that I am not either or, I am both an outsider and an insider, which Mohammad (2001) state is possible. On that note, it is possible to speculate if any question asked by a researcher can genuinely be open since every person brings with them some level of knowledge that might make him or her an outsider in relation to the participants. This is in line with Boeijie (2010) who states that theoretical perspectives constructs the research findings. I believe that as long as the researcher is aware of its perspectives and makes subjectivity transparent, the research questions can be open since it is impossible to know someone else's answer in advance.

According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), consistency of the findings associates with the concept of reliability, and it can be related to whether the participants would give the same answers to a different researcher. With understandings from social constructionism the interpretations of the analysis would be different if another researcher with a different background and theoretical perspectives tried to reproduce this study. Given that I and the participants shared some common understandings about kindergartens, the answers given might have been different if the researcher did not possess the same understandings, as well as if the questions were asked at a different time.

4.4.2 "Did I answer your question correctly?"

During the interview, I encountered some challenges since I like to engage in conversations with new people. Hence, not sharing my opinion on the phenomenon or how to respond neutrally, became challenging. Gudmundsdottir (1996) mentions that participants often look for clues in our body language or verbal outcomes like "mhm" and interpret them as encouraging or discouraging. In the beginning, I used words like "exciting" and "interesting", in some cases interviewee's might interpret these as encouragement. However, they were my personal opinions, and I was afraid the participants could interpret them as leading concepts. Encouraging words might lift the interview and provide in-depth answers (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015) and to not respond at all might make the interviewee feel uncomfortable or believe that the researcher is not listening, which will construct their narrations. To keep my integrity, I decided to respond with only sounds like variations of "mhm" as well as nods.

The majority of participants asked if they had answered the questions in the right manner. I assured them before the interview started and when they asked, that there is no correct answer and that they possess the knowledge. Thagaard (2013) notes that participants might feel a sense of powerless during the interview, which is why their answers might be affected by what they think the researcher wants to hear. She also states that if the participants have an active attitude during the interview, this is not the case. However, I believe that some people might portray an active attitude because they are nervous. It might be that the participants wanted to represent their work in the best possible or correct way. It is worth noting that a few leaders choose the participants based on who would represent a holistic view of the kindergarten, or who is loyal to the institution. For examples, in one of the e-mails I received with consent, the leader emphasised that she or he had picked out one novice and one experienced pedagogical leader.

I was aware that the participants could interpret my responses as the right or wrong answer, which is why I felt that responding was a challenge. An ethical aspect of this is that I tried to decrease the influence my response had on the participants´ answers. In their book, Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) emphasise the importance of researchers who maintains their integrity, since they are the main instrument for acquiring knowledge there is a danger of interpreting only from the participants´ point of view. Being aware of ethical guidelines and my own integrity proved to be helpful when designing the research design and during the interviews. Therefore, I excluded kindergartens I were familiar with.

4.5 Ethical considerations

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) emphasise of how ethical considerations go beyond the live interaction, integrated into every stage of the research design, which the following sections will further elaborate on. In addition to the ethical considerations mentioned further below, the Norwegian Centre for Research Data have approved the project[28].

[28] Appendix 3

4.5.1 Consent

Informed consent is a fundamental act in any ethical research project, and researchers can receive it in both oral and written form (Alderson & Morrow, 2011). For the thesis, the participants gave their consent with a written consent agreement[29].

When I scheduled the interviews, the leader or the participant, depending on who I arranged with received the consent agreement by email. Also, I brought spare consent agreements to the interviews in case they had forgotten to sign it. Before the interview started, I reminded them of their rights, which included the right not to answer any questions, the right to end the interview without reason or to withdraw from the research. In addition, I asked if they had any questions about the consent agreement or about the research. They also received information regarding how long the interview would take, about anonymity and the audio-recorder. This information is a part of what entails in obtaining informed consent and is in line with Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) and Brydon (2006)

4.5.2 Anonymity

After reading Ellis's (2007) article, it became clear to me how easy it might be for readers to recognise the participants identity and especially within a small community. Therefore, when I began to look at the possible profiles for the research topic, I was aware of how important it was not to disclose any personal information regarding the participants. This is in line with Brydon (2006), where she stresses the fact that even if the research topic is not considered sensitive and the information might seem unthreatening, it can be hazardous in some combinations.

Therefore, demographic details such as school names, workplace, municipality, or names they mentioned during the interview were not transcribed (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Also, an age range is indicated and not the participants' specific age, as well as what type of education the participants have, and what gender they possess. This is in line with Ennew et al. (2009, p. 2.17) who state that the researcher must predict which private data might put participants at risk.

[29] Appendix 4

Some of the participants expressed concerns concerning their anonymity. I did my best to reassure them that no one would recognise them, by explaining that I would replace their names in the transcriptions with a letter and a number and disguise the other personal information. I consider the demographic details in combination with indirectly identifiably personal data like age, gender, and education hazardous information since there are limited options of some of the profiles in Norway. Since it was only the profiles that are highly relevant to this thesis, age, gender, and education are just mentioned in a general way.

4.5.3 "Didn´t participant 1 answer that?" Power and reliability.

Before the second to last interview day, I had received an email a few days earlier where the participants asked for more information regarding the interview or if they could get the questions beforehand. After some reflections, I decided to give them a more thorough explanation regarding the aim, objectives, and type of interview, while leaving out the questions. However, I added that it was possible to receive the topics beforehand if my explanation was not sufficient enough. When the interview day came, they had not responded to that email.

At one point during the second interview, I asked a question about their profile that I previously had asked participant 1, where the answer I got was *"(name) did answer that"*. I responded with *"I know, but I would like to hear your opinion about it"*. This situation was very uncomfortable as I had not experienced any similar situation before and this was the first time I felt a presence of power asymmetry. Since I had not given any of the participants the questions beforehand, I realised that the two participants must have talked with each other while I was in the bathroom in-between the interviews. In addition to that situation, the same participant started to guess upcoming questions, for example *"that might be a question later?"* or *"are you asking questions like that?"* and responding with *"next"* after answering questions. I considered this situation an issue since I did not expect the participants to speak with each other between the interviews, as none of the other participants talked to each other in that type of situation earlier. On the other hand, I had not gone to the bathroom in between my previous interviews, which is why the case had not occurred to me.

Considering that the two participants spoke with each other before the second interview, it is possible that participant 1 shared the questions asked and the given response. When

participant 2 knows how participant 1 responded to the questions, participant 2´s answers might be affected by how participant 1 answered, which makes this a question of reliability. When participants know the questions beforehand it gives them time to think about how to respond, which might influence their impulsive feedback. Consequently, this makes it difficult for me to know what was participant 2´s expression of the "truth" according to personal perspectives (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015) and which were influenced by participant 1´s perspectives.

As discussed by Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) the power relationship is asymmetrical during a research interview. Since it is not a conversation between equals, it is a one-way dialogue where the interviewer has the monopoly over the interpretations. When participant 2 responded, as shown in the section above, I felt the power asymmetry present. I felt that we switched roles and the participant became the interviewer, as the participant was older than me I also felt a sense of having done something wrong and in a way losing my professionalism. However, when I transcribed the interview, I learned that it took one second before I replied when at the time it felt like it took minutes. This experience taught me that I kept my professionalism and that I should be aware that new experiences occur when I am least expecting them. As well as not to take anything for granted.

Regarding another example, Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) mention that the audio-recorder can function as a context marker, indicating the shift from an everyday conversation to a professional interview. In hindsight, I realised I had experienced this. One of the participants changed the tone of voice and posture when we entered the room the interview was to be held in and made a comment after I announced that I would turn the recorder off. Ahead of the interview, the participant had given me a guided tour of the entire kindergarten, which provided us with the opportunity to establish rapport. On reflection, both entering the room and the audio-recorder might have indicated a power shift.

4.6 After the interviews

As the previous sections have addressed methodological choices and ethical considerations before and during the fieldwork, the sections below will account for the methodological choices done after I conducted the interviews.

4.6.1 Transcribing the interviews

The transcribing process begun at once after ending the interviews. Transcribing is the process of shaping the oral language into a written language (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). During the transformation, all the non-verbal expressions like posture, face mimics, the tone of voice, and other bodily expressions are to some extent lost (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Regarding a valid transcript, Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) remind us that it is beneficial to think about "what is a useful transcription for my research purposes (p. 213)". As I was unsure about my analytical method, I decided to transcribe each interview in a verbatim way; writing down exactly how the participant and I spoke, with sounds and pauses. Also, it was useful to transcribe word for word concerning reliability, to try to avoid any discrepancies regarding what the participants said (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). However, where the transcriber chooses to insert commas and period marks might convey two different meanings (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Therefore, I inserted periods and commas when the participants naturally paused or stopped. In hindsight, I wish I had spoken up about some of the background noises during the interview and mumbling, since there were times were disturbing noises made it difficult to hear what the participants said.

4.6.2 Analysis

Nilsen (2005) state that the analytical process is a dialectic process, where the researcher continually moves between the literature and the data. I also believe it is dialectical regarding not being a distinct part of the qualitative research process, it is embedded in every part of the research stage (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). After transcribing the interviews, it was time to continue with a more structured analysis of the data. As the aim of this thesis is to explore differences and similarities, it seemed appropriate to apply a thematic analysis approach to review the data systematically. Since general aims of thematic analysis are set to examine commonalities, differences, and relationships between the two as explained by Gibson and Brown (2009).

Thematic analysis is not grounded in one existing theoretical framework, according to Braun and Clark (2006). This statement is also endorsed by Gibson and Brown (2009) who comments that since it is a theoretical and conceptual issue and not a technical matter, the approach cannot have specific rules of practices. However, they further state that it does contains some guiding features on how to conduct the analysis. I began with separating each

interview into segments or open coding as seen in Boeijie (2010). I coded each segment with empirical or inductive codes, which means that each code emerged from the data (Braun & Clark, 2006; Gibson & Brown, 2009).

Afterwards, I reviewed all the initial codes, before rearranging them into new codes that were already grounded in existing theoretical concepts, deductive approach. Then I moved on to refining the themes, checking for validity by going back to the transcripts and determining if it captured the essence of the research aim (Braun & Clark, 2006). To gain an organised overview of the empirical material, to understand the profiles´ similarities and differences I found inspiration from Brinkmann and Kvale´s (2015) meaning condensation. I arranged the codes into a table, where the profiles´ similarities were coloured yellow and their differences were coloured green. Finally, I narrowed the similarities and differences into two themes which would answer my research objectives. The two themes are: (1) the profiles´ overall objectives, values, and perspectives on children; (2) structuration of space, time, and activities. The concept of curricula analyses the two themes, which are further explored with the analytical concepts of agency to understand the children´s social positions and opportunities for agency.

Throughout this process, I tried to keep my eyes on the larger aim of the thesis and what picture I was trying to create with it, which is emphasised by Gibson and Brown (2009). This focus was helpful in relation to create the themes and to be critical regarding what captured the essences of my research questions and what did not.

4.6.3 Validity

Validity refers to the degree a method explore what it is intended to explore, and the type of research question posed to the interview text, according to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015). What I have done is to cross-check findings multiple times with the transcripts to ensure the strength of my arguments and transcribed precisely how the participants spoke. Also, I used the kindergarten´s annual plan to cross-check the profiles overall objectives and values.

4.7 Summary

This chapter has presented the research process from idea to analysis. The focus has been to make the research process transparent, account for the methodological choices and present the research tools for this study. The intention was to create an understanding of how the data has been collected and analysed, before proceeding on to the final chapters. This chapter has also presented reflections, shown examples of reflexivity, experiences, and how my role has affected the data collection and findings. Also, this chapter has shown how some parts of the research process is not a distinct part but embedded into several parts of the research process.

The following chapters contain the empirical material, organised into two chapters. The first chapter draws on the previously mentioned themes and answers the first research questions. The second chapter builds on the previous chapter and aims to answer the second research question. The profiles´ curricula and agency are the analytical concepts in the following chapters.

5. Establishing the curricula

Chapter five aims to answer the first research question, "what are the profiles' defining characteristics?" by drawing on the two empirical themes. These are firstly the profiles' overall objectives, values, and perspectives on children, and secondly their use of space, time, and activities. I will do this by presenting excerpts and statements from the interviews and discuss them in relation to the theoretical framework.

To gain an understanding of the defining characteristics I will use the analytical concept of curricula. As explained in the theory chapter, the curricula hold specific inclusions, exclusions, choices, assumptions, discourses, and rules which all affect the children and their childhoods (James et al., 1998). The concept is not particularly used in Norwegian childcare settings. However, I use it as an umbrella term for the two empirical themes to explore the profiles' defined characteristics. Curricula is thus a structure which is utilised to examine how children have opportunities to build their agency (Lee, 2001) and what social positions they have.

The following chapter is organised into seven parts, one for each case.

5.1 The Montessori profile's curricula

The Montessori profile is organised into a traditional childcare centre with a toddler and an older children's department containing sub-units (hereafter referred to as unit). Both units have the same architectural layout of an ample space, where the practitioners and the children have invested meaning into several parts of the space (Montgomery, 2003). There were shelves adjusted for children's height containing objects and toys which fostered practical, cognitive and academic skills such as arts and crafts materials, puzzles, household materials[30], and objects for learning geography, math, language, and physics or about the body. The participants argued that the selected toys and materials should offer children more than leisure, it should foster skills the children could use throughout their life. Both units had the same materials and objects, however, they became more advanced and complicated as the children grew older. All the furniture is sized for children; small tables and chairs, and a water tank was placed low enough for the toddlers to be able to pour water by themselves. The

[30] Meaning cocking utensils, stove, objects for pouring water, a small trying rack and washing supplies.

environment´s design is due to the profile's primary focus on children's independence. The participants explained the concept of independence as children being able to act on their own, to find what they wanted to play with or needed without help. In other words, there was nothing the adult had to aid the child with. The following two excerpts are the answers from when I asked about their overall goals and values:

M1: Very much focus on children´s independence because we know that children have the need to do things on their own and wish to do things on their own. They often get angry if you are offering too much help (…) they should not depend on us adults to do something – that is *very* important.

M2: Our goal is to create harmonious people, you´re supposed to feel good about yourself and feel like you can use yourself in a right way and reach your fullest potential. That is what we work towards (…) Help me to help myself is our motto.

Their motto of *"help me to help myself"* and M1's statement of *"should not depend on adults to do something"* meant that the adults should facilitate the environment for independence. From an early age they should know how to use the toilet and how to dress themselves, which is why they have specific materials for practising buttons and zippers for the young children. To teach the individual child these skills, the practitioners made sure to take their time to teach children everything they needed to know, either in groups or individually. By practising such skills, the children became skilled which can be interpreted as enhancing their abilities to do social actions (Lee, 2001), an essential aspect of the profile, which is shown with the excerpts below from my question regarding their perspectives on children:

M1: Believe in each child because they can do an enormous amount of things if they are allowed to.

M2: Independent [children] and that children are very competent, children are willing to learn if you [adults] facilitate it. Children are not future adults..they are..they are able to do so much more.

One line of thought concerning M2´s use of independence and M1´s statement is that both participants appears to want to facilitate for children to show their competences and abilities. Since their environment´s design has specific facilitations for children's practical skills, I was curious towards what I termed as "normal" toys as these might only offer children leisure experience and not a practical skill.

AR: Do you have `normal´ toys like cars, dolls or things like that?

M2: We had dolls and have Lego and other building blocks, but I do not remember the name. We had cars, but it became very noisy and a lot of rampaged and running around. As for dolls, I am a bit…it is nice for the children if they actually played with it, but it became a job where they needed adult help to dress the doll and needed a lot of help, which is something we try to avoid.

It is essential for the Montessori profile that toys, materials, and objects offer children an academic, cognitive or practical skill, and enhance the children´s abilities to act on their own. Gulløv and Højlund (2005) argue that institutions have specific frames which guide children´s and adults´ behaviour. Based on the empirical material, Montessori´s frames guide children into behaving independently, by excluding toys which do not foster the desired skills or is menace to peaceful environment the curricula shape the children´s minds and bodies into a learning being (James et al., 1998).

M2 pointed out that it is not always the materials that were important. However, it was the concentration the children gained from working with the materials. Since cars make sounds and invite children to physical play, the object might not be considered appropriate (Nordtømme, 2016). The concept of concentration is the cornerstone of their daily, and, thus weekly schedule. Within the older children´s unit, the children had three hours of work time, which is when the children practise their concentration and play inside, it lasted until lunch. Afterwards, they spent the rest of the day outside on the centres outdoor area. While toddlers have different needs regarding eating and sleeping, their work time was more flexible than the older children´s schedule. After breakfast and up until lunch, the toddler´s had their work time. However, M2 emphasised that to create a calm atmosphere where the children could practise their concentration, a practitioner brought a small group of children outside during the work time. Despite their much organised days, the profile did not have a structured week with various activities, except for a field trip day once a week.

Also, M1 explained that they taught the children not to disturb each other or an adult working with a child, and how to politely interrupt without disturbing the child or practitioner. The two participants argued that if you practised and acquired concentration skills from an early age, it would be easier to utilise the ability in the future, such as when learning at school. Regarding learning, the Montessori participants both advocated for the "*freedom to choose what to learn"* was how it became fun to learn; it became fun when you learned about something you were interested in. M2 gave an example where the toddlers had shown no interest in the presentation of the Sami people. M2 concluded that they had other subjects that were more vital to learn about such as letters as the toddlers would have the chance to learn about the Sami people in the older children's unit or later in life.

Both participants emphasised the concept of freedom, it meant the children should be able to choose what they wanted to play with or learn. The adults were not allowed to push any subjects or materials on the children:

AR: Can you tell me about your profiles goals and intentions?

M2: They [children] should be allowed to learn in their own way and in their own time. If you have not learned to count to ten before you leave the childcare centre, most children do, but that is not the goal. Some [children] might not want to learn that, but then they might have learned something else. Because they shall be able to learn what they want to learn. (…) [For example] In circle time it is possible to bring up new subjects such as the Sami people and present it to the children and say that this is something you could be interested in, this is something you can learn more about. Especially in the older children´s unit, they [adults] present new material for the child; the child has not worked with it before, to show that this is something new you can try. (…) In that sense we try to push a bit, sometimes we push a bit more often such as presenting letters to children who are going to school soon.

M2´s statement implies that the children do not have to learn specific topics. One possible implication of this might be for the children to disregard vital subjects putting them at a disadvantage at later stages in their education if they do not have enough cultural capital to say yes or no (Kjørholt, 2010). On the other hand, M2 argued that they tryed to encourage the

school children[31] to gain necessary knowledge before entering primary school. In that case, how this profile does learning separates from the other profiles in this study. Although the curricula constitute of academic and practical skills, there is a presence of a different kind of learning where the children have the hegemonic voice. Whereas, the practitioner, is aware that the child who is spontaneous and in "the here and now" might change interest the next day or in the next few days.

5.2 The Steiner profile's curricula

The Steiner profile is organised as a traditional kindergarten with a toddler and an older children's department with units. I visited the older children's unit, and it was similar to the architectural layout of the Montessori institution. The layout is a large open space with smaller places where the children can play (Montgomery, 2003). In contrast to the Montessori profile, which has specific artefacts the children can work with, Steiner has only ductile[32] artefacts:

S: Most of our materials and objects are ductile, which means they can be anything. We have wooden blocks, train tracks, trains, cars, room dividers, dolls, and a small stove and shelve. The stove can be a shop counter. (…) Last year dolls were popular objects to play with, but this year it is not.

AR: mmh

S: But it varies throughout the year, different objects for different seasons. Like during the winter we spend more time inside with indoor activities.

The ductile toys which children could play with, without restrictions, were present on the floor tucked away in boxes, while hidden away were art and craft supplies such as stitching. However, S pointed out that the children just had to ask if they wanted to do such activities.

Each day consisted of circle time in the morning, one fixed activity depending on the day, story time after lunch and throughout the week they had language groups and playgroups. The fixed activities consisted of three cooking days, a field trip day, and a painting day. In the

[31] The term school children refer to children who is in their last year of the kindergarten.

[32] Ductile artefacts mean that the toys or objects have more than one specific function; it can be whatever the imagination allows it to be.

excerpt above, S states that they have different objects depending on the season, the following excerpt will account for why:

AR: You mentioned earlier something about annual parties, is that typical for Steiner or is it created by you?

S: Within the Steiner pedagogics we have a thought about following annual seasons and by having annual parties which reflect the seasons, it makes the world manageable for the children.

AR: Ah...okay

S: Larger overview of the day by having a consist rhythm every day adds up to a larger overview of the week. Then you get a larger overview of the month by have something that happened and then eventually an overview of the year. Because the same things happen every year.

One essential value for this profile is nature; the children spend much time outside, either on field trips or by playing in the centres outdoor area. S emphasised that they had *"great respect for the nature, which was different in each country depending on culture and habitat"*. S further said that each month had an annual party such as in August they celebrate a Norwegian version of Thanksgiving[33]. Through such activities, the children attending a Steiner institution become bearers of Norwegian cultural heritage (Borge et al., 2003; Nilsen, 2008). The way the Steiner profile have structured their year is one of their defining characteristics. S explained that *"making the world manageable for the children"* referred to making it predictable for the children and thus engendered emotional safety, which was necessary if the children were to let themselves go in free-play:

AR: What is your profile´s pedagogical goal or intentions?

S: Our primary goal is to carefully take care of the child and make it possible for it to grow up. (…) Being able to develop the fantasy, become confident in yourself and your feelings. Free-play is our goal. (…) We facilitate and create a framework so that the individual child may be able to develop freely.

[33] Translated from 'høsttakkefest'.

S explained the concept of free-play[34] as when the children best utilised their imagination. Regarding children´s play, S mentioned the concept of concentration. S wanted the children to be able to entirely concentrate and engaged in their plays without adult interruption. Similarly, several other participants also spoke about this concept. For example, MU2 mentioned that the children should be able to gain peace when they played, thus children who wanted to play with cars or aeroplanes had to do so in the hallway. C also endorse MU2´s view, stating that children should be able to sit with an activity for an extended period and that this was something they practised.

Also, in order for children to be able to concentrate in play when their day was very structured, and to make sure they could develop freely, the children were allowed to say no to activities:

AR: Could you elaborate a bit more on how you facilitate for the individual child?

S: Through observing and viewing the child…well if…if the child does not want to paint it does not have to paint, (…) we allow the children to say no to activities.

Connected to S´s above excerpt is their primary objective of free-play. When S spoke about free-play, it was with a passionate tone of voice, suggesting it was an often discussed and important topic. S explained that they were aware children´s play. For example, practitioners should wait to interrupt the children until they saw the play was at its end, or the adults could help the children with their playing by enriching their play. From the way S spoke about children´s play, it suggests great respect for children´s peer culture; by letting the children say no to activities with the intention of not to intrude on the children´s plays and to let the children have control. Corsaro (2009) points out that peer culture recognised within western societies relates to free-play, where children engage in fantasy and role play by gaining control over their lives and shares that control with others. Moreover, I got the impression that ideally, they would want the children to say no to an activity every time the children wished. However, since institutions have considerable organisational issues such as sick leaves, meetings and breaks, there were times where the children could not say no and would have to do the same activities.

[34] Free-play understood as self-determine play (Gullestad, 1997) such as fantasy or role-play.

The Steiner profile separates from the other profiles in this study by not focusing on academic learning, which distinguishes from the academisation of the curricula (Kjørholt, 2012; Seland, 2009). The exclusion of academic learning from their schedule shows how the academic field does not have a place within their space (James et al., 1998). It might be possible that they do not want to teach children about academic subjects as a way to resist creating predetermined outcomes (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005), the below extract illustrates this interpretation:

S: Accept each individual as they are (…) the individual is capable of developing itself and to find own solutions...and sort of find opportunities in itself.

S's statement is from our talk about their perspectives on children, and humans in general. The participant wanted the children to develop themselves, as S put it, and it was essential for the profile to respect every child and encourage them to be whom they wanted to be. Nurturing individuality in such ways might be a reason to not create predetermined outcomes.

5.3 The Reggio Emilia profile's curricula

The Reggio Emilia profile´s architectural layout is a base[35] and resembled a bazar street from the Middle East with several rooms assigned to an activity (Kjørholt & Seland, 2012). The older children´s base included a drama room, a Lego room, a building room, a reading room, and an atelier. The toddler's base had a reading room, an atelier, one place with large pillows and mattresses for physical play, and one place with several ductile artefacts such as lids, wooden sticks, boxes, cans and animals, balls, and cars. The base for the older children had a structured week as opposed to the toddlers´ base who did not, except for the institution's joint music assembly and field trip day. Both bases had divided their children into age-groups, which the practitioners utilised in many situations. Regarding the toddlers' base, R2 had divided the children into two main groups during meal time and nap time, R2 emphasised that they were separate into groups for practical reasons, due to the children's different sleep and meal schedule. The older children´s base had divided their children into three age groups with regards to their structured week. Three days a week, the age groups switched between field trip, time outside on the centres outdoor area, language groups or projects. R1 explained that the projects were either initiated by the practitioners or from the children's interests.

[35] A base is the opposite of the traditional department/units. One base for all the toddlers and one base for all the older children, sometimes the bases have divided their children into smaller groups which they belong to (Kjørholt & Tingstad, 2007). Chapter 4 touched upon this.

How the Reggio Emilia profile interpret the Reggio Emilia approach is a part of their defining characteristics. "Mastering life", the environment, books, the "Let me do it" program[36], recycling, and a program about how to utilise space and place as a pedagogical tool are essential objectives and values for this profile. The extract below exemplifies their primary goal and is from my question about this topic:

R1: We call it mastering life, yes, it sounds quite pompous. But we think that safety and care..is a part of being able to grow up. (…) We can think that..we shall let them become ready to master their life, that is what it is all about. This is something that is new for us this year. But we have throughout the last half year worked a lot on relations and language. Previously we have been very strongly attached to Reggio Emilia with the atelier part, which is good but, Reggio is so much more than the atelier part. We believe that children should be able to use all their languages, developing [verbal] language, relations, not just what we are doing with our fingers.

R2: Our main goal is to work from the objects clause which is embedded in the Kindergarten Act and the Framework Plan. It's about giving children good opportunities for development (…) Where Reggio becomes an entryway in how we fulfil the objects clause.

Edwards (2002) suggests in her article that Reggio Emilia does not have defined methods in contrast to the other formal approaches like Montessori and Steiner. Rinaldi confirms this statement by arguing that it is not possible to copy the Reggio Emilia approach, others can only find inspiration from it (Dahlberg et al., 2009). However, the fact that others can only find inspiration from the approach might be a method in itself. The above extracts suggest that the institution has discussed what Reggio Emilia means for them and changed how they understand and utilise the approach. R1's statement suggests that there used to be a significant focus on the atelier. However, the focus has broadened to a point where it is how they fulfil the objects clause according to R2. By expanding the inspiration from, and reflecting on what

[36] The Let me do it program is program childcare centres can use to ensure children´s participation and independence. However, it was created with an intention of increasing practitioners' health and not with children as their first priority (Konradsen, Nervik, Skjølsvold, & Stenset, 2013). Also, I recommend Jordal and Solbrække (2015) for a critical view on the program.

Reggio Emilia is for them, allows other assumptions and conventions a place in their curricula (James et al., 1998).

Including new values or thoughts often lead to the exclusion of others which may contain consequences for the children's childhoods. For example, from R1's point of view it seemed like the atelier had lingered in their inspiration, and now it was time for other ways to communicate than *"not just with our fingers"*, which might be speech instead of drawing. Whereas during R2's elaboration of their rooms, it was clear from R2's enthusiastic voice that the atelier was essential; a personal favourite and a place R2 had invested meaning into (Montgomery, 2003) by decorating the room with low shelves and child-sized furniture. As R2 put it: *"I have decorated the room based on my perspective on children"*, which meant that the children should be able to reach some of the materials such as paint brushes. On the other hand, the children had to be accompanied with adults to enter the room.

As was described in the first section of the previous page, this institution has assigned activities to their rooms. During the mornings and in the afternoons the practitioners close most of the rooms, and both participants argued that the children cannot be in a room without adult supervision. Expressing a need for control and regulation, which corresponds with Kjørholt and Tingstad (2007) and Seland's (2009) discussions described earlier. One of the nature participants also mentioned that the toddlers needed adult supervision in every room. In contrast to the two previously mentioned profiles, the Reggio Emilia space shows how places have restrictions concerning specific activities. For example, a locked Lego room indicate that the activity is not an option for free-play.

The choice of assigning each room to a specific activity and the rule where children need adult supervision is a large part of this profile's curricula. Thus, these choices have implications for the children social actions, behaviour, and thus childhood (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005). One line of thought from Kjørholt and Tingstad (2007) is that these rooms decrease children's freedom due to the closing of some places in the mornings and the afternoons. Although Seland (2009) argues that control regarding rooms opens dilemmas for children[37], another line of thought might be that their curricula reflect society. For example,

[37] Dilemmas regarding children who did not want to choose or wanted to make a decision with their friends (Seland, 2009), this was elaborated on in chapter 3.

there are specific places such as stores which closes during certain hours. Thus, it could reflect how society functions by closing the rooms at a specific time.

5.4 The music profile's curricula

The music profile is a combination of a traditional institution with departments and units, and what Kjørholt and Seland (2012) have determined as a bazar street with multiple designated rooms. One of the defining characteristics of this profile are these places; each has an assigned theme such as math, language, creativity, and heartprogram which all the units can utilise. MU1 explained that the themes are representations of the seven disciplines in the Framework Plan[38], the next section will account for this time structure. Music and English are important values and focus areas for this profile. For example, singing and counting in English and the two annual concerts which the children prepare for throughout the year. The toddler's unit had a small space compared to the other units at the centre, with both small and large chairs and tables which could be folded up to the wall. Due to the themed rooms' suitable artefacts[39], the toddlers' unit had artefacts for physical play and for table activities such as clay or colouring. While the older children's unit had play zones with board games, reading and drawing, building, and a Lego zone. MU2 explain that the room had play zones as a means for children to find peace when they played, which is why the children who wanted to play with cars or paper aeroplanes had to do so in the hallway.

In contrast to the abovementioned profiles, the music profile has a strict time structure which is another defining characteristic. This structuration is what the participants called a *"pedagogical concept"*, created by the company to ensure that everyone followed the Framework Plan. Each day was assigned a theme such as math, language, creativity, heartprogram, and nature. By dividing all children into age groups, it was possible to adjust the themed activities according to age. One week per month the older children were separated into age groups which they belonged to throughout that week. In hindsight, I wish I had asked more about this since it would have been interesting to know what they did if a child's development did not correspond with the age.

[38] See chapter 2 to look at the seven disciplines.

[39] Each room had materials and objects which matched the theme such as arts and crafts materials for the creativity room. In addition, there were some expensive materials which were used for special projects such as a microscope.

AR: Is there a special reason to why your profile has chosen to separate the week days?

MU1: It is the Framework Plan in practice. (…) I have worked in other childcare centres and see a lot of positive sides to it. [However] there can be some things that I find challenging, which is to be spontaneous and children´s participation. But, the positive aspect of it is that when we plan out the activities, we always have the Framework Plan with us. We use it when we think about what do we [adults] want to work with, what is the children interested in now.

In the excerpt, MU1 is quick to mention the positive aspects of the time structuring, which I find interesting since MU1 mentioned a few times how it was challenging. However, both MU1 and MU2 argued that the time structuring made their jobs easier, while they did not mention how it benefited the children.

AR: Is it supposed to make your jobs easier?

MU2: I think so yes, but many others will say that it excludes your choice to do as you want…but we can still do what we want, we can choose to not have a language day.

Although MU2 states there is a possibility to not have a language day, I got the impression that it rarely happened. Earlier in the interview, MU2 mentioned that when they had projects, they did different things with the project on different days. For example, if it was a math day the project´s focus would be on math and the next day, it might be in language. However, MU1 pointed out that while it was possible to be flexible regarding the days or activities, it would demand more focus from the practitioner since they still should work within the designated themes. Further on, both participants mentioned that sometimes the projects were based on what the practitioner saw the children were interested in, which is one way for children to participate (Brattrud et al., 2012; Sandvik, 2006). While, other times the children contributed to the project by participating within a framework, which was created by the practitioners.

The time structure was created to ensure the Framework Plan, and one aspect of the Framework Plan is children's contribution to the pedagogical content. The themed activities happened between breakfast and lunch, which means for the children who are picked up early a large part of their day is prearranged. Paradoxically, the time structure was engendered to ensure the comprehension of the Framework Plan and if the children are not contributing or

contribute in tiny ways the Framework Plan's intentions have not been pursued. Each day has a designated theme with fixed activities which leaves little to no space for participation about the content.

Since the music profile's curricula appear to be very structured and run by adult initiated activities, there seem to be some ambiguities in the participants' statements. The empirical findings imply other pedagogical thoughts and ideologies (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005) than what the participants states regarding their overall objective, which will be explained below. The following statements are the participants answer to the question about their profiles intentions and values:

MU1: We have promises to the parents and to the children. Our promise to the children is that they shall become the best version of themselves.

MU2: We intend to get the world´s most important values to grow, (…) these values are our children. Our goal is for them to grow, feel good, and become the best version of themselves.

AR: How do you make sure that this goal becomes a reality?

MU2: By seeing[40] every child and facilitate for the individual child in order to make sure that they get the best time of their life.

Their promise to the children and their intention is also the company´s vision, which means that every kindergarten owned by this company should adhere to it. The slogan, intention and ideology of children *"becoming the best version of themselves"* implies that adults facilitate children´s potential and children who act individually and know who they are or want to be. While their curricula with a strict routine appear to nurture the opposite; children who know the same and acts the same way, creating predetermined outcomes (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005). During our talk, both participants highlighted children's participation as done within a framework created by the adults. Although options to choose from is often considered as an individualistic approach to participation (Kjørholt & Seland, 2012), a childcare centre is also a place where many different people must work together. Thus, routines a created based on size

[40] To see a child was a bit difficult to translate into English. However, it refers to observing the child's needs and for adults to be present.

and number of children and adults (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012). If the themes and their time structure are considered to have a higher value than children's spontaneous actions, it might be necessary to exclude relational participation (Bae, 2009) to ensure the time structure and their pedagogical concept.

Returning briefly to the area of music and English. The participants touched briefly upon these concepts with various emphasise. MU1 from the toddler's unit gave the impression of being very fond of music, explaining that aesthetics was a personal interest and that music should permeate the day; by being utilised in diverse situations such as in mealtime or in the cloakroom. In contrast, MU2 emphasised utilising music as a tool throughout the day. For example, to gain the children´s attention, or during activities such as drawing to music. MU2 also explained that one day a week the children experienced music with passionate practitioners as a part of their themed activities. Due to the participants´ emphasise on the time structure and less emphasise on music or the English language throughout the interview, it could seem like the time structure has a different amount of emphasise than the values of music or English. Nevertheless, since there are no observations connected to this study, it is something that could have been looked deeper into in future research projects.

5.5 The sports profile's curricula

The sports profile has traditional departments with units, and a sports hall available for all. Each unit has the same architectural layout with one ample space and a small room connected with a door. The toddler´s unit had stored their books and arts and crafts materials on shelves out of reach for the young children. While on the floor there were artefacts which fostered physical play such as pillows, mats, and soft boxes. Other toys such as dolls and cars were also present. In the older children´s unit, SP2 had waited to decorate their large space until the children had expressed their interests, chapter 6 will discuss this later. Low shelves with materials the children could reach and small tables and chairs for table activities filled the older children´s space.

AR: Can you tell me about your profiles intentions and objectives?

SP1: Our goal is for the children to become safe through motion joy and gain good values through motion joy and nutrition. We shall facilitate for the children to experience happiness and mastery in their everyday life through their bodies. (…) Our platform

is..every child shall experience activities inside, outside, field trip and sports hall throughout the week.

The platform of activities *"inside, outside, on field trips, and in the sports hall"* is how this profile has organised their week, with sports pedagogues creating the activity-plan for the sports hall and helped with their annual plan to ensure their value of motion joy[41]. This latter plan is one of their defining characteristics due to its content. The program divides the year into periods of four each belonging to a season, every period covers between four to five primary motor skills aimed to reach the goal of motion joy. Similar to the Reggio Emilia and music profile, the children are separated into age groups during their time in the sports hall, due to development reasons. Each unit had one day in the sports hall and one field trip day, while the other days were open for other activities inside or outside.

Throughout the interview, it became clear how independence and participation as values were essential to the profile, when the participants spoke about independence they often used the word mastery[42]. For example, the toddler´s unit were especially fond of a place in the forest which had considerable opportunities for various physical play as a destination for their field trips. There was a small wooden hut which the children could climb on and jump down from, a pawn with a bridge, a hill, and plenty of bushes and trees. SP1 emphasised that it was important that children could walk on their own. Thus, they arranged their field trips according to the children´s abilities and age. However, they did have a bus to utilise if the destination of the field trip were fare away. SP2´s following excerpt demonstrates their perspective on children:

AR: Can you tell me a bit about yours and the kindergartens view on children?

SP2: I think it is clear that the adults here give the children time to make their own decisions and space to be themselves. Support them. We do not have that use of force if you know what I mean. (…) [We are] good to talk with the children.

AR: Yes

[41] **"**Bevegelsesglede" is the Norwegian term the participant used.

[42] Children experiencing mastery meant that they should have opportunities to act by themselves, acting independently without having adults to do the actions for them. Through field work I experienced participants using both independence and mastery about children acting by themselves in various situations. Hence, the two words have the same meaning in the thesis.

SP2: It is a very good way to meet the children. Not that kind of reprimanding pedagogy, I have seen that in several other places, it is a bit old fashioned.

From my point of view, the excerpt shows how it is expected from the practitioners that children have space to express their thoughts and participate. A place where the adults treat them with equal value and constructors of the institution, such assumptions implies that children have control. Constructing the child as a subject of the institution and not an object of its structures and adult controlled rules, acknowledges children as agents since they participate in a negotiating relationship (Mayall, 2002). Part 6.5 elaborates further on this topic.

Owned by the same company implies that the sports and the music profile should both adhere to the company´s vision of children "becoming the best version of themselves". However, neither SP1 nor SP2 spoke about this goal, they aimed towards children finding joy in nutrition and movement, such as focusing on their annual plan and bring the children into the kitchen. As nutrition were another essential value, activities such as planting seeds and growing vegetables, picking barriers, visiting farms, baking, and helping with lunch happened regularly throughout the month. The only resemblance to the music profile was their use of the heartprogram, which they utilised once a week without further elaborating on the program.

5.6 The nature profile´s curricula

The nature profile were also organised as a base, which has resemblances to a bazar street (Kjørholt & Seland, 2012). The toddlers' base had various places with an assigned activity such as a car room, water room, the play kitchen[43], and art and craft room available for both bases. The older children´s base had two large spaces, one space for eating with small chairs and tables, and the other space had a projector with plenty of floor space and a tribune. N2 did not speak much about the older children´s indoor space during the interview, an explanation might be due to their focus on outdoor life. When asked about their profile´s intentions and objectives the participants said:

[43] The play kitchen (lekekjøkkenet) is a room where the children can play with a miniature kitchen or play family/house plays.

N1: Our profile is nature..we have several areas of focus like nutrition, environment and inclusion which are our primary focus areas.

AR: Mhm

N1: We had a project last year with toddlers and outdoor life, it started last year…and…it is not a project anymore it is how we work with the toddlers now. The two-year-olds have fieldtrips three times a week. One-year-olds have one time a week and upstairs in the older children´s base they have four times a week. And they have longer trips than the two-year-olds. The one-year-olds have the shortest trip. (…) They should be able to do things themselves and (…) children shall be treated with respect and acknowledgment. That is really important for the institution. (…) Equal respect!

N2: We have nature as our focus area, which is a huge value. We wish to teach children to enjoy outdoor life regardless of the weather, we wish to give them [children] challenges and learning. (…) One of our biggest task, especially for the small children is for them to feel mastery. To become independent.

Later in the interview, N1 stated that they often brought indoor activities such as painting into the forest and emphasised that it was possible to do all indoor activity outside; mixing new and old cultural processes. Both participants expressed further that it was good for the children to be outside and spend time in nature:

AR: What is important to you in your line of work?

N2: It is in our plans and our wishes to the children, especially perhaps... [I] think a lot about our prestigious society and eh..how we [people] should be like, what to wear, much stress. You find peace; you find a lot in nature that children nowadays might be missing in their everyday life.

N2 wanted the children to use nature as a recreational place, and enjoy what nature has to offer. It appeared that nature as a place for restitution was essential to N2 since N2 spoke about this topic several times throughout the interview. Early in the interview, N2 explained to me that camping and outdoor life had been a part of N2's childhood. Although N2's childhood alone is not responsible for N2's present thoughts, a practitioners experiences, values, and childhood will also influence the children (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012).

The profile´s use of nature is one of their defining characteristics, as N2 put it: *"we should not just take a walk"*. N2´s statement referred to two objects; nature functioned as a recreational place and as a place for learning. For example, they brought back pinecones, sticks, stones, and moss to use in their art projects. They picked berries, mushrooms, learned to value animals and the fauna, and explored the forest either on skis or by foot. Through these activities, the profile reproduces traditional Norwegian cultural values of loving nature, and the popular image of a good and proper Norwegian childhood (Borge et al., 2003). On the other hand, they created musical instruments from natural materials, had nature obstacle-races, learned about the environment and sustainable development, and connected the other disciplines of the Framework Plan to nature.

As was mentioned by the participants on the last page, the concept of independence or mastery is an essential value for this profile. Both participants explained that the profile encouraged all children to act on their own, to use their abilities and to learn new competencies. For example, during a dressing situation in the cloakroom adults should only lend a hand to help the toddlers, not dress them. I had asked N1 if independence was important to the profile, N1 explained that it was essential that the children were able to try for themselves:

N1: It is about letting go of control, let the children try for themselves. Instead of rushing to either get outside or do something ells, we think pedagogy throughout the day.

N2 explained why the concept of independence was essential, when I asked about their perspectives on children:

N2: We [adults] shall facilitate for independence. It is especially important in a nature profile to become independent and master it. To be able to take care of your belongings such as clothes, what to bring with us in our bag packs, and take care of our skis.

Separating the children into age groups was another way for this profile to facilitate for children to act on their own. By dividing the children into age groups, N1 said the purpose was to prepare the children for longer and longer field trips by beginning with an exploration of the kindergarten's outdoor area; the field trip should not be longer than the children could

walk by themselves and with their bag packs. Also, N1 had created a daily overview for the children regarding what kind of weather it was outside, where the field trip destination was, and what they needed to wear for their field trip; with the intention of creating an emotionally safe and stable environment for the children.

Comparing the sports and the nature profile, an indication of reproduction of Norwegian cultural values of outdoor life and love for nature is present in both. In the literature, it is argued that nature institutions reproduce Norwegian cultural values and nourishes the popular image of a good and proper childhood by emphasising outdoor life (Borge et al., 2003; Nilsen, 2008). The sports profile´s use of nature where children learn how to plant and grow food and flowers, and their field trips where physical play and environment are valued, support the argument. Findings by Fjørtoft (2004) show that children who played in natural landscapes such as a forest enhanced their motor development as opposed to children who played on the kindergarten playground.

The nature profile in this study has long and many field trips throughout the week, which means that the children spend a considerable amount of their time outside in nature[44]. Through this time spent in natural grounds, the children will thus enhance their motor development and acquire values connected to Norwegian culture such as skiing, hiking or picking berries. The children in the sports profile have an organised plan for developing their motor skills and learning about Norwegian culture through their field trips and nature lessons such as planting seeds. The argument is thus that the nature and sports profile´s children have many of the same learning outcomes, and they both reproduce Norwegian culture values and the thought of a good and proper childhood. However, the sports profile putting a modern twist on these thoughts by organising the learning outcomes as opposed to the nature profile where it happens by spending time in nature. In sum, the two curricula's thus offer the children considerable similar aspects to their childhoods.

In Lysklett and Berger´s (2017) article, the nature profile differed from other profiles regarding organising their children into smaller groups, this was something that the nature, Reggio Emilia, music, and sports profile did in this study. Further on, Lysklett and Berger

[44] As the term nature might refer to everything that is not inside, it is essential to define it. To me nature is understood as the forest or places which have not been cultivated by humans.

(2017) emphasise that nature kindergartens had rules built on mutual trusts with the children. Regarding this thesis, it was only the sports profile who mentioned anything about mutual trust, such as the school children could play on the sports field without adult supervision. Since the nature profile had several days designated for field trips, while the other profiles had one day for field-trips, my findings correspond with Lysklett and Berger´s (2017) findings concerning how much time their participating care centres spent in nature and on their reference areas.

5.7 The culture profile´s curricula

Talking about their profile C began to define their perception of the culture concept. C explained that to them the term referred to their local community and surroundings such as nearby places and the forest; Norwegian culture such as our holidays, traditions, and especially old Norwegian traditions about farming and food-making; the children and their families´ cultures, and that it exists diverse cultures in the world. Since there are an enormous amount of diverse cultures in the world, the centre had adopted a child from the global south, which all the children often corresponded with by sending drawings and letters. The culture profile is organised with bases, and with specialised rooms (Kjørholt & Seland, 2012) which every base shared. Both bases had separated their children into smaller groups, I visited the school children's group who had their own place on the institution's premises, which was a small wooden hut.

AR: What is the most important to you regarding the kindergarten's profile?

C: We have a culture profile and this little outdoor-group which is our nature unit. We are a base kindergarten with this little group for our school children, which I feel it a really important part of it. [What I mean is that] the children get to be...after being inside with all the other children we pull back and do things by ourselves. I am that person who really enjoy this [nature and outdoor life] and sees a lot of great learning potential for the children in it.

Based on the excerpt above it seems like the school children had the nature part reserved for them like it is a reward or a special treat for the older children. In hindsight, I wish I had asked about this since it might have contributed to valuable information about the profile and contributed to understanding their children´s social position. Nevertheless, C emphasised that

when they were in the forest, the children learned about nature, the fauna, animals, developed their motor skills, and how to behave in nature. C gave an example, where the children, divided into three groups decided between being either birds, insects or Norwegian forest animals. From these categories, they had to figure out how the animals moved, communicated, and acted before putting on a show for the others. Hence, this leads me to believe the profile reproduce Norwegian cultural traditions (Borge et al., 2003; Nilsen, 2008) on several levels. Although nature was a personal interest to C, their primary objective was to be there for the children:

AR: Can you tell me a bit about your profile?

C: We have, as you can see, glowing, creating, and present. It is our goal to be with the children all the time; they shall get the best possible experience they can have while they are here, it is our biggest objective. I see a lot of great learning potential in nature and I wished that children had more outdoor life at school. Because you can learn academic subjects in nature if you want, but we [in the kindergarten] shall not teach them how to read and write and all that. But we can teach them a lot of other things, like about nature and motor skills.

There appear to be some ambiguities in C's above reflections about academic learning. During our talk about their schedule, C pointed out that during circle time they taught the children how to count and to create patterns with their hands, which are mathematical skills. Also, they utilised the pedagogical tool of "*writing dance"*[45] which is a combination of movement and writing aimed towards learning to write. On the one hand, C's statement separates from the lifelong learning discourse where academic skills and subjects have become more present (Seland, 2009). On the other hand, the ambiguities between the statements might indicate that the lifelong learning discourse has infiltrated the curriculum to a point where it is difficult not to let it influence the content. Turning now to the concepts of *"glowing, creating, and present"* which C spoke about in the excerpt above. The terms referred to the practitioners' behaviour towards the children. C explained that the children should *"feel"* the presences of the adults, which was essential in their line of work regarding how the profile perceived children:

[45] Writing dance is my translation of "skrivedans". This news article can provide some knowledge https://www.nrk.no/ho/skrivedans-gir-god-handskrift-1.7850281

AR: Could you describe your profile's view on children?

C: I believe that children shall be taken seriously, they shall be respected in the same way as we respect adults, so we shall respect what the children stand for and try to understand them. (…) Every child is equally important, a child who is open has the same value as a child who is not. (…) include every child!

As mentioned earlier in the introduction of the culture profile, C broadly defined the concept culture. The profile created culture groups to ensure and promote the institution's culture. The practitioners assigned themselves to a group which they were passionate about, in such ways the groups had enthusiastic adults which created the content for the children. The groups are art and craft, literature, drama, music, and movement. The themes have significant resemblances to the seven disciplines of the Framework Plan. In contrast to the music profile, the culture groups occurred regularly throughout the year without a strict schedule. C explained that some of the groups happen spontaneously during the week as in the case of the music or literature group, while the other groups such as art and craft, drama, and the movement group demanded more planning. The spontaneous approach shows that it is possible to incorporate the Framework Plan in an organised way without rendering the risk of overshadowing children's participation.

Regarding space, the Montessori environment and the culture unit´s environment were similar in many areas. Due to the school children´s small place, the designers had incorporated flexible solutions to the architectural layout. The shelves functioned as a bench and as a stool for the children to reach the wall anchored shelves. Likewise, to the Montessori profile, all the toys and objects were within the children's reach, and a water tank was available for drinks and washing. The profile's curricula for the school children shows how ideological thoughts are present in the environment (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005) and influences children to act on their agency and to contribute to the construction of the content in their everyday life. For example the adults' reflections have invested meaning into the children's place with their practice of child controlled projects (Clark, 2013; Dahlberg & Moss, 2005), which is further discussed in chapter 6.

5.8 Summary

This chapter, has described and discussed the profiles' curricula and showed their defining characteristics. Overall, from the interviews, it seems as the curricula influence children differently. The Montessori curricula form an independent and academic self, while the Steiner profile nurtures the individual non-academic child. Also, the children who attends a Steiner institution are to a certain degree cultural bearers of Norwegian traditions and culture (Borge et al., 2003; Nilsen, 2008). The Reggio Emilia shape their children into a multi-communicative identity. The music curricula's focus moulds them into a structured and academic being, while the sports and nature profile produce children who can reproduce Norwegian cultural heritage, who act on their own and has great motor development. Lastly, the culture profile constructs an open agent who also possesses considerable knowledge regarding Norwegian culture. Hence, the children are shaped into various identities based on the curricula's content (James et al., 1998).

On the other hand, due to agency, children cannot be passively constructed into these identities (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012; Gulløv & Højlund, 2005; James et al., 1998). The empirical findings from this study cannot account how agency influence the identities shaped by the curricula; further work is required to establish this. The next chapter, therefore, moves on to present and discuss children's social position and opportunities for agency.

6. Curricula's potential for children's agency

The previous chapter presented and discussed some of the profiles´ defining characteristics viewed from the analytical concept of curricula. This chapter will explore the second research question, "in what ways do the profiles´ curricula position children as social beings and shape children´s opportunities for agency?". The following discussion builds upon the previous empirical chapter and the analytical concept of curricula, while answering the second research question by using the analytical concept of opportunities for agency. In such, the curricula function as a structure that either give or limit children opportunities for exercising their agency, and thus, reveal knowledge about their social position.

6.1 The Montessori children's social position and opportunities for agency [46]

As described in 5.1 independence is an esteemed value to this profile, where the concept refers to children who have abilities to act on their own. To an extent, it is possible that the adults wants to liberate the children from adult power by becoming independent of the practitioners (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). However, due to M1's following statement and the participants statements from 5.1 my interpretations on their social status is not related to liberation.

AR: Can you tell me what is essential in your line of work?

M1: The children are the most important. We [adults] are always conscious about how we affect and what we do to make sure that the children get to develop in the best possible way, by putting our adult needs second and the children's needs first.

To *"put the adults´ needs second and the children´s needs first"* meant that the adult had to be aware of its behaviour. For example, if the adults ran around the children would do so as well, thus the adults had to walk slowly. Although such example shows that there is a code of conduct regarding behaviour, which have been founded by adults. The facilitated environment with child sized furniture show that the children are the most important, and children´s different citizenship status is present with their various objects which fosters skills the children need later in life. A difference centred citizenship is a status where children are

[46] The Montessori children is another way to refer to the children who attends a Montessori childcare centre and is a term the chapter will use to refer to the children who attends the specific profiled kindergartens.

acknowledge as type of citizens without comparison to adults, where they contribute to society without the responsibility for how the world has become (Moosa-Mitha, 2005).

Moreover, Gulløv and Højlund (2005) points out the placings of the institutions artefacts have implications for children´s status. In the Montessori environment none of the children are dependent on adults or other children to reach objects, this expose an ideological thought of children experiencing the same social position. The empirical findings of Brattrud and colleagues (2012) indicate that some artefacts like books are often not placed low enough for toddlers to reach. However, they are visible which reveals a notion of control. By contrast, such notion of control is not present in the Montessori environment. From Lee´s (2001) perspective of agency, the Montessori profile show how they have built an environment where children can do social actions and gain abilities which they can utilise to do agency later in life. On the other hand, questions to ask is when this profile expect children to act independently what implications it might have for helpfulness, and the possibility for older children to assist the younger children with reaching a taller shelf to practise helpfulness.

As explained in 5.1, the children have the liberty to choose which materials to play with. On the other hand, it is nonetheless the practitioners who decide which artefacts that are available, which might provide the children with fewer opportunities for agency. Consequently, this show how the profile and the practitioners control the children's exercise of agency (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005), especially since a part of the practitioners' role is to show the children how an artefact function before the child can work with it. On the other hand, from Lee´s (2001) perspective people are inter-dependent on each other, learning and abilities to do agency has to come from a somewhere. Although the children have the freedom to choose what to learn and what to work with, they can only choose between what practitioners considers as correct artefacts. At the same time, M1 emphasised that as soon as the adults had shown the child how to work with the material it was up to the child how to play with it further. In that case, the children have a different way to exercise their agency by exploring the object.

From the previous section it can be seen that agency moves, at one point the child might have fewer opportunities and in the next moment the opportunities for agency might arise (Robson et al., 2007). During our talk about their daily routine M1 mentioned that if a child looked tired or fatigued they would help them a bit more than usual, for example in the cloak-room.

M2 also mentioned that in the toddlers' unit, the children often needed an adult to sit beside them while the children explored and worked with the artefacts. Indicating that they can also be vulnerable and dependent, which show that the discourse on the vulnerable and developing child is not forgotten (Kjørholt & Tingstad, 2007). When the participants listen to the children´s body languages in such ways, they acknowledge children´s agency (Robson et al., 2007), and provide a space were children can exercise their agency in many forms. Similarly, in our conversation, R1 also emphasised what M1 points out, which is discuss further in part 6.3.

6.2 The Steiner children's social position and opportunities for agency

Part 5.2 described the Steiner profile´s overall goal of children´s free-play, where the participant perceived it as imaginary or role play. From Kjørholt´s (2008) perspective, children who are connected to play and peer culture (Corsaro, 2009) gain a different form of citizenship than the adults, which the empirical findings support by S´s emphasise on children´s space to do free-play. Also, the profile´s focus on children´s individuality does not just allow them to be different from each other, the practitioners also encourage them to be different from adults, which I interpret as being recognised as having a different-centred citizenship status (Moosa-Mitha, 2005).

In 5.2 the Steiner profile's overall objectives were presented, some of these are for children to develop their fantasy and take part in free-play. Thus, spending time outside in nature and playing with ductile artefacts was essential according to S. In contrast to Montessori where the toys have one specific purpose, it is the children's fantasy which limits the materials purposes and not the adult power. Also, the unit's open space was without restrictions on where the children could play. Thus, it opens opportunities for exercising agency. Where artefacts are placed and what is available have implications on children's social status (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005) such implications might be about less agency if artefacts are not within the child's reach. Some of the materials such as various arts and crafts objects where hidden away in a tall cabinet with locked wooden doors, and the children had to ask permission to play with those objects. Kjørholt and Tingstad (2007) and Seland (2009) argues for adults who lock rooms as exercising control and regulation over children's choices. In this case, it is not a room, it is a cabinet which limit children´s options.

By taking a deeper look at the profile's daily organisation, an interpretation of fewer opportunities for agency is possible to detect. Although the children are allowed to say no to an activity, the profile have a lot of predetermined adult-run activities. These are the circle time, the day's designated activity, language and play groups, the story time after lunch, and the preparations for the seasonal parties. Such activities where children have modest or no impute offers little to none opportunity for agency (Robson et al., 2007). On the other hand, during circle time S emphasised it was important they talk about what the children wanted to engage in regardless of the topic, and that all children had the opportunity to speak. Providing a space where any topic is allowed, and every person has time to speak, offer children space for agency which enhances their abilities to speak in a crowd.

On Lee´s (2001) line of thought, it is possible that all the adult-run activities give children a network to exercise agency in the future. On the other hand, children live in "the here and now" which is why pedagogues cannot just prepare them for the future, having the opportunity to say no allow the children to be spontaneous and focus on "the here and now".

6.3 The Reggio Emilia children's social position and opportunities for agency

Part 5.3 explained how the toddlers´ base had a less organised schedule than the older children´s base, indicating that the bases allows for different play forms. It appears as if the toddlers have more time for self-determined play, which means they have more control over their actions which they can share with their peers (Corsaro, 2009). If so, it might indicate that the curricula places ambiguous values about the children, such as the older once needs more structure since they are about to enter school. Thus, the institution offers children of different ages diverse social positions.

The Reggio Emilia participants did not allow children to be in a room by themselves, with their statement they expressed a notion of control and regulation. Through these controlling structures they position the children within a discourse where the child needs protection (Kjørholt & Tingstad, 2007). While through other statements R1 and R2 present a competent child, who has multiple opportunities do act on their own, the following sections will account for this.

R1 stated that within the base for the older children the practitioners should not *"serve"* the children and that everyone had *"responsibility for themselves"*. The former concept of not *"serving"* the children connects to children helping each other, being inter-dependent (Lee, 2001), and for adults to not disservice children. R1 explained that during the institution´s collective field trip day an older and a younger child would walk beside each other; during meal time the children help each other with pouring drinks or prepare sandwiches; in the cloak room and other situations such as putting on blue plastic shoe covers. R1 further explained being *"served"* by adults also indicated that it was the child's responsibility to ask for help. For example, in the cloak room the children should be able to dress themselves, and the practitioners should not help unless the child asked or if they saw that the child were tiered or fatigue. As R1 said *"we sit with our hands in our lap"*.

AR: Could you describe your view on children?

R2: Every child brings with them their own experiences and resources into the care centre. They have their own personalities and they have a lot to contribute to. They are social and capable of being social. (…) I do not want to underestimate them. But, and this counts for the big children as well, children should be allowed to be vulnerable and new to the world too.

What R2 describes corresponds with Sandvik (2006), who explains that participation relates to active adults observing which objects or activities catches the children's interests. R2´s cautiousness and R1 acknowledging children´s embodied motions in the cloakroom, show their acknowledgment towards children´s diverse forms of agency. R1's abovementioned elaboration of the children's responsibilities also suggests that they do not have responsibilities they are not able to handle (Eide & Winger, 2006).

Providing children with responsibilities increases their abilities to think and act, and it opens a space where the child can exercise agency. However, handing them responsibilities in one area positioning them as autonomous beings, and placing them in need of protection in other areas might seem ambivalent towards the child's social position. Gulløv (2003) argues that when adults position children in such ways the children do not have a fixed social role in society. On the other hand, Kjørholt (2008) argues for a different citizenship related to children´s position in cases where they are simultaneously both autonomous and dependent. A question then might be if it is the children's actions or the adult's assumptions which decides

their position. For example, there must be adult supervision in every room, meaning the children are not competent enough to be alone, while the practitioners have decided they are competent enough to help each other and ask for help when it is necessary.

With respect to the older children's age groups, R1 explained that they utilised the pedagogical tool of children´s meetings:

R1: We have children's meetings three to four times a week with the different groups, where the children are responsible for the content. For example, on Mondays which is a [collective] field-trip day, they participate by deciding where to go.

AR: mhm

R1: But it might be that we [adults] have decided on certain places the children can choose between, because we have a lot of destinations. If we do not do it that way..we know there are a few places which are particular popular and it is important to have some variations and inspiration.

Similarly, N2 also utilised the children´s meetings and had the same opinion as R1 has in the excerpt. Seland (2009) advocate that the children´s meetings become problematic if practitioners present the tool as for how the institution does participation if children are only able to choose between options. R1 and N2 said that there were times the children chose between the adults´ prechosen options, and at the same time R1 states that the children *"are responsible for the content"*. The ambiguous answer and the expression of control offer an interpretation where the adults believe it is essential for the practitioners to give children variations and varied activities. In such case they express the lifelong learning discourse (Seland, 2009), where versatile, varied destinations and activities are considered appropriate for their lifelong learning. By letting the children participate in a decision-making process which already took place when the adults picked out the destinations, contains individualistic choice which might give the children a false experience of a democratic process (Bae, 2009). Participation based on strict frames offer children little opportunities for agency. However, providing them with varied experiences increases their abilities and competences, and in such it offers the children fuel for their future use of agency (Lee, 2001). Nevertheless, I did not observe the children´s meeting or asked follow-up questions to R1 and N2, there it is difficult to reflect further on this particular meeting regarding children's influence.

Chapter 5 discussed how R1 and R2 restricted children's use of space and how the older children have other opportunities for play than the younger children. Regardless of closing of places is a matter of control or a reflection of society limiting use of space is to provide them with fewer opportunities for agency as opposed to have no restrictions on where to play (Robson et al., 2007). This is an example of agency as dynamic dependent on the situation. On the other hand, although it might inhibit the exercise of agency in that moment, children can nonetheless take the opportunity to restrict the power of the closed room by playing there anyways (Seland, 2009). Through these actions children take control and transform it to an action of participation (Grindheim, 2013).

6.4 The music children's social position and opportunities for agency

In 5.4 the profile's "pedagogical concept" was presented and discussed with their goal of children "becoming the best version of themselves", the follow sections will connect that discussion to children's social position. The Framework Plan was touched upon during the interviews and the following excerpts show how predetermined outcomes are valued (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005):

MU2: I believe that every childcare institution needs various personnel, because you lose something if you don't have it. The Framework Plan doesn't just involve around outdoor life or music. It involves everything, so you must…in a way every institution must use everything anyways.

AR: Yah

MU2: It is what the Framework Plan says, which is good. Because if it didn't [state all of those things] some children would have entered school being excellent in sports and perhaps you would have recognised which childcare institution the children came from. (…) That would have been wrong because as long as it is possible we are to send the children to school with a common foundation.

In the literature, it is argued that the process children go through to develop as human beings are influenced by society´s thoughts and ideas about what a child is, and the practitioners' thoughts, values, and education (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012). It is my concern that teaching all children the same knowledge and emphasise the same amount of knowledge, would take away their individuality and give the children the same social position of being equally good

adhering to the Norwegian "*janteloven"*[47]. If children shall "become the best version of themselves", there must be a difference in their knowledge level due to their interest and abilities. On the other hand, I did not explore this further and thus the concern is based on previous personal experience with children.

By contrast, from my question on their perspectives on children MU1's answer contradicts MU2's above excerpt:

MU1: When the child enters the unit, it should know that we [adults] are very happy that it came today and that it only exists one of every child. It is about being focused on, to know that we miss you when you are gone, and we are excited to see you again. There is only one of each child and you have your own spot in the group. That is our view of the child. (…) We are different, but we have the same value.

The excerpt shows MU1´s acknowledgment towards children´s unique social position within the kindergarten, while they are a part of the child group they are also an individual being, and this shows how children´s differences are valued (Nissen et al., 2015). Nevertheless, their slogan of "becoming a best version of themselves" is a large objective and it contains some undefined and philosophical aspects this study has not been able to go further into.

As was mentioned in 5.4 there is a room assigned to each theme, the toddler's unit has high and low chairs and tables with plenty of space for physical play, and the older children's unit has play zones with restrictions regarding behaviour and play. Through the creation of play zones, the practitioners have included what they consider appropriate objects and materials to play with and excluded others. For example, by restricting cars or paper aeroplanes to the hallway with other noisy and "disturbing" games. MU2 explained that within the unit children should be able to concentrate while they were playing since the included activities demanded more focus as is the case with colouring, reading, building, or playing board games. However, it has implications for children's social position (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012) when the adults give children's play different values and offer the appropriate activities a larger space than the activities which might seem inappropriate. Although a hallway might be larger than a unit, the majority of activities which the children can choose between is designed to be inside the unit.

[47] "Janteloven" is a Norwegian norm where you should not be superior to others or stand out in any way.

The restrictions to space correspond with Nordtømme's (2016) findings where the rooms and its artefacts had implications on children's plays by controlling what was considered appropriate behaviour. The institution's themed room also control the children's behaviour with their tall shelves with locked doors which means the materials require an adult to be present (Nordtømme, 2016), and designated activities show how play has become a tool for learning (Seland, 2009).

As was mentioned earlier on the previous page, this profile has a focus on children as predetermined outcomes. An implication with this focus is the children's opportunities for agency. To expand the skill it is necessary to enhance our activities, competencies, and capacities (Robson et al., 2007). Although adult's culture influence peer culture (Corsaro, 2009), it should not be the primary inspiration; which might be a consequence to participation within a framework, if this is the main tool to do participation. Space and the age groups also restrict children's opportunities for agency (Robson et al., 2007). Regarding the age groups, it might be good for children to befriend people of the same age before they enter school, primarily if they are enrolling in the same school. On another note, the music kindergarten is a large institution with a number of children, which might be a feature to their high emphasise on structure (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012).

The organisation of space offer a framework for children's social actions, and simultaneously it is these actions which shapes the space (James & James, 2004), as is the case with the music profile. The themed rooms offer little opportunities for agency by having prepared adult run activities. The play zones have preassigned specific games and the place has limitations on what is considering appropriate to play with, this can have implications on the children's peer culture and communication if the children would like to share the situation with someone who is not in the same space as them.

6.5 The sports children's social position and opportunities for agency

Part 5.5 presented briefly the units´ architectural layout, each unit had one large open space and a small closed off room. SP1 from the toddlers' unit said that they only used the room for specific occasions as in cases of the heartprogram or small play groups. On the other hand, SP2 stated that in their unit this small space functioned as a place the children could play without adult supervision; providing the children with trust and responsibilities. Right next to

the institution there is a football field which the adults allowed the children play on without supervision. SP2 had made a deal with the children to always ask first and let an adult know if someone broke their rule about playing nicely with each other. Although, it was possible to keep an eye on the football field from the centres outdoor area, the children´s freedom might be interpreted as what Nilsen´s (2012) participants called "freedom with responsibility (p. 213)". Allowing children to step outside of the institutions fence and play on public accessible places provide children with an unusual experience of the institution and thus offer what Nilsen (2012) characterises as a different kindergarten childhood.

Providing the children with responsibilities, and opportunities to be without adult supervision offer them a different social position; a position where the child is not understood as dependent or in need of adult control. The sports profile´s centre thus increase participation and independence (Kjørholt & Tingstad, 2007). However, SP2 emphasised that the school children were the ones that were given the trust of leaving the institutions outdoor area, which means that the older children have more authority than the younger children (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005).

In the toddlers´ unit, the artefacts such as books, paper, and colour pencils were placed on a high shelf, I asked SP1 the reason behind such placings, and SP1 answered "*I want control";* expressing a notion of control and regulations. This corresponds with Brattrud and colleagues' (2012) empirical findings where materials were out of reach for the toddlers . The objects placed above the children thus demand participation from adults, this corresponds with Nordtømme´s (2016) empirical findings where she interprets it as disciplining attitude towards the children by restricting access to certain materials. On the other hand, the toddlers have considerable floor space which according to Nordtømme´s (2016) observations provide them with more opportunities to play. The unit is filled with various materials for physical play, such materials with strict rules might offer children different and unexpected ways to participate in as was the case with Grindheim´s (2013) observations where children did so in rooms with fewer strict rules. In turn, this offer the toddlers many opportunities for agency. As opposed to the older children´s unit where tables, chairs, and shelves take up their floor space.

As was mentioned in 5.5 SP2 waited to design the older children´s unit until the kindergarten year had begun:

AR: Could you tell me about your methods for promoting children´s voices?

SP2: We did not decorate the unit, until we knew what kind of interests the children had. Observed a little and bought some equipment's and materials. [Then] decorated the room and that is something you do during [the years] as well. Change for the children, because the children change their interests. Then we [adults] can talk to them [children] and ask them.

The excerpt is an example of how children and adult´s construct their environment. Where SP2 utilises a form of listening pedagogics (Dahlberg & Moss, 2005); listen is a metaphor for using all of our senses to understand the other and take the children´s interest seriously (Rinaldi, 2009b) by decorating the room accordingly. In my view this shows how the adults do not only respect children, it is a way for children´s agency to be visible. Through the children´s interests and actions the room structures are influenced by them (James et al., 1998). Another opportunity for agency became visible in SP1´s statement regarding mealtime:

AR: What is most important to you in your line of work?

SP1: I work with the young children, so I focus a lot on them. It is a lot of practise in eating by themselves, that they get to use cutlery and they can use the knife if they want to. (…) They get some butter and then they can spread it out on the bread by themselves. If the butter is only spread to a small area and the child is happy with that, that is fine. If they want help to spread out the butter, of course we assist, but they express that themselves.

AR: So, you do not interfere the children by telling them where the butter should be?

SP1: No, if the child is satisfied that is okay.

An interpretation of SP1´s statement is that interfering without the child´s consent was an act of control and viewed as disrespectful towards the child. During these activities, the children are encouraged to exercise public agency (Robson et al., 2007) in an environment where the adults let go of control and power. SP1´s statement shows how they want the toddlers to use their abilities to act on their own, and how they believe that having opportunities to enhance and learn new competencies are essential for young children.

6.6 The nature children's social position and opportunities for agency

Part 5.6 touched upon the nature profile´s use of age groups as means to facilitate for children to use their abilities, which is necessary to have in the older children´s base where there are longer and many field trip days. On that note, the toddlers had more floor space since their base were large, which might be connected to the older children´s field trip days.

N1 stated that the one-year-olds had the shortest walks and that they carried their own bag packs, from these actions the children gain a social position where the adult acknowledges child´s competencies. N1 also mentioned that if the children stopped and somehow expressed that this was a place they wanted to explore, the adults would listen to them and either follow up their explorations or it would become the camp for the day. From Nilsen´s (2012) perspective N1 is depicting a participating child, where the practitioners listen and observers what the children are drawn towards (Sandvik, 2006). On the other side, such facilitation of a field trip allows the children to have a position as the dependent child; in need of adult protection. Adults who account for the interrelationship between the dependent and the participation discourse, implies an understanding of a different citizenship status for toddlers (Kjørholt, 2008).

As was explained earlier in 5.6 one line of thought is that the nature profile reproduces traditional Norwegian cultural values through practising specific activities such as skiing and picking berries and as a place for recreation (Borge et al., 2003). On the other hand, nature was also a place for various learning activities. For example, gaining knowledge about the environment, creating musical instruments, and connecting the other disciplines of the Framework Plan to their field trips. Through these organised and adult run activities, the practitioners control and regulate the children, and the child becomes a learning subject where the practitioners utilise a place for learning which it is commonly not used as such (Nilsen, 2012). The social position of a learning subject might function as a contrast to the traditional Norwegian childhood where self-management and explorations of outdoor life are considered critical values (Gullestad, 1997). However, further research is necessary to make concluding remarks.

The pedagogical tool of the "children´s meeting" was how the children contributed to the decision of the field trip destination, part 6.3 elaborated on this since the nature participant

had the same statements as the Reggio Emilia participants. N2 emphasised that sometimes the adults had decided where they should go, or the children choose between preassigned places. Through such contributions, the children gain the social position of a participating being (Nilsen, 2012), while it is within a framework created by adults, which offer little exercise of agency. Furthermore, N1 also had restrictions regarding where the toddlers could play. Like the Reggio Emilia profile, N1 explained that they also locked some of the rooms during the mornings and afternoons. The locked rooms are an example of how the institution´s architectural layout reveal how children are regulated and controlled when the intention was to increase their freedom and participation (Kjørholt & Tingstad, 2007).

6.7 The culture children's social position and opportunities for agency

The last part of 5.7 mentioned how the school children's environment encouraged them to act by themselves and as contributors to the content. One line of thought is that the school children's place functions as a preparatory stage before school. Although the hut is a part of the institution's space, it is the older children's place separated from the others; guiding the children's social status and behaviour (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005) to act differently than the children within the central space of the institution. Part 5.7 also touched upon ambiguities about C´s statement of academic knowledge or learning´s place within the institution. By utilising a program for writing, learning to count, and using the forest as a place to learn about animals and insects positions the child as a learning subject (Nilsen, 2012).

Part 5.7 presented some essential feature of the culture profile, one of these characteristics is the profile's perspectives on children. According to C, the children should be respected in the same way as adults, taken seriously, and included. Projects are an activity the profile endorse, other profiles in this study such as Reggio Emilia and music also mentioned the use of projects. However, C was the only participant who stated that the children controlled the projects. Therefore, I asked if their projects were child run:

C: It is what the children are interested in, not what we adults want them to be interested in. It is the children´s. Because they discover something or speculate about something, the children´s interests shall become small and large projects, it is how we work. (…) As I said, we work intensively with including everyone's interests in the projects. If a

child else out of the project, we should try to find something within the project that draws the child back in, think outside the box.

AR: Mhm

C: Yes, well, and you hear a lot when you talk with the children if we are doing a project. We ask each child questions, so they can further their perspectives and thoughts, then suddenly there is a new element we can use [in the project]. Yes, so that is a very fun way to work.

As seen earlier in this study, some participants emphasised participation within a framework. In the case of the culture profile, they found ways for their children to construct the institution's content and act as agents (Mayall, 2002) without depriving them of their agency. On the contrary, such understandings allow children control and the opportunity to share that control with the rest of the group, which is the cornerstone of peer culture (Corsaro, 2009). C exemplified further the importance of inclusion by bringing the shy or introverted children forward either in projects or in circle time. At the same time, C emphasised that it had to happen in a safe space, being aware of the possibility that the situation could go both ways. Robson and colleagues (2007) mentioned personal biography as a feature for agency, the ability to dare to speak up influence how children use their agency. When C stated that they bring forward the children who struggle to do it for themselves, I interpret it as acknowledging their need for support, care and thus enhancing their agency and opportunities to exercise agency. Opening up and providing a space where children can discover and speculate, where the their diverse interests become implemented into projects are to understand that children know their interests (Punch et al., 2007). In turn, this opens great opportunities for agency.

6.8 Summary

This chapter has presented and discussed how the curricula positions children as social beings and the ways in which children have opportunities to exercise agency. The children's social position appears to vary within and amongst the profiles, depending on the profiles' ideas of childhood and children, structure, artefacts, activities, and space (Gulløv & Højlund, 2005). Children´s position seems to vary within the profile in the cases of the Reggio Emilia, sports, and the nature profile. The Reggio Emilia children are both seen as dependent and autonomous, and the older children have more organised activities than the young ones. The sports profile gives the school children responsibilities on a different level than any of the other children have within and amongst the other profiles, and the nature profile expect their children to have longer field trips as they get older. Although the toddlers' work time in the Montessori profile were less strict than the older children's work time, both units had the same emphasise on organised activities. Also, this was the case for the music profile. Since the toddlers´ units were unable to participate in both the Steiner and culture profile, I cannot make a comparison between the two departments.

The children´s social position appears to vary amongst the profiles. The Montessori profile teaches them to become very independent and familiar with academic learning. The music children´s experience a position where they are fully prepared for school, and the sports profile offer responsibilities to their school children which none of the other profiles does. The culture profile´s use of the hut differs from the other profiles, and thus provide their children with a different social position. At the same time, several of the profiles can be linked to a difference centred citizenship (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). The Steiner profile who focus on play and peer culture, the Reggio Emilia profile´s understanding their children´s position of both dependent and autonomous (Kjørholt, 2008), and the nature profile who provides their toddlers with the same position as the Reggio Emilia children.

The Montessori´s space was the same for both units. Within the Reggio Emilia, music, sports, and nature profiles the toddler´s had more floor space than the older children, who had tables and chairs taking up their space. The culture profile had a designated building for their school children, which was small and had little floor space. Although the Steiner profile had plenty of floor space for their older children, as I mentioned above it is difficult to make a comparison. In summary, from Nordtømme´s (2016) perspective these findings indicate that

in several of the profiles their curricula imply a need for disciplining and control the older children´s behaviour and bodies by having more organised activities and little floor space.

Throughout the different activities described in this chapter, opportunities for exercising agency appears to be dynamic within the profiles (Robson et al., 2007). The themed rooms, participating within a framework, and the restrictions of space offer children little opportunities for agency. However, from Lee´s (2001) perspective such restrictions of what to learn and where to go can enhance specific abilities to exercise agency later in life. On the other hand, being able to exercise control over your interests and knowledge as is the case with being able to say no to activities, control over projects, and deciding what to learn about offer many opportunities to exercise agency.

The final chapter of this thesis will connect chapter five and six, and discuss some questions which emerged from the topic and empirical material by connecting them to this thesis.

7. Concluding remarks

This thesis has aimed to explore and develop a basic understanding of how early childhood education and care centres with a specific profile differ from each other. The empirical material and the theoretical perspective of social constructionism guided this exploration to focus on the curricula as a structure, and in which ways children have opportunities for agency and their positions as social beings. The concept of curricula includes here the profiles´ overall objectives, values, perspectives on children, space, time, and activities.

My motivation to research this topic arose from the fact that children were privileged to attend institutional childcare till today where parents have freedom of choice. In our modern society childcare institutions compete for consumers as the authorities have opened for a commercialisation of the kindergarten market[48]. Also, when the childcare field became a part of The Ministry of Education and Research, they increased the focus on learning and academic knowledge. Kindergartens with a specific profile can be understood as a variation to the traditional childcare centres. However, they offer alternative pedagogy and learning. There exists little research on the phenomenon of profiled institutions, and this study have provided a basic understanding.

Based on the empirical findings it was possible to identify some significant differences and similarities in terms of how the participants presented their profiles and what they thought were important in their line of work. From the characteristics it appears as if the differences are more present in their intentions as opposed to their actions, this might be considered a risk.

[48] https://www.aftenposten.no/okonomi/i/P3ya45/Eierne-i-barnehagekonsern-har-tatt-ut-nesten-1-mrd

7.1 Summary of key findings

7.1.1 Question 1: What are the profiles´ defining characteristics?

The findings demonstrate that each profile have some key defining characteristics which makes them distinct from each other. As the findings indicate that differences are more present in the profiles intentions, it is necessary to ask if it pose any risk. The Montessori profile has an extensive focus on cognitive and academic learning, while the Steiner profile focus on none-academic learning and free-play. The two approaches´ permeated pedagogical content and methods takes a distinct direction as opposed to the other profiles.

The Reggio Emilia is inspired by an experimental approach from Italy and has been shaped to fit the Norwegian childcare system. I anticipated this profile to be more different than the findings show, due to the fact that the participants did not emphasise children´s co-constructions. Instead they focused on the children´s "hundred languages", which is one aspect of the Reggio Emilia approach.

The other four profiles are characterised by their thematical focus, and thus their actions are very dependent on the staff´s qualifications and interests. Such as music with their extensive focus on the Framework Plan, the sports profile´s values of motion joy and nutrition joy. The nature profile´s focus on nature and the participant who wanted the children to experience the space as a place for recreation. Lastly, the culture profile´s focus on children co-constructing the content and culture.

When it comes to the participants´ rhetoric about participation and independence or mastery, there appears to be some ambiguities. The participants use the same words, which might be due to the Framework Plan. However, this thesis with its empirical material has demonstrated how these words seem to have various definitions and practices. As childcare institutions over the past few years have become publicly listed[49] and the leaders can earn millions[50], having defining characteristics appears to be necessary.

[49] https://www.aftenposten.no/okonomi/i/jP7n5o/Barnehager-med-ikke-okonomisk-formal-hadde-150-mill-i-overskudd-i-2016
[50] https://www.utdanningsnytt.no/nyheter/2016/september/styret-i-privat-barnehage-tok-ut-3-millioner-kroner-i-honorar/

On the other hand, how profiles present themselves and what goes on behind their walls might not correspond with their intentions. An example of this is the music centre where the participants rarely spoke about music opposed to other topics. Another example might be the sports profile where the adults do not focus on sports, their focus is on embodiment and outdoor life. As childcare institutions manage specific values which affects children (Kjørholt, 2010), how ground breaking their pedagogical offers to children are would be interesting to investigate further. Since people´s ideas about what goes on within and what kindergartens do, determines their content (Dahlberg et al., 1999).

By having various curriculums, the institutions´ social actions give children different playing, learning, and social experiences, which affects their lives and influence their childhood structure. Although an assorted childcare market might provide parents with the opportunity to be critical towards childcare institutions, too many differences can open large distinctions in social classes. According to the government, the ideological purpose of Norwegian kindergartens is to abolish social differences and offer equal opportunities for learning (St.meld. nr. 41 (2008-2009), 2009). When the offered pedagogical content varies due to some profiles being more pervaded than others, it might pose risks to social differences and the pedagogical standard the authorities seems to crave.

7.1.2 Question 2: In what ways do the profiles´ curricula position children as social beings and shape children´s opportunities for agency?

The empirical material shows how the children have various social positions. For example, the curricula appear to control the older children´s behaviour with several organised activities, creating places with more furniture and less space for physical activities inside. Through these controlling actions it is possible to detect a notion of preparing children for school. The school building has ideological thoughts, furniture, and little floor space for physical activities which regulates the children´s bodies and behaviour. Preparing children to function in society and become familiar with social codes is a part of the civilisation process (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012). However, focusing on what is to come might neglect relational participation and the exercise of agency in the presence. A childcare institution is place where multiple people shall function together, which presupposes that acceptable behaviour and routines are influenced by various organisational structures (Gilliam & Gulløv, 2012). In such, adult control and regulations is not equivalent to children´s lack of agency. By contrast, agency is always

present, while the possibilities to exercise it is constituted within a framework (Robson et al., 2007).

Children´s opportunities for agency seems to vary within and amongst the profiles, which connects to the participants´ previously mentioned rhetoric. The empirical findings show how some children have several opportunities to exercise their agency. While others have adult-run activities. On one hand, individualistic approach to participation gives children little opportunities for agency in "the here and now". On the other hand, it might offer them a necessary foundation to exercise agency later in life (Lee, 2001). Although children are to become adults at some point in their lives, since they live in "the here and now" offering them little space for agency has implications concerning their rights, almost adhering to a notion of becomings instead of focusing on being both. Hence, a concern towards some of the profiles´ overall objectives and values such as "mastering life" and "becoming the best version of themselves" emerges. Does this rhetoric have implications for children and childhood or is it used as a marketing strategy, such questions needs further research to be answered.

7.2 Final statement

When profiled institutions offer various possibilities for agency and social positions both amongst and within the profiles, authorities must consider what implications it has for childhood. Taken together, the empirical findings suggest that there exist some ambiguous thoughts about the institutions´ intentions and realisation. Although there has been an extensive amount of research conducted on kindergartens with great emphasis on quality (Meld. St. 19 (2015-2016), 2016). A clarification concerning the institution's intentions in a commercialised society might be necessary before discussing the quality. On the other hand, it is not necessarily a negative thought that the profiles´ have various curriculums. A valid concern might be what a standardised pedagogical offer does to childhood and society.

On concluding thoughts, my empirical material demonstrates that further research applying an ethnographic methodology presumably will reveal several differences between profiles´ intentions and realisations.

7.3 Further recommendations

There are many ways to conduct research within kindergartens, and this study has the methodological perspective of a structural approach to childhood. Looking at how social structures affect children and childhood indirectly, Qvortrup (2009) states that structural approach is useful when we expect it to produce insights which other perspectives cannot produce. Since some of the kindergartens were large, this thesis offers a glimpse into their lived worlds. The empirical findings in this study provide a new understanding to the field of Norwegian childcare.

In a further study, it would be interesting to research profiles based on children's perspective. To investigate the children's perspective would provide an in-depth exploration of how they do their social position, and how their social position differentiate between the profiles and how they exercise their agency. Such research could be done with the profiles from this study or with other profiles since there exist approximately 14 profiles in Norway. Secondly, by applying an ethnographic methodology, it is possible to gain more in-depth knowledge about the features and characteristics of the profiles. By applying a longitudinal ethnographic study, it would have been interesting to follow a few children from different profiled kindergartens into their first years (or longer) of primary school, to gain an in-depth understanding of how profiled institutions affect childhood.

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Appendix 1: Invitations

Undersøkelse av barnehager med ulike pedagogiske profiler – en masterstudie i Childhood Studies ved Norsk Senter for Barneforskning, NTNU

I forbindelse med min masteroppgave hvor jeg skal se nærmere på barnehager med ulike pedagogiske profiler, trenger jeg barnehager der jeg kan innhente data om dette fenomenet, hvordan det tenkes og praktiseres omkring den profilerte målsettingen. Datainnsamlingen vil forgå høst semesteret 2017 etter nærmere avtale. Jeg håper du vil hjelpe med meg dette.

10-14 pedagogiske ledere vil bli intervjuet, intervjuet er ventet å ta ca. 1 time og vil forgå i barnehagen. Intervjuet er todelt, del 1 vil bestå av en omvisning inne på avdelingen hvor du viser og forteller om bruken av rommet. Del 2 består av et vanlig intervju. Intervjuet vil bli tatt opp på båndopptaker som blir lagret på et trygt sted.

Jeg trenger ingen konfidensiell informasjon fra deg og ingen informasjon som kan knytte det du sier opp mot deg vil bli skrevet ned. Jeg er den eneste som vet at det er du som har sagt det du sier og navnet ditt blir byttet ut med en kode, for eksempel: *interviewee 1.*

Dine perspektiver, meninger og tanker er verdifull informasjon for meg, fordi de kan bidra til økt forståelse av Rammeplanen og ulike pedagogisk profiler. I tillegg vil de bidra til en bedre forståelse av hvordan de utvalgte barnehagene jobber med sin profil og hvordan utviklingen av barnehager i Norge har forandret seg med årene. Skulle du av en eller annen grunn ønske å trekke deg fra studien kan du trekke deg når som helst, du trenger ikke begrunne hvorfor og informasjonen du har gitt meg vil ikke bli brukt i oppgaven.

Kontakt Anette Ringen Rosenberg om du ønsker mer informasjon, deltagelse eller ikke ønsker å delta.
TLF: 99 42 65 47 E-POST: anetterr@stud.ntnu.no

Takk for at du leste ☺

Appendix 2: Interview guide

Introduksjon:

- Først vil jeg takke deg for at du tok deg tid til intervjuet, det setter jeg stor pris på.

- Som du tidligere har blitt informert om handler masteroppgaven min om barnehagers pedagogiske profiler. Ved å jobbe i denne barnehagen, har du opparbeidet deg en unik erfaring som jeg er veldig interessert i. Jeg er interessert i hva du synes er viktig i jobben din og om du tror du ville tenkt annerledes om du hadde jobbet i en barnehage med en annen profil. Jeg er ønsker å lære om din barnehages pedagogiske profil basert på dine perspektiver og erfaringer. Planen min er at vi snakker sammen litt først, også viser du meg rundt på avdelingen slik at du kan fortelle meg litt om rombruken.

- Intervjuet vil bli tatt opp ved hjelp av en båndopptaker og transkribert før lydfilen blir slettet.

- Som nevnt i informasjonsskrivet trenger jeg ingen konfidensielle opplysninger om deg. I oppgaven vil navnet ditt bli anonymisert med en kode.

- Under intervjuet har du rett til å ikke svare på spørsmål, og du kan avbryte intervjuet når som helst om du ønsker.

- Intervjuet vil ta omtrent en time.

- Har du lest igjennom samtykkeskjema?
    - Hvis ja: har du noen spørsmål knyttet til det?
    - Hvis nei: gå igjennom det viktigste og signer.

- Har du noen spørsmål før vi begynner?

FAKTAOPPLYSNINGER OM PEDAGOGEN
Jeg ønsker litt bakgrunnsinformasjon om informanten, for å få en forståelse av informantens profesjonelle identitet.

- Kjønn
- Alder
- Utdanning.
- Hvor lenge har du arbeidet i denne barnehagen?
- Har du jobbet i andre barnehager tidligere, eller har du annen type arbeidserfaring?

TEMA 1. BARNEHAGENS PEDAGOGISKE PROFIL.

Under dette temaet ønsker jeg at informanten skal gi meg innsikt i hva som er særpreget til barnehagen ved å fortelle hva han/hun synes er viktig i jobben sin. I tillegg ønsker jeg at informanten reflekterer over hvordan dette eventuelt samstemmer med eller ville være forskjellig fra å jobbe i en barnehage med en annen profil. Videre ønsker jeg innsikt i

forholdet mellom pedagogens og barnehagens målsettinger og intensjoner, og i hvilken grad pedagogen mener barnehagen greier å realisere disse intensjonene.

- **Fortell litt om målsettingen og intensjonene barnehagen har?**
    - Føler du at de blir realisert? Hvis ja, hvordan? Hvis ikke, hvorfor ikke?

- **Kan du fortelle hva som er viktigst for deg i forhold til profilen barnehagen har?**
    - Kan du beskrive det mer detaljert?
    - Hvordan fungere dette i praksis?
    - Tror du at de dette ville vært viktig om du hadde jobbet i en annen barnehage? Hvis ja, hvorfor? Hvis ikke, hvorfor ikke?

- **Fortell litt om hvordan du tolker Rammeplanen?**
    - På hvilke måter praktiserer dere innholdet i rammeplanen?
    - Kan du beskrive det mer detaljert?

TEMA 2. FORHOLDET MELLOM PEDAGOGISK PROFIL OG BARNESYN.

Under dette temaet ønsker jeg at informanten skal gi meg innsikt i forholdet mellom den pedagogiske profilen og synet de har på barnet, ved at informanten reflektere rundt hans/hennes og barnehagens syn på barn.

- **Synet på barn er et viktig tema i rammeplanen, kan du fortelle hvilket syn din barnehage har på barn og barndom?**
    - Føler du at ditt personlige syn samstemmer med synet profilen har? Hvis ja, hvorfor? Hvis ikke, hvorfor ikke?
    - Tror du det ville vært annerledes om du hadde jobbet i en annen barnehage? I tilfellet, på hvilken måte?
    - Har du alltid hatt det samme synet på barn i løpet av din karriere? Hvis ja, hvorfor? Hvis ikke, hvorfor ikke?

- **Fortell litt om metodene du bruker for å synliggjøre barnas stemmer og meninger i hverdagen?**
    - Kan du beskrive det mer detaljert?

- Hvis det ikke kommer frem:
    - **Hvilken rolle tenker du at den voksne burde ha i barnehagen?** Hvis uklart: veileder, lærer, tilrettelegger.

TEMA 3. BRUK AV INNE- OG UTEROM, EN VANLIG DAG.

Under dette temaet ønsker jeg at informanten skal gi meg innsikt i forholdet mellom den pedagogiske profilen og bruken av ulike rom, ved at han/hun forteller hvordan en vanlig dag utspiller seg i rommene avdelingen disponerer.

- **Ved å ta gårsdagen som utgangspunkt (eventuelt en annen dag), kan du gi en detaljert beskrivelse av hvordan en vanlig dag utspiller seg, fra det første barnet kommer til det siste barnet drar?**

    - Temaer:
        - Mottak/ønske velkommen
        - Spising
        - Lek/aktiviteter
        - Annet pedagogisk innhold
        - Rydding
        - Møbler/innredning
        - Materialer tilgjengelig
        - Fellesrom i barnehagen
        - Uterommet
        - Farvel

    - Reflekterende spørsmål:
        - Er dette en vanlig hendelse – hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?
        - Har det alltid vært sånn – hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?

    - Hvis det ikke kommer frem:
        - Er det andre faste ting dere gjør i løpet av uken, som ikke gjøres hver dag?

AVSLUTTENDE SPØRSMÅL.

- **Hva er unikt med deres pedagogiske profil?**
- **Hva tror du skiller dere fra andre profiler?**
- **Kan du med tre ord beskrive barnehage barndommen i 2017?**

AVSLUTTENDE INFORMASJON.

- Da har jeg ingen flere spørsmål, men er det noe du vil legge til eller klarere?
- Tusen takk for at du tok deg tid til intervjuet, du har gitt meg verdifull informasjon og jeg håper at intervjuet har vært en god opplevelse for deg.
- Ta kontakt med meg om det skulle dukke opp spørsmål eller andre ting du lurer på. Kan jeg kontakte deg om jeg har flere spørsmål eller vil oppklare noe?

Appendix 3: NSD approval letter

Vebjørg Tingstad

7491 TRONDHEIM

Vår dato: 01.11.2017 Vår ref: 56501 / 3 / LAR Deres dato: Deres ref:

Forenklet vurdering fra NSD Personvernombudet for forskning

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 10.10.2017.
Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

56501	*Exploring diverse kindergartens in Norway*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*NTNU, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Vebjørg Tingstad*
Student	*Anette Ringen Rosenberg*

Vurdering

Etter gjennomgang av opplysningene i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg, vurderer vi at prosjektet er omfattet av personopplysningsloven § 31. Personopplysningene som blir samlet inn er ikke sensitive, prosjektet er samtykkebasert og har lav personvernulempe. Prosjektet har derfor fått en forenklet vurdering. Du kan gå i gang med prosjektet. Du har selvstendig ansvar for å følge vilkårene under og sette deg inn i veiledningen i dette brevet.

Vilkår for vår vurdering

Vår anbefaling forutsetter at du gjennomfører prosjektet i tråd med:

- opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet
- krav til informert samtykke
- at du ikke innhenter sensitive opplysninger
- veiledning i dette brevet
- NTNU sine retningslinjer for datasikkerhet

Veiledning

Krav til informert samtykke

Utvalget skal få skriftlig og/eller muntlig informasjon om prosjektet og samtykke til deltakelse.
Informasjon må minst omfatte:

- at NTNU er behandlingsansvarlig institusjon for prosjektet
- daglig ansvarlig (eventuelt student og veileders) sine kontaktopplysninger
- prosjektets formål og hva opplysningene skal brukes til

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Appendix 4: consent form

SAMTYKKESKJEMA FOR DELTAKELSE I STUDIEN.

ARBEIDSTITTEL: Exploring diverse profiled kindergartens.
STUDENT: Anette Ringen Rosenberg.

- Jeg har blitt tildelt informasjon angående studien og har snakket med Anette om studien. Hun gjør denne studien som en del av sin masteroppgave for å oppnå graden Mphil in Childhood Studies, veiledet av professor Vebjørg Tingstad under avdelingen for Childhood Studies ved NTNU Trondheim.
- Jeg forstår at jeg kan avslutte intervjuet når jeg ønsker og det ikke skal overskride en time. Jeg har fått muligheten til å stille spørsmål angående min deltakelse og prosjektet, og jeg forstår at jeg kan fortsette å stille spørsmål.
- Jeg forstår at jeg kan trekke meg fra studien når jeg ønsker uten begrunnelse. Hvis jeg trekker meg vil det ikke få konsekvenser og informasjonen jeg har gitt vil dermed ikke bli brukt i masteroppgaven.
- Jeg forstår at studien ikke krever konfidensiell informasjon fra meg og studenten er den eneste som vet at jeg har sagt det jeg har sagt. Den ferdige oppgaven vil bli arkivert og publisert i NTNU Open av NTNU Universitetsbiblioteket. Deltakere vil derimot ikke kunne gjenkjennes i publikasjonen, ettersom navnet blir anonymisert.

Spørsmål kan stilles til Anette Ringen Rosenberg via telefon: 99 42 65 47 eller
e-post: anetterr@stud.ntnu.no

Ved å signere nedfor, samtykker jeg til (kryss av):

☐ Intervju

Jeg forstår at informasjonen jeg gir vil bli brukt i Anettes masteravhandling og jeg samtykker til den bruk.

Signatur Sted/dato

…….. ……