

## **“Migrant Children Are Not the Problem. The Problem Is the Need to Make the Administration Happy.” The Perceptions of Professionals’ on Participation and Acculturation in Education Contexts**

THOMAS DROESSLER<sup>3</sup>

ORCID: [0000-0002-4688-8821](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4688-8821)

Evangelische Hochschule Dresden, Germany

LENA FOERTSCH

ORCID: [0000-0001-5481-4913](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5481-4913)

Evangelische Hochschule Dresden, Germany

MARGUND K. ROHR

ORCID: [0000-0001-7796-050X](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7796-050X)

Evangelische Hochschule Dresden, Germany

Children are individuals capable of expressing their wishes and needs, making decisions and taking action in order to influence their own living situation and contribute to social life. Furthermore, children’s participation is essential to their development, learning and well-being, and particularly crucial to the integration of migrant children. Accordingly, societal and scientific discourses emphasize the need for the participation of children, including as a substantial element of integration processes. However, research shows a tension between theoretical discussions and concepts, on the one hand, and practices in educational settings on the other. Educational contexts vary in their conceptualizations of children’s agency and participation, as well as the degree to which they provide opportunities for participation or rather set restrictions upon it.

To illuminate this dependency on respective educational settings in more detail, data from the German sample of the first phase of the CHILD-UP research and innovation project were used to explore two research questions. First, potential differences in perceptions and understanding of

---

<sup>3</sup> Contact: [thomas.droessler@ehs-dresden.de](mailto:thomas.droessler@ehs-dresden.de)

children's participation were investigated by surveying four groups of professionals, namely teachers, educators in early childhood care, after-school educators and social workers. Second, the analyses explored potential associations between intercultural aspects, integration and participation among the four groups of professionals.

Overall, the results showed that children's participation is emphasized and supported in each of the examined educational settings, but also reveals differences according to school. More specifically, schoolteachers were more reserved about participation than the other groups of professionals. Moreover, although all professionals emphasized migrant children's integration, a stronger emphasis on assimilation was observed for teachers, which could be explained by structural and normative conditions in the educational setting of school.

The results point to the need for a further examination of these differences by focusing on the interplay between the normative requirements, structural conditions, institutional tasks, as well as professional attitudes of different professions in education. Accordingly, relational approaches to the concept of children's agency are applied to discuss whether and how relational conceptualizations of participation can overcome an essentialist perspective on children's participation and may perhaps shed light on the interconnection between participation and integration according to the institutional character of different educational settings.

**Keywords:** participation, agency, acculturation, integration, professional perspectives

## Introduction

"Migrant children are not the problem. The problem is the need to make the administration happy, but not the children." The quote is taken from a teacher's response to an open-ended question from a survey investigating how to support children's participation within different educational contexts. Views on participation by children in general and by migrant children in particular were examined during the first stage of the research and innovation project CHILD-UP by surveying members of different educational professions. The background to this is that the project addresses issues and challenges concerning the integration of migrant children within educational settings and examines prerequisites, opportunities, and strategies to support their and their families' integration. Thereby, one of the major presumptions of the project is that participation is crucial for the integration of migrant children, because their participation implies that their needs, interests, experiences and competencies, and thus their ability to express themselves, to act and to contribute to the receiving society are seriously taken into account. In the sense of integration, participation expands from a political to a social and cultural level and aims to mediate interests between the individual, the community and society. Participation thus becomes the active involvement and contribution of even migrant children. Most important for this active participation is the understanding of one's own needs, interests and ideas and the ability to communicate these to the outside world, as well as trust in intersubjective relationships of recognition in society or in institutions such as schools. Active participation is thus an interplay of individual attitudes and at the same time factors of educational settings. According to Dewey 1993, the expansion of participation opportunities

also presupposes participation. If institutions enable children with a migration background to participate in decision-making, co-determination and active participation, then the children have the opportunity to identify themselves and to develop their own suitable perspectives. This subjective experience of participation in turn creates intrinsic motivation to participate in the form of contributing goals and perspectives. This intrinsically motivated form of participation has a positive effect on integration processes. Integration is therefore linked to the active agency of the individual and as such presupposes participation in the sense of negotiating interests, needs and goals.

The CHILD-UP study builds on this basic assumption. It aims to investigate possible differences in the perception and understanding of children's participation of four different groups of educational professionals according to their institutional background. Furthermore, links between perceptions of children's participation and intercultural representations concerning the integration of migrant children among the aforementioned groups of professionals are analyzed. The four professional groups who participated in the quantitative survey are

- Teachers working with pupils in primary respectively secondary schools,
- Educators working in after school care, which in Germany is situated in primary schools and looks after pupils from first to fourth, in some federal states to sixth grade after school hours,
- Educators working in day-care centers with children aged from three to six, and
- Social workers working in different fields of children's and youth welfare such as open youth work, social work at schools, or family work,

whereby these groups represented different contexts of education and upbringing of children and thus are involved in the integration of migrant children.

In all of these educational contexts, children's participation marks an essential principle for the work with children on a general level. Beyond the normative character of participation as it is, for instance, emphasized in the UNCRC (e.g., Rap 2019), studies have shown that participating children in institutionalized educational settings has a positive effect on their well-being, their sense of belonging, their self-efficacy, learning and development (Pramling Samuelson & Sheridan 2013; Hansen Sandseter & Seland 2015). With regard to migrant children, participation receives its importance due to their societal integration, which can only succeed, "if children have the opportunity to participate in the resident society within their everyday living spaces. The participation of children from different ethnic and social backgrounds is ensured when they can use their own resources [...] to open up spaces of activity." (Sauer 2009: 191). In this vein, it is of interest, how professionals of different educational contexts, who all work with migrant children, perceive children's participation. Hence, attitudes concerning migrant children's integration associated with different professional backgrounds and institutional work contexts are considered to be interrelated to attitudes towards children's participation.

Although knowledge, attitudes and practices of professionals in different pedagogical institutions have been studied and discussed with regard to the respective pedagogical context (see following section), there is a lack of studies that allow a direct comparison of corresponding attitudes of different pedagogical professional groups. One exception from the German-speaking countries is a study by Rieker et al. (2016). In a mixed-methods design combining quantitative and qualitative methods, Rieker and colleagues investigated perspectives, experiences and practices of children's participation among parents, teachers and professionals in other contexts (youth welfare administration, community work, political and school administration) in Switzerland using different methodical instruments. This article is based on a quantitative study conducted as part of the CHILd-UP project. In this study, day care educators, schoolteachers, and social workers were interviewed using a common questionnaire, with minor adaptations to their differing work contexts. One aim was to investigate professionals' attitudes and practices concerning children's participation. A further goal of the project was to facilitate immigrant children's integration by strengthening their participation and enhancing possibilities for participation in educational settings. Research insofar explicitly referred on migrant children's integration and its connection to their participation in different educational settings. This link between participation and integration is explored by examining professionals' intercultural attitudes, as well as whether and how they affect attitudes toward children's participation. The aim is to explore if and how intercultural attitudes are endorsed by professionals in their profession or work field and if there are interactions between these attitudes and attitudes towards children's participation.

## Theoretical and empirical underpinnings

Because of its emphasis, participation represents a ubiquitous concept, which today "tends to become a possible request, which neither cannot be limited to specific social contexts, nor leads to the establishment of mandatory procedures. The term is now used in a wide variety of contexts and with a wide variety of connotations. Accordingly, there is an 'almost infinite list of definitions' (van Deth 2003: 170)" (Bettmer 2008: 213). In educational and childhood-related research contexts, definitions of children's participation usually refer to the UNCRC (e.g., Church & Bateman 2019) and/or are linked to concepts of (children's) agency (Baraldi 2014; Baraldi & Iervese 2014; Houen et al. 2016; Prout 2000; James 2011; Sirkko et al. 2019). The agency concept is based on findings from the field of childhood studies and recognizes children as "social actors" (Prout & James 1990: 8). Agency and participation often are considered to be coherent, if not congruent concepts, as they both stress children's opportunities to act independently, to have a choice about what to do and how to act, to have a serious possibility to influence and potentially change decision-mak-

ing processes, and thus to have control over their own life in different social contexts (e.g., Houen et al. 2016; Sirkko et al. 2019; Church & Bateman 2019). For Baraldi, children’s active participation means showing “agency[, which] means showing the ability of choices of action, opening different possible courses of action, so that a specific course of action is one among various possibilities” (2014: 73). This not only underlines a certain coincidence of agency and participation, but also stresses the serious possibility for children to influence and change social situations and the social conditions of their lives as the very core of participation. Concerning adults in general, and education professionals in particular, children’s participation is conceptualized as their right to be heard, to express their views and needs, to have choices, to contribute to decision making and thus to have their opinions taken into account and be able to substantially influence their daily life.

Children’s participation, in turn, takes place in different social contexts and, in this understanding, is equally designed to enable children to exert comprehensive and active influence on the actions and conditions of these contexts. This makes the question of contexts in which children live and in which they (should) participate interesting. The everyday reality of children’s lives today is characterized by extensive institutionalization; children spend most of their times in institutions such as day care centers and schools. Even in their free time, many children are in contact with educational institutions such as extracurricular educational programs or child and youth welfare institutions. This is relevant insofar as it expresses specific structural patterns of childhood, which are still oriented towards upbringing and education and thus towards the future role of children in society (Prout 2006, James 2000). Johanna Mierendorff even speaks of a “culmination of the scholarization and pedagogisation of childhood” (2010: 256). It is true that against the backdrop of a transformation of state action towards a social investment state, comprehensive changes have taken place with regard to the perceptions of children. However, these do not essentially lead to an erosion, but rather to a consolidation of the basic pattern of institutionalized childhood. “There is still a deeply rooted societal and state interest in maintaining the protective space of childhood as a moratorium on education and development” (Mierendorff 2018: 141). This at least leads to the question of the relationship between, for example, institutionalized educational contexts, those who act in them and participation.

Related research shows that different reasons to limit or legitimate limiting children’s participation are communicated to various degrees in educational contexts as in early childhood education and care, school and social work. In the field of **early childhood education and care**, Sandberg and Eriksson showed that staff’s perception (and practices) concerning children’s participation and its support not only depended on factors such as attitudes, teamwork, professional values, working methods, existence of a safe environment, time and other organizational aspects. Moreover, it is limited by educational considerations and attitudes defining what reasonable

participation by children means, regardless of the emphasis staff placed on children's participation. Sandberg and Eriksson demonstrated that preschool staff's perception of participation is rooted in an understanding of participation as a pedagogy and a pedagogical process and thus is restricted for children's benefit. Accordingly, "Results in the study show that when it comes to the overall pedagogical responsibility, teachers don't think that children can participate. It is here the preschool staff express uneasiness when contemplating what would happen if the children were to decide." (2010: 628). In the model project "The Nursery of Democracy: Participation in Day Care Centers", Hansen, Knauer and Sturzenhecker explained that participation in day care institutions is both possible and "practical" (2006: 8). Even if educational staff express unease or even fear of losing control, Hansen and colleagues view this as an important starting point for establishing participation and participation processes in day care centers not only on a small scale, but as an "institutionally embedded right" (2006: 20). Only if adults are themselves able to participate they can also facilitate children's participation. The principle of responsibility plays a particularly important role for participation in day care centers. Hansen, Knauer and Sturzenhecker explicitly point out: "Granting children responsibility for themselves does [...] not mean that adults can relinquish their responsibility for the children." (2006: 15). Hansen and colleagues' findings have been used and further refined in studies of various contexts in Germany (IFP 2012; Knauer & Bartosch 2016; Knauer & Hansen 2020). For example, the early childhood education curricula for the states of Bavaria (IFP 2012: 389) and Schleswig-Holstein (Knauer & Hansen 2020: 16) and the project "Key Competencies of Pedagogical Staff in Day Care Centers for Democracy Education" refer to and build upon their results. In the latter project, children and educators were asked in which contexts they experience democracy and participation processes in everyday day care center life. Children perceive participation both in terms of the structures and rules they experience and negotiate in social interactions and in terms of being appreciated for their own personalities and abilities. For educators, their personal understanding of education and the understanding of education developed by the institution as a whole play a major role. In addition, they note that participation requires intrinsic and extrinsic motivation by all participants (Knauer & Bartosch 2016: 12–13).

Research on participation in **school contexts** has revealed similar findings and conclusions. For instance, Christof (2020) investigated prospective teachers' job-related beliefs concerning participation and identified tensions between normatively-grounded perceptions of children and their participation on the one hand and professional attitudes and institutional conditions on the other. "On the one hand, students [student teachers, the authors] reproduce with their statutes on participation as to *make participation possible for EVERYONE* a noble educational goal to which they feel obliged or which they strive for. On the other hand, the responses to use participation to increase motivation in order to be able to achieve a higher output among

pupils expose the noble educational goal of participation as a means to an end, the school (from the still little reflected point of view of the students) even has to fulfill.” (p. 306, emphasis in the original). The causes of this are perceived conflicts between pupils’ participation and legal obligations such as official state curricula and their defined learning objectives, but also lesson schedules and time pressure stemming from the institutional conditions in schools. Furthermore, prospective teachers fear a loss of authority as teachers, because pupils may exploit the freedom provided by their participation, which in turn leads to practices of pupil participation “in a tolerable dose, almost in a small scale” (ibid). Huppert and Abs (2008) come to similar results in their evaluation of the federal states’ project “Learning and Living Democracy” in German schools. They showed that schools deal with pupils’ participatory expectations in different ways, some of which promote pupils’ participation in line with their competencies and opportunities, while others perceive pupils “as deficient and not capable of participating, whereas teachers perceive of pupils’ active participation primarily as a limitation on their scope of action [...]” (2008: 12). From the teachers’ point of view, pupils’ participation is restricted by organizational factors such as the lesson schedule, autonomy in lesson planning, textbook selection, and finally, teachers’ own perceptions of the obligations and tasks pupils have to fulfill in their role as pupils. This may lead to the “paradox that participation [of pupils] in school is supported, but its realization is rejected where it contradicts the substantial interests of teachers” (ibid). Huppert and Abs summarize that “participation (by pupils and teachers) at schools is prone to be limited and to limit in line with competencies and responsibilities” (2008: 14). Reviewing recent research on participation in schools, Feichter (2020) concludes that children’s participation in school is restricted in certain circumstances, such as when pupils’ participation could substantially affect lesson planning, content, or teaching methods. Pupils’ participation in interactions is also limited when they are guided by teachers, and their results are predetermined by adults. Finally, the study critically stresses the association between the opportunities and effects of students’ participation and their abilities and competencies to participate appropriately, which constitute a prerequisite for participation from the perspective of teachers. This sometimes is taken as a reason to restrict participation, which, however, actually weakens pupils’ experience of participation and thus opportunity to acquire the ‘required’ competencies. Accordingly, Feichter states the paradox that “participation is conjured, belongs to the good tone of educational vocabulary [...], and denying or restricting students’ participation is for almost all teachers pedagogically, even morally reprehensible. On the other hand, practice and research in schools show that topics regarding students’ participation usually remain pleas without substantial anchoring in practice” (2020: 26–27).

Concerning **social work**, especially in the field of youth welfare, a number of studies have investigated supporting and hindering factors for participation in various settings (e.g., Kriener & Petersen 1999; Wolf 1999; Pluto 2007; Messmer & Hitzler 2015).

Many of these studies find a high level of agreement among social workers concerning participation by children (and their parents), but also point to substantial reservations and obstacles. In their 2003 review, Pluto and Seckinger identified 13 reasons to limit or restrict children's participation stated by social work professionals. Some of these reasons concern individual aspects, such as the risk of overwhelming children and adolescents, their unwillingness to participate, or a lack of competencies with respect to considerable decision-making and its consequences. In addition to allegedly professional reasons, also structural aspects, such as the limiting or contradicting requirements of laws, organizational structures and routines, and time pressure play a role (Pluto and Seckinger 2003). Messmer, also summarizing research results, further criticizes that "educators take care of the well-being of the children, but there often is no support of children's influence on daily life and a lack of institutionalized opportunities to participate" (2018: 116). Children's participation is also restricted when social workers guide negotiation processes in formal support planning discussions or everyday communication. Finally, certain professional experiences and certainties may legitimate limiting participation from social workers' point of view in the case of decision-making processes, educational routines or problem assessment. Children's participation may challenge these certainties and unsettle social workers: "To the extent that participation touches existing hierarchies and power relations proven patterns sometimes becomes brittle. This may lead to higher potentials of conflicts, which social workers tend to avoid" (2018: 122).

In all these contexts, age, maturity and competences seem to be crucial in legitimizing the control or restriction of children's participation opportunities from the perspective of the professionals. Considering the structural pattern of childhood, these limiting reasons highlight educational issues, correlating perceptions of children and thus to the social function of educational institutions. Regardless of the emphasis on children's agency and their right to participate as expressed in common definitions of participation as cited above and even in educational contexts, considerations and practices of participation at least are connected to educational institutions and professionals' understanding of their role within these institutions. Accordingly and concerning agency, Esser states: "If agency is positioned in social interdependence, rather than in individual independence, this leads to a question that may lead empirical research an alternative way: What agency does childhood involve and what actorship are children allotted as children in different contexts?" (Esser 2016: 57) Here it is the question, if and how such different contexts affect understandings and practices of participation of different professionals, especially considering that both contexts and professionals are educational ones. Concerning migrant children integration, it is of interest too, how participation is embedded in the context of day care, school or the field of social work, when participation is considered as an important resource for integration processes (Baraldi 2015, Fachkommission Integrationsfähigkeit 2020: 9).

## The Present Study

The aim of this paper is to investigate perceptions of children's participation across different educational professions and work contexts. It investigates whether there are differences in attitudes and potential practices towards children's participation between different groups of professionals. This article is based on a quantitative study within the CHILD-UP project, where day care educators, schoolteachers, and social workers were interviewed using a common questionnaire, with minor adaptations to their differing work contexts. A further goal of the project was to facilitate immigrant children's integration by strengthening their participation and enhancing opportunities for participation in educational settings. In order to do so, the study investigated professionals' intercultural attitudes and whether and how they affect their attitudes toward children's participation. Thus, another research question was: Which intercultural attitudes do professionals endorse for their profession or work field, and are there interactions between these attitudes and attitudes towards children's participation?

## Method

### Sample description

A total of 192 professionals were surveyed about their perceptions, experiences and practices regarding children's participation. Four groups of professionals were compared, namely teachers working in different school forms ( $n=40$ ), day care educators ( $n=77$ ), after-school educators ( $n=20$ ), and social workers working either in day care centers or in schools ( $n=55$ ). Participants were 30.74 years old ( $SD = 10.48$ ) on average and the majority were female (82.3%). Their level of work experience varied: While about 40 percent had worked in their field for fewer than 5 years (39.7%), one-third had 6 to 15 years of work experience in the field (33.2%), and another 27 percent had 16 or more years of work experience (27.2%). With the exception of after-school educators, they had comparable experience in working with children/clients from diverse backgrounds (i.e., non-native Germans, immigrants, and refugees); however, compared with the other professionals, both teachers and day care educators thought that children/clients with diverse backgrounds are well-supported. Overall, participants were quite satisfied with their job ( $M = 3.39$ ,  $SD = 0.62$ ). They also reported being satisfied with their relationship to the children/clients in their care. The professional groups did not differ with respect to age, sex, work experience, or job satisfaction (see Table 1).

### Procedure

Participants were recruited in educational contexts such as day care, schools, and after school institutions that were willing to participate in a questionnaire study as part of the CHILD-UP project. The survey took place in two regions in Germa-

Table 1

Sample characteristics

	Total (N=192)	Teachers (n=40)	Educators, day care (n = 77)	Educators, after school care (n=20)	Social workers, day care (n=36)	Social workers, schools (n=19)	
age (in years)	39.74 (10.48)	42.38 (11.69)	38.99 (10.81)	37.85 (7.07)	38.58 (9.36)	41.37 (11.22)	$F(4,186) = 1.12, p = .348$
work experience	3.42 (1.61)	3.55 (2.00)	3.48 (1.61)	3.30 (1.22)	3.21 (1.37)	3.42 (1.58)	$F(4,179) = 0.26, p = .902$
working with children/clients from diverse backgrounds	1.60 (0.78)	1.80 <sup>a</sup> (0.84)	1.64 <sup>a</sup> (0.78)	0.92 <sup>b</sup> (0.36)	1.56 <sup>a</sup> (0.61)	1.82 <sup>a</sup> (0.92)	$F(4,184) = 5.35, p = .000,$ $\eta^2 = .10$
perceived support of children/clients from diverse backgrounds	2.69 (0.78)	2.73 <sup>a</sup> (0.84)	3.02 <sup>a</sup> (0.77)	2.23 <sup>b</sup> (0.64)	2.40 <sup>b</sup> (0.61)	2.32 <sup>b</sup> (0.54)	$F(4,184) = 8.47, p = .000,$ $\eta^2 = .16$
job satisfaction	3.39 (0.62)	3.38 (0.63)	3.47 (0.62)	3.10 (0.72)	3.35 (0.54)	3.44 (0.62)	$F(4,181) = 1.49, p = .207$
relationship to the children/ clients	3.58 (0.55)	3.50 (0.60)	3.75 <sup>a</sup> (0.43)	3.40 (0.50)	3.41 <sup>b</sup> (0.61)	3.58 (0.61)	$F(4,185) = 3.71, p = .006,$ $\eta^2 = .07$
sex (=female)	158 (82.3%)	32 (80%)	67 (87%)	16 (80%)	28 (77.8%)	15 (78.9%)	$\chi^2(df = 4) = 2.04, p = .728$
migrant background (dummy, = yes)	13 (7.0%)	0 (0%) <sup>a</sup>	11 (14.9%) <sup>b</sup>	1 (5%) <sup>a</sup>	0 (0%)	1 (5.3%)	$\chi^2(df = 4) = 12.89, p = .012$
Participation in multicultural training (dummy, = yes)	92 (48.4%)	20 (51.3%) <sup>a</sup>	36 (46.8%) <sup>a</sup>	3 (15%) <sup>b</sup>	21 (22.8%) <sup>a</sup>	12 (66.7%) <sup>a</sup>	$\chi^2(df = 4) = 12.97, p = .011$

Note. Means and SD resp. N and percent are depicted. Significant differences are indicated with different subscripts.

ny, namely the city-state of Hamburg and the federal state of Saxony. We further recruited participants via newspapers, the Internet (e.g., professional associations' websites or newsletters for professional groups), and public notices/flyers in relevant educational settings. Participants responded to either paper-and-pencil or computerized questionnaires.

In accordance with the project's mixed-methods design, the quantitative study had an exploratory character. Nonetheless, due to the project's coherent design, the collected data can provide an inside view on perspectives towards children's participation among members of different professions. In a further stage of the project, these quantitative data will be enriched with more fine-grained qualitative data.

## Measures

*Integration and intercultural aspects.* In light of the CHILP-UP project's core assumption that participation is crucial for the integration of migrant children and that enhancing participation by children in general and migrant children in particular can contribute to better integration, it is interesting to examine the data concerning cultural and integration issues more closely. We therefore consider two aspects, namely coping with the challenges of increased cultural diversity and integration attitudes.

*Coping with challenges of increasing cultural diversity.* Professionals were asked to what extent they are able to handle current challenges such as coping with cultural diversity, ensuring that pupils with and without migrant backgrounds work together, raising awareness for cultural differences, and reducing stereotypes and prejudice. They could indicate their answers on a 4-point scale ranging from 1 (very much) to 4 (not at all). Responses were recoded for the analyses and an index was computed. Cronbach's alpha was satisfactory ( $\alpha = .75$ ).

*Attitudes toward acculturation.* To investigate cultural attitudes, the acculturation scale by van Dick and colleagues (1997, 2014) was used. The scale measures four different dimensions of acculturation attitudes: (1) integration (5 items,  $\alpha = .71$ , sample item: "It would be good to see all ethnic groups in Germany retain their cultures"), (2) assimilation (4 items,  $\alpha = .71$ , sample item: "People who come to Germany should change their behavior to be more like us"), and (3) segregation (3 items,  $\alpha = .76$ , sample item: "If members of ethnic groups want to keep their own culture, they should keep to themselves"), as well as a total acculturation score that sums up responses to all 12 items ( $k = 12$ ,  $\alpha = .82$ ). Participants could indicate their response on a scale from 1 (totally agree) to 4 (totally disagree). All responses were recoded for the analyses so that higher scores reflect higher agreement.

*Participation.* Participation was assessed with seven items encompassing different aspects of agency or participation, such as encouraging children's initiative and

activities, supporting them in expressing their thoughts and ideas in general and regarding the educational context, and participation in decision-making. Sample items were *"I support children's initiative and encourage them to act upon it"*, *"If children have creative new ideas for learning or regarding institutional aspects, I support and encourage them to put their idea into action"* or *"I encourage children to question my thoughts and decisions"*. Participants could select responses ranging from 1 (totally agree) to 4 (totally disagree). We created a participation index for the analysis by aggregating the seven items. Cronbach's alpha was satisfactory,  $\alpha = .79$ . Moreover, responses were recoded so that once again, higher scores reflect higher agreement.

*Covariates.* In addition to age and sex, participants reported their years of work experience in their professional field. Six categories were created ranging from 1 (less than one year) to 6 (more than 20 years). Experience working with children/clients from diverse backgrounds was assessed by asking participants about the percentage of children/clients in their care who are non-native Germans, have a migrant background, or are refugees. Responses were recorded on five-point scale ranging from 0 (do not work with children/clients in the respective target group) to 4 (over 60% of children/clients come from the respective target group). We calculated an indicator by aggregating the scores. We further assessed perceived support for each of the above-mentioned groups of clients (i.e., non-natives, migrants, refugees) by asking how to what extent participants believed these clients are adequately supported in the respective institutions. We used a four-point scale from 1 (very well) to 4 (not at all). Again, scores were recoded and then aggregated in order to create a support index. Participants further indicated their job satisfaction by answering a single item (i.e., *All in all, I am satisfied with my job*) ranging from 1 (very satisfied) to 4 (very unsatisfied). These scores were also recoded so that higher scores reflect higher agreement.

## Results

### Analyses

To address our research questions, we first computed ANOVAs for the main dependent variables, namely coping with diversity-related challenges, acculturation attitudes, and participation. In these ANOVAs, professional groups served as a between-group factor. In a second step, we computed correlations between the main dependent variables in order to examine associations between intercultural aspects, integration, and participation. We further ran these correlation analyses separately for the two educational contexts considered, namely day care and schools, in order to examine whether the associations differ by institutional context.

## Main results

### Integration and intercultural aspects

The results yielded no differences in subjective coping between different professional groups,  $F(4,185) = 1.53, p = .194$ . Across all professional groups, participants were quite confident in dealing with the challenges and demands of increasing cultural diversity in educational settings ( $M = 3.33, SD = 0.52$ , see Table 2). More experience working with children/clients from diverse cultural backgrounds was positively associated with subjective coping ( $r = .174, p = .017$ ).

In general, professionals agreed upon the importance of integration ( $M = 2.96, SD = 0.51$ ), were more reserved towards assimilation ( $M = 2.05, SD = 0.53$ ), and negatively inclined toward segregation ( $M = 1.40, SD = 0.46$ ). Significant differences between professional groups were found for integration, assimilation, and segregation (see Table 2).

Table 2

Group differences on acculturation attitudes and intercultural challenges

	Teachers (n = 40)	Educators, day care (n = 77)	Educators, after school care (n = 20)	Social workers, day care (n = 36)	Social workers, school (n = 19)	
integration ( $k = 5,$ $\alpha = .71$ )	<b>2.75</b> ( <b>0.54</b> ) <sub>a</sub>	3.08 (0.43) <sub>b</sub>	<b>2.68</b> ( <b>0.59</b> ) <sub>a</sub>	3.04 (0.45)	3.16 (0.50)	$F(4,175) = 5.55,$ $p = .000,$ $\eta^2 = .11$
assimilation ( $k = 4,$ $\alpha = .71$ )	<b>2.30</b> ( <b>0.46</b> ) <sub>a</sub>	1.95 (0.52) <sub>b</sub>	2.18 (0.46)	1.98 (0.57)	1.92 (0.54)	$F(4,175) = 3.80$ $p = .005$ $\eta^2 = .08$
segregation ( $k = 3,$ $\alpha = .76$ )	1.47 (0.48)	1.35 (0.43) <sub>a</sub>	1.68 (0.56) <sub>b</sub>	1.30 (0.34) <sub>a</sub>	1.27 (0.51)	$F(4,175) = 3.07$ $p = .018,$ $\eta^2 = .07$
acculturation ( $k = 12,$ $\alpha = .82$ )	2.93 (0.40)	3.19 (0.45)	2.83 (0.58)	2.86 (1.20)	2.75 (1.64)	$F(4,176) = 2.01$ $p = .096$
coping with cultural diversity ( $k = 4,$ $\alpha = .75$ )	3.33 (0.45)	3.43 (0.51)	3.29 (0.38)	3.24 (0.64)	3.16 (0.52)	$F(4,185) = 1.53$ $p = .194$

Note. M (SD). Subscripts indicate significant differences.

More concretely, as indicated by their lower endorsement of integration, school teachers and after-school educators were more conservative than day care educators and social workers. School teachers also endorsed assimilation more than day care educators and social workers did. The after-school educators' responses were similar to those of the school teachers, although their values were less extreme than those of teachers. Finally, both educators and social workers working in day care centers more strongly rejected segregation than educators in after school settings, however the differences with school teachers were quite small. However, in terms of participation, the all four groups of surveyed professionals agreed with integration in principle and rejected attitudes calling for the societal or institutional segregation of migrants (see Table 2).

## Attitudes towards children's participation

Across all groups, endorsement of supporting and encouraging children's participation and agency was quite high ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 0.49$ ). However, agreement with some aspects differed between professional groups,  $F(4, 184) = 5.06$ ,  $p = .001$ ,  $\eta^2 = .10$ . Teachers reported less encouragement of participation than educators in day care and after school care as well as social workers regardless of field (see Figure 1 and Table 3).

Figure 1

Differences in the encouragement of participation across professionals

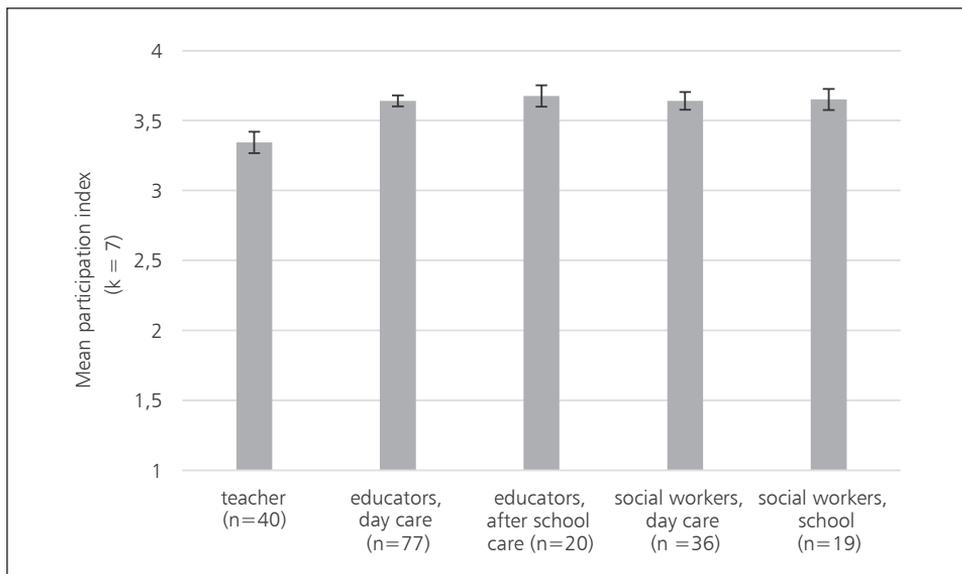


Table 3

Group differences in participation

Participation Items	Teachers (n = 40)	Educators, day care (n = 77)	Educators, after school care (n = 20)	Social workers, day care (n = 36)	Social workers, school (n = 19)	
I encourage children to express their opinions towards adults.	3.50 (0.64)	3.70 (0.52)	3.74 (0.45)	3.74 (0.48)	3.84 (0.38)	$F(4,184) = 1.87,$ $p = .117$
I support children's initiative and encourage them in putting them into action.	<b>3.03 (0.68)<sub>a</sub></b>	3.68 (0.52) <sub>b</sub>	3.74 (0.45) <sub>b</sub>	3.35 (0.81)	3.22 (0.81)	$F(4,181) = 8.24,$ $p = .000, \eta^2 = .15$
I encourage children to discuss questions and issues.	<b>3.43 (0.78)<sub>a</sub></b>	3.87 (0.34) <sub>b</sub>	3.68 (0.48)	3.85 (0.36) <sub>b</sub>	3.83 (0.38) <sub>b</sub>	$F(4,181) = 6.07,$ $p = .000, \eta^2 = .12$
If children have creative new ideas for learning or regarding institutional aspects, I support and encourage them in putting their ideas into practice.	3.54 (0.60)	3.66 (0.53)	3.53 (0.61)	3.55 (0.71)	3.89 (0.32)	$F(4,178) = 1.54,$ $p = .241$
I encourage children to question my thoughts and decisions.	3.50 (0.68)	3.65 (0.48)	3.84 (0.38)	3.59 (0.56)	3.61 (0.50)	$F(4,182) = 1.38,$ $p = .192$
I encourage children to express their ideas.	<b>3.33 (0.76)<sub>a</sub></b>	3.73 (0.45) <sub>b</sub>	3.68 (0.48)	3.88 (0.33) <sub>b</sub>	3.83 (0.38) <sub>b</sub>	$F(4,183) = 6.67,$ $p = .000, \eta^2 = .13$
I try to support/encourage children's activities that are not related to my pedagogical work.	3.08 (0.80)	3.12 (0.85)	3.53 (0.76)	3.52 (0.73)	3.22 (0.73)	$F(4,174) = 2.46,$ $p = .048, \eta^2 = .05$
Participation index ( $k = 7, \alpha = .79$ )	<b>3.34 (0.49)<sub>a</sub></b>	3.64 (0.34) <sub>b</sub>	3.68 (0.33) <sub>b</sub>	3.64 (0.36) <sub>b</sub>	3.65 (0.33) <sub>a,b</sub>	$F(4,184) = 5.06,$ $p = .001, \eta^2 = .10$

Note. M (SD). Different subscripts indicate significant differences.

Although the differences are small, teachers endorse participation less than the respondents from the other professional groups. In particular, significant differences can be observed with respect to encouraging children to discuss questions and issues, encouraging them to expressing their ideas, and supporting children's initiative and acting upon it. For all of these aspects, teachers were more tentative in their endorsements than the other professionals were. In contrast, educators in day care and after school care and social workers responded quite similarly to most of the participation items. There were only a few minor differences within or between these groups and subgroups. Social workers in schools agreed with the item "If children have creative new ideas for learning or regarding institutional aspects, I support and encourage them to put their ideas into action" more than all other groups and were less likely to agree that they support children's initiatives than social workers in day care centers. Apart from this, there were no coherent patterns of differences between day care and after-school educators and social workers, regardless of their particular fields of work. Systematic differences, albeit on a small scale, could only be identified between teachers and the other professional groups, with teachers in this sample expressing more reservations concerning children's participation. However, all respondents endorsed the significance of children's participation on a basic level.

## Linking integration, intercultural aspects, and participation

In a second step, the associations between coping with cultural diversity, acculturation attitudes, and attitudes towards children's participation were investigated. The analyses showed that subjective coping with cultural diversity is positively associated with endorsement of integration and negatively correlated with endorsement of segregation. At the same time, being better able to cope with cultural diversity is positively linked to the endorsement of children's participation. Moreover, participation is positively correlated with integration and negatively associated with assimilation (see Table 4).

Additionally, correlational patterns for the two educational contexts, namely for schools (i.e., school teachers and educators in after school care, which in Germany in the vast majority work in (primary) schools closely cooperating with teachers) and (educators in) day care, were compared, which yielded significant differences in three associations. More concretely, while coping with cultural diversity is negatively linked to segregation in day care ( $r = -.36, p = .002, n=73$ ), this association is positive in schools ( $r = .22, p = .101, n=58$ ), Fisher's  $z = -3.31, p = .001$ . Moreover, while assimilation was not correlated with participation in the day care setting ( $r = .01, p = .930, n=74$ ), a negative correlation between the two variables in schools was identified ( $r = -.33, p = .011, n=57$ ), Fisher's  $z = 1.98, p = .048$ . Finally, the

association between assimilation and segregation was more pronounced among day care educators ( $r = .71, p = .000, n=73$ ) than among school teachers and after-school educators ( $r = .43, p = .001, n=58$ ), Fisher's  $z = 2.31, p = .021$ .

Table 4

Associations between the main variables

		<b>Integration</b>	<b>Assimilation</b>	<b>Segregation</b>	<b>Participation</b>
Coping with cultural diversity	<i>r</i> (Pearson)	.160*	-.145	-.158*	.197**
	<i>p</i> (two sided)	.032	.052	.035	.007
	<i>N</i>	180	180	179	189
Participation	<i>r</i> (Pearson)	.338**	-.211**	-.042	-
	<i>p</i> (two sided)	.000	.005	.575	-
	<i>N</i>	179	179	178	-

In summary, the results point to the uniqueness of teachers' (and after-school educators') attitudes. Teachers reported less endorsement of integration, approve assimilation, and endorse participation to a lesser extent than the other professional groups. At the same time, a negative correlation between assimilation and participation and a lower correlation between assimilation and segregation were found in schools as compared to day care centers. In order to deepen our understanding of these contextual differences (day care vs. school), we looked onto endorsement of developmental goals as a potential explanation and conducted additional exploratory analyses, the results of which are presented in the following section.

## Results of further exploratory analyses

Given the differences between teachers and the other occupational groups, endorsement of developmental goals by teachers, day care educators and after-school educators were of particular interest. Professionals in each group were asked to rate the importance of a list of 15 developmental goals on a scale ranging from 1 (very important) to 4 (very unimportant) (see OSM Table 5). While no substantial differences regarding the expression of needs and feelings, coping with diversity, or listening to others were found, teachers emphasized aspects such as achievement and ambition more than non-school educators. At the same time, non-school educators prioritized developmental goals such as taking advantage of opportunities to participate and participating in decisions more than teachers did (see OSM Table 5).

## Discussion

The present study confirms education professionals' high degree of consensus on the importance of children's participation. This was true across all professional groups and all institutional settings considered. In line with expectations, we also find that all professionals favor integration by migrants, while clearly rejecting segregation and at least in principle rejecting assimilation. However, a closer look reveals some differences between professional groups and institutional contexts according to participation in general, and migrant children's integration in particular.

### The views of professionals on participation

In our study, teachers are more reserved or critical than day care and after-school educators and social workers concerning children's participation. Specifically, aspects such as encouraging children to express their ideas, supporting their initiative, and discussing questions and issues enjoy significantly less approval from teachers compared to other professional groups. Some differences among these other groups, both compared to each other and to teachers, appear as well, but do not indicate a systematic and coherent pattern, as can be observed for teachers. While this study can only provide preliminary data with respect to professional, organizational or institutional issues that may constrain children's participation, they do point to casual differences. More specifically, compared to the contexts of early childhood education and social work, the school context represents a fairly closed institutional setting. This could have been what the teacher meant when he wrote the quote "Migrant children are not the problem. The problem is the need to make the administration happy, but not the children." at the end of the survey. School contexts follow specific rules, exhibit characteristic spatial and temporal structures, and execute a highly rigid program with respect to children and their education (Tyack & Tobin 1994). This shapes not only opportunities and constraints for children's participation and behavior, but also impacts teachers' attitudes and practices (and parents' school-related expectations as well, as Tyack and Tobin demonstrated). When discussing the socializing power of school, Feichter (2020) refers to challenges and obstacles for children's participation anchored in the structural and interactional orders of school, such as heteronomy, power imbalances, adaptation and conformity, routines, individualization, performance and competition (2020: 32–33). Although Feichter focused on the impact of these factors on children's participation in school, it is reasonable to assume that they also influence teachers' orientations and practices, since teachers themselves provide a structural and normative framework for a specific understanding of professional teaching practice. Some of these factors, such as power imbalances, routines, and to a certain extent adaptation and individualization, have

a substantial and obvious impact on children's participation in early childhood education and social work as well. Other factors, such as performance and competition, have a much weaker or no impact, which leaves more space open for strategies and opportunities to promote children's participation. As the present study shows, each of the three professional contexts (i.e., child day care, school, and social work's educational settings) limit children's participation it infringes upon the main goals of the profession or prerequisites for achieving them. Unlike for non-school educators and social workers, ensuring pupils' performance according to predefined requirements represents one of the main professional goals for teachers and a benchmark of their professionalism. This may explain why teacher's attitudes to children's participation are more restrictive.

Given the importance of children's participation, as emphasized by both the UNCRC and research, the tension between the importance of participation and its implementation in educational contexts deserves closer scrutiny. Assuming that this tension is not about professionals' structural limitations and related interests, nor a lack of knowledge or awareness concerning children's participation, it may indicate that professionals have different conceptions and understandings of participation, which need not necessarily contradict the normative guidance provided for instance by the UNCRC. Moreover, to a certain extent, those different understandings may affirm the importance of children's participation in light of the unique structural and professional aspects of different educational contexts and the professionals who work in them.

One reason for the challenging complexity in implementing participation is its multidimensionality. Participation, or even agency, is neither a given capacity of children, nor a question of conditions alone (Esser 2016). Participation can be considered a process that arises from the interplay between particular acts of participation; given, presupposed or denied capacities to participate; and the opportunities and conditions for individuals or groups of individuals to act as participants. This interplay is essential to considerations of children's participation, including but not limited to in pedagogical contexts, and with the view of children as social and societal agents. Bettmer argues that participation has a pedagogical function, because "with its realization the prerequisites are created for individuals to develop the necessary competencies for participation" (2008: 215), and this is crucial not only to children's participation. It may also be important for developing a better understanding of what participation in different educational contexts means and what promoting and constraining children's participation in these contexts looks like in practice. This perspective will need to consider that there are probably different valid and valuable concepts for children's participation.

Childhood in contemporary societies can be characterized as highly institution-alized (Mierendorff 2010). Day care, school, and even social work today not only represent normal parts of children's life experiences and social environments. They also play a role in children's upbringing and education in the sense of institutions

assigned to related societal functioning. In light of the discussion around a relational conceptualization and understanding of agency (Scherr 2012; Esser 2016) and the conceptual linkage between children's agency and participation, a more relational approach to participation may be better able to capture the relationship between institutional aspects, professional attitudes, and professionals' self-understandings. At the same time, it may propose that children's participation be conceptualized differently with respect to its insinuated, normative meaning. This does not mean falling back on an understanding of children's agency and participation as a situational expression of the relation between individuals and structure. On the contrary, a relational approach to participation considers the relations among different actors, including children, and its meanings to and at different places as schools, day care centers, etc. Thus, a relational approach to participation may be able to overcome an essentialist view on children's participation, which identifies a rather clear opposition between the normative view of children's participation and its opportunities and (particularly) constraints in practice. If these constraints are considered to be related to institutional goals and requirements and at least a shared understanding of institutions' societal tasks and functioning, then participation is also linked to the institutional frameworks of schools and other educational institutions (Feichter 2020: 28). This does not mean denying the need for changes in day care centers, schools and social work in terms of their structural conditions, legal and conceptual foundation, and their workers' professional attitudes. Instead, a relational perspective on participation may be able to identify hindering aspects and practices related to children's participation with no substantial foundation in institutional functioning or in professional knowledge. This may provide findings and thus recommendations for how to ensure, promote and increase children's participation.

## **Cultural attitudes, participation and integration**

Concerning acculturation attitudes, while albeit small, the observed differences between professional groups are not consistent. Professionals working in the institutional context of schools, which in Germany includes both teachers and after-school educators, more often tend to endorse assimilation. This does not necessarily indicate pro-assimilation attitudes or expectations among these two groups of professionals in general, but may merely reflect concerns about immigrant children's integration success. Research in Germany show the high emphasis of teachers on migrant children's language proficiency as a presupposition of proper integration in school system, and related patterns institutional discrimination of migrant children by the school system, which often lead to quite well-intentioned practices of exclusion and attribution of migrant children (Gomolla 2013). This at least means exclusion of migrant children according to not only the prerequisites of successful social integration,

but also concerning participation itself, when language and other competencies are considered similarly. Accordingly, assimilation and participation concerning migrant children may be interrelated in terms of learning and gaining (necessarily considered) competencies to properly participate not only in the sense of participation itself, but with regard to the school, its rules and expectations. This link to the institutional setting of the school (or and nuanced in day care, social work etc.) might limit migrant children's participation instead of considering it as a substantial resource for integration. In this sense, integration may be understood as stepwise reduction of those limitations regarding the educational context.

Considering the societal mandates of institutions such as schools or day care centers may help to identify and better understand the relations between participation and immigrant integration. The correlation between assimilation and participation in schools observed in this study perhaps stems from the specific institutional character of schools rather than an endorsement of assimilative attitudes in principle or a delay or denial of migrant children's participation. For migrant children in schools, this probably means that assimilation into a school as an institution and as an everyday social environment is particularly important, even more so than for native-born German children, in order to meet the school's educational requirements. Thus, migrant children's participation to some extent requires individual effort to meet these requirements. In our experience obtained by presenting the CHILD-UP project to a German school, one of the teachers in the audience commented: "Integration is all about language." What may initially seem a flippant remark actually elucidates a central prerequisite for individual success in school, which is also a condition for societal integration, given the dominant use of the German language in German schools. Firstly, this indicates a need for changes to institutional conditions and tasks and how they are perceived by professionals. Second, it indicates the need for a better understanding of the relationship between participation and immigrant integration and how to support both from the perspective of different groups of professionals, particularly given the preliminary character of the reported quantitative results. Regarding these results in particular, and the significant role of schools and other institutions for migrant children's integration (Sime & Fox 2015) in general, one aim of the corresponding qualitative study within the CHILD-UP project is to investigate the relations between integration, participation and the particular institutional conditions from the point of view of different professionals, with the goal of identifying opportunities for improvement.

## Conclusion

The present study emphasizes that participation and inclusion are not only expressions of the individual attitudes and practices of professionals, but are in interaction with the logics of the respective educational setting. Accordingly, teachers were

found to have more restrictive ideas about participation and to endorse assimilation more strongly than the other groups of professionals. The study points to the necessity of illuminating this interplay of personal attitudes and practices with expectations and norms of the respective educational setting in order to promote participation and integration of children with a migration background.

## References

- Baraldi C. (2014), Children's Participation in Communication Systems: A Theoretical Perspective to Shape Research, in: Warehime, M.N. (Ed.), *Soul of Society: A Focus on the Lives of Children & Youth (Sociological Studies of Children and Youth, Vol. 18)*, Emerald Group Publishing Limited, pp. 63–92.
- Baraldi C. (2015), Promotion of Migrant Children's Epistemic and Authority in Early School Life, "International Journal of Early Childhood", Vol. 47, Issue 1, pp. 5–25.
- Baraldi C., Iervese V. (2014), Observing Children's Capabilities as Agency, in: Stoecklin, D., Bonvin, JM. (Eds.), *Children's Rights and the Capability Approach. Children's Well-Being: Indicators and Research*, vol 8. Springer, Dordrecht. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9091-8\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-017-9091-8_3)
- Bettmer F. (2008), Partizipation, in: Coelen, T., Otto, H.U. (Eds.), *Grundbegriffe Ganztagsbildung: Das Handbuch*, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, pp. 213–221.
- Christof E. (2020), Berufsbezogene Überzeugungen angehender LehrerInnen zu Partizipation von SchülerInnen, in: Gerhartz-Reiter, S., Reisenauer, C. (Eds.), *Partizipation und Schule*, Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, pp. 291–308.
- Church, A., Bateman, A. (2019), Children's Right to Participate: How Can Teachers Extend Child-Initiated Learning Sequences? "International Journal of Early Childhood", Vol. 51, issue 3, pp. 265–281.
- van Deth J.W. (2003), Vergleichende politische Partizipationsforschung, "Vergleichende Politikwissenschaft", pp. 167–187.
- van Dick R., Wagner U., Adams C., Petzel T. (1997), Einstellungen zur Akkulturation: Erste Evaluation eines Fragebogens an sechs deutschen Stichproben, „Gruppendynamik“, Heft 1, Jg. 28, pp. 83–92.
- van Dick R., Wagner U., Adams C., Petzel T. (2014), *Einstellungen zur Akkulturation. Zusammenstellung sozialwissenschaftlicher Items und Skalen (ZIS) (Attitudes towards acculturation. Compilation of socio scientific items and scales)*, <https://doi.org/10.6102/zis155> [Accessed: 03.02.2021].
- Dewey J. (1993). Demokratie und Erziehung. Eine Einleitung in die philosophische Pädagogik. Beltz.
- Esser, F. (2016), Neither „thick“ nor „thin“: reconceptualising agency and childhood relationally, in: Esser, F., Baader M. S., Betz T., Hungerland B. (Eds.), *Reconceptualising Agency and Childhood. New perspectives in Childhood Studies*, New York NY: Routledge.
- Fachkommission Integrationsfähigkeit (2020), *Gemeinsam die Einwanderungsgesellschaft gestalten: Bericht der Fachkommission der Bundesregierung zu den Rahmenbedingungen der Integrationsfähigkeit*, Berlin: Zarbock.
- Feichter, H.J. (2020), Die Grammatik der Schule als Partizipationshindernis. Organisationstheoretische und schulkulturelle Überlegungen, in: Gerhartz-Reiter, S., Reisenauer, C. (Eds.), *Partizipation und Schule (participation and school)*, Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien, pp. 25–40.

- Gomolla M (2013), Fördern und Fordern allein genügt nicht, in: Auernheimer G. (ed.), *Schieflagen im Bildungssystem. Die Benachteiligung der Migrantenkinder*, Wiesbaden: Springer VS, pp. 87–102.
- Hansen R., Knauer R., Sturzenhecker B. (2006), *Die Kinderstube der Demokratie. Partizipation von Kindern in Kindertageseinrichtungen*, vol. 3, Kiel: hansadruck.
- Hansen Sandseter E., Seland M. (2015), Children's Experience of Activities and Participation and their Subjective Well-Being in Norwegian Early Childhood Education and Care Institutions, "Child Indicators research", Vol. 9, pp. 913–932.
- Houen S., Danby S., Farrel A., Thorpe K. (2016), Creating Spaces für Children's Agency: 'I wonder...' Formulations in Teacher-Child Interactions, "International Journal of Early Childhood", Vol. 48, pp. 259–276.
- Huppert A., Abs H.J. (2008), Schulentwicklung und die Partizipation von Lehrkräften., "Zeitschrift für internationale Bildungsforschung und Entwicklungspädagogik", Vol. 3, pp. 8–15.
- IFP – Bayerisches Staatsinstitut für Arbeit und Sozialordnung, Familie und Frauen, Staatsinstitut für Frühpädagogik (2012), *Der Bayerische Bildungs- und Erziehungsplan für Kinder in Tageseinrichtungen bis zur Einschulung*, München, Berlin: Cornelsen.
- James A. (2011), To Be (Come) or Not to Be (Come): Understanding children's citizenship, "The Annals of The American Academy", pp. 167–179.
- Knauer R., Bartosch U. (2016). Demokratie: Kinder können mitbestimmen, „Kindergarten heute“, Vol. 8, pp. 10–15.
- Knauer R., Hansen R. (2020), *Erfolgreich starten. Leitlinien zum Bildungsauftrag in Kindertagesstätten*, in: Ministerium für Soziales, Gesundheit, Jugend, Familie und Senioren des Landes Schleswig-Holstein (eds.), Kiel: Hansadruck.
- Kriener M., Petersen K. (1999), *Beteiligung in der Jugendhilfepraxis. Sozialpädagogische Strategien zur Partizipation in Erziehungshilfen und bei Vormundschaften*, Muenster: Votum.
- Messmer H. (2018), Barrieren von Partizipation: Der Beitrag empirischer Forschung für ein realistisches Partizipationsverständnis in der Sozialen Arbeit, in: Dobslaw, G. (ed.), *Partizipation – Teilhabe – Mitgestaltung: Interdisziplinäre Zugänge*, Opladen: Budrich, pp. 109–128.
- Messmer H., Hitzler S. (2015), Ein- und Ausschließung im Hilfeplangespräch, in: Kommission Sozialpädagogik (ed.), *Praktiken der Ein- und Ausschließung in der Sozialen Arbeit*, Weinheim, Basel: Juventa, pp. 173–192.
- Mierendorff J. (2010), *Kindheit und Wohlfahrtsstaat: Entstehung, Wandel und Kontinuität des Musters moderner Kindheit*, Weinheim, München: Juventa.
- Mierendorff J. (2018), Potenziale eines wohlfahrtstheoretischen Zugangs in der Kindheitsforschung, in Betz T., Bollig S., Joos M., Neumann S. (ed.), *Institutionalisierungen von Kindheit. Childhood studies zwischen Soziologie und Erziehungswissenschaft*, Weinheim, München: Juventa, pp. 129–145.
- Pluto L. (2007), *Partizipation in den Hilfen zur Erziehung. Eine empirische Studie*, München: DJI Verlag.
- Pluto L., Seckinger M. (2003), Die wilde 13 –scheinbare Gründe, warum Beteiligung von Kindern und Jugendlichen nicht funktionieren kann, in: Sozialpädagogisches Institut (SPI) des SOS-Kinderdorf e.V. (Eds.), *Partizipation ernst nehmen (Taking participation seriously)*, Materialien 3, München: Eigenverlag, pp. 59–81.
- Pramling Samuelsson I., Sheridan S. (2013), Preschool a source for young children's learning and well-being, "International Journal of Early Years Education", Vol. 21, Issue: 2–3, pp. 207–222.

- Prout A. (2000), *Children's Participation: Control and Self-realisation in British Late Modernity*, "Children & Society", Vol. 14, pp. 304–315.
- Prout A., James A. (1990). *Constructing and Reconstructing Childhood: Contemporary issues in the Sociological Study of Childhood*, London: Falmer Press.
- Rap S. (2019), *The Right to Effective Participation of Refugee and Migrant Children: A Critical Children's Rights Perspective*, United Nations University Working Paper Series W-2019/3, Bruges.
- Rieker P., Mörgen R., Schnitzer A., Stroezel H. (2016), *Partizipation von Kindern und Jugendlichen. Formen, Bedingungen sowie Möglichkeiten der Mitwirkung und Mitbestimmung in der Schweiz*, Wiesbaden: Springer VS.
- Sandberg A., Eriksson A. (2010), Children's participation in preschool – on the conditions of the adults? Preschool staffs concepts of children's participation in preschool everyday life, "Early Childhood Development and Care", Vol. 180, Issue 5, pp. 619–631.
- Sauer K.E. (2009), *Integrationsprozesse von Kindern in multikulturellen Gesellschaften*, in: Geisen T, Riegel C. (ed), *Jugend, Partizipation und Migration. Orientierungen im Kontext von Integration und Ausgrenzung*, Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften, pp. 169–194.
- Scherr A. (2012). Soziale Bedingungen von 'Agency'. Soziologische Eingrenzungen einer sozialtheoretisch nicht auflösbaren Paradoxie, in Bethmann, S., Helfferich, C., Hoffmann, H., Niermann, D. (Eds.), *Agency: Die Analyse von Handlungsfähigkeit und Handlungsmacht in qualitativer Sozialforschung und Gesellschaftstheorie*, Weinheim, Basel: Beltz Juventa.
- Sime D., Fox R. (2015), *Migrant children, social capital and access to service*, "Children and Society", vol. 29, pp. 524–534.
- Sirkko R., Kyrönlampi T., Puroila A.M. (2019), Children's Agency: Opportunities and Constraints, "International Journal of Early Childhood", Vol. 51, pp. 283–300.
- Tyack D., Tobin W. (1994), The "Grammar" of Schooling: Why Has it Been so Hard to Change? "American Educational Research Journal", Vol. 31, No. 3, pp. 453–479.
- Wolf K. (1999), *Machtprozesse in der Heimerziehung. Eine qualitative Studie über ein klassisches Setting in der Heimerziehung*. Muenster: Votum.