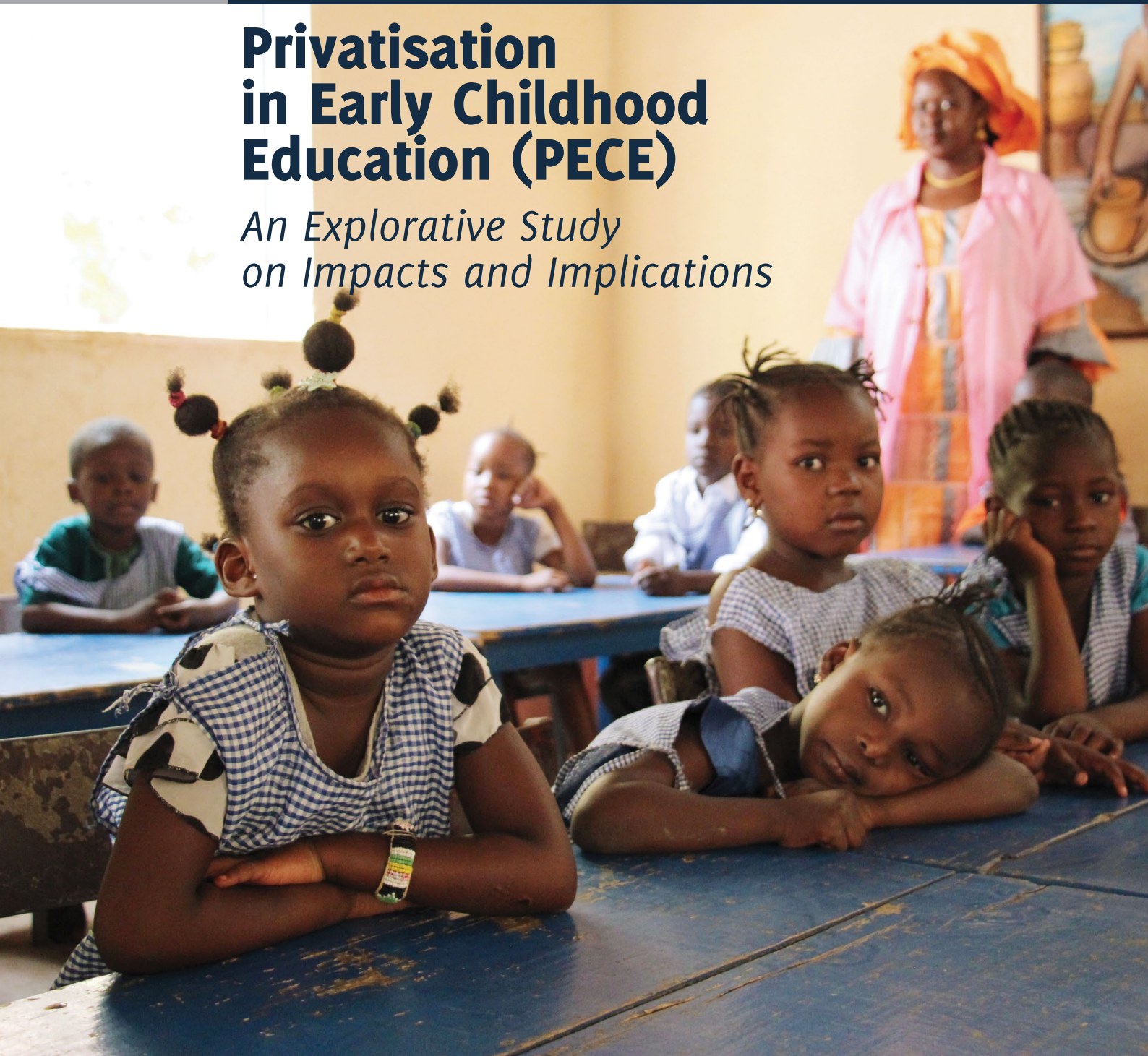




Education International
Internationale de l'Éducation
Internacional de la Educación

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

*An Explorative Study
on Impacts and Implications*



Mathias Urban and Clara Inés Rubiano

University of Roehampton, School of Education,
Early Childhood Research Centre

London, October 2014

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

Mathias Urban and Clara Inés Rubiano

University of Roehampton, School of Education, Early Childhood Research Centre

London, October 2014

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Acknowledgements..... | 6 |
| Acronyms and Abbreviations..... | 7 |
| Note on Terminology..... | 9 |
| | |
| INTRODUCTION..... | 10 |
| 1. PRIVATISATION IN EDUCATION..... | 12 |
| 1.1. An Overview..... | 12 |
| 1.2. Privatisation Trends and Developments..... | 13 |
| 1.3. Privatisation of Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Development Provision..... | 16 |
| 2. AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY..... | 19 |
| 2.1. The Survey..... | 21 |
| 2.2. Case Studies - Background Information Provided by Participating Unions..... | 23 |
| CASE STUDIES – FIRST GROUP..... | 23 |
| CASE STUDIES – SECOND GROUP..... | 25 |
| 2.3. Analysis of the Responses..... | 32 |
| 3. IMPACTS OF PRIVATISATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION..... | 33 |
| 3.1. Specific Trends and Developments..... | 33 |
| 3.2. Accessibility and Quality of Provision for Young Children and their Families..... | 37 |
| 3.3. Outcomes for Young Children and Families..... | 39 |
| 3.4. Workforce issues in early childhood provision..... | 40 |
| 3.4.1. Situation of the ECE Workforce..... | 40 |
| 3.4.2. Views on Effects of Privatisation in the ECE Workforce..... | 42 |
| 3.4.3. Challenges Facing ECE Practitioners..... | 43 |
| 3.5. Governance and Regulation of Private ECE Provision..... | 44 |

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

| | |
|--|----|
| 4. DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF PRIVATISATION IN ECE | 48 |
| 4.1. Understanding Trends and Impacts of Privatisation in ECE in 14 Different Socio-Cultural Contexts | 48 |
| 4.1.1. A Trend towards Increasing Privatisation in ECE | 49 |
| 4.1.2. A Privatisation Trend that Threatens to Overshadow Public ECE..... | 50 |
| 4.1.3. An emergent trend in ECE aiming to reverse privatisation..... | 50 |
| 4.2. Learning from the Case Studies | 51 |
| 4.2.1. Implications for the quality of ECE provision | 52 |
| 4.2.2. Implications for the ECE workforce..... | 54 |
| 4.2.3. Implications for ECE as a Profession | 57 |
| 4.3. Challenges to promoting and achieving free and public early childhood provision for all children | 61 |
| CONCLUSIONS..... | 65 |
| RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS | 67 |
| 1. Initiate and facilitate a critical debate about the impacts of the privatisation of ECE | 67 |
| 2. Build on and follow up on the initial findings of this study to deepen understandings of the processes and implications of privatisation locally and globally | 67 |
| 3. Build global and local leadership capacity and a knowledge base for ECE as a public good and public responsibility | 68 |
| REFERENCES | 70 |
| | |
| Annex 1. Reactions against privatisation in education | 74 |
| Annex 2. Participants in the study | 75 |
| Annex 3. Survey (first batch)..... | 76 |
| Annex 4. Survey (second batch)..... | 79 |
| Annex 5. Summary of impacts of privatisation in ECE | 84 |

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

Figures

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1 - Examples of forms of privatisation. | 14 |
| Figure 2 - Aspects of privatisation: dimensionality and interrelationality..... | 32 |

Tables

| | |
|---|----|
| Table 1 - Summary of trends and strategies of privatisation in ECE..... | 48 |
| Table 2 - Characteristics of the ECE profession in 14 different contexts..... | 57 |
| Table 3 - Summary of strategies to promoting and achieving free and public ECE..... | 62 |

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank Educational International (EI) for supporting us to conduct this study, and particularly Dennis Sinyolo, Guntars Catlaks, and Undarmaa Batsukh for their encouragement, helpful feedback and constructive comments on the report.

We would also like to thank the EI member organisations that participated in this study for sharing with us their views on the phenomenon of privatisation and their perceptions of the ways it influences Early Childhood Education in their countries.

Particular thanks to: Amy Sylla, Le Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Élémentaire (SNEEL/CNTS); Awa Wade and Mamadou Haby Ly, Union Démocratique des Enseignantes et Enseignants du Sénégal (UDEN); Chandra Prakash Rajbhandari, Nepal Teachers' Association (NTA); Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina (CTERA); Deirbhile Nic Craith, the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO); Enma Rosana Palacios Barriga, Unión Nacional De Educadores (UNE); Gina Sevilla Aguilar, Asociación Nacional de Educadores (ANDE); Grethel Mora Chacón, Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores de La Educación Costarricense (SEC); Guillermo Scherping Villegas, Colegio de Profesores de Chile (CPC); Gun Aamodt and Einar Juell, the Union of Education Norway (UEN); Jenny Davies, the Te Riu Roa, New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI); Maria Cynthia Dizon-Gealogo, Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT); Marie Antoinette Corr, Gambia Teachers Union (GTU); Marilou C. Pantaleon, Teachers Organization of the Philippines Public Sector (TOPPS); Milagros C. Ogalinda, National Alliance of Teachers and Office Workers (SMP NATOW); Palham Anthonio Kwesi Oyiye, Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT); Teresita Rey, Federación Uruguaya de Magisterio - Trabajadores de Educación Primaria (F.U.M.-T.E.P.); and Véronique Brouillette, Centrale des Syndicats du Québec (CSQ).

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| ACT | Alliance of Concerned Teachers – The Philippines |
| ANDE | Asociación Nacional de Educadores in Costa Rica |
| ANEP | Administración Nacional de Educación Pública - Uruguay |
| BSE | Bachelor of Science in Education |
| CEN-CINAOI | Centros de Educación y Nutrición y Centros Infantiles de Atención Integral - Costa Rica |
| CHED | Commission on Higher Education – The Philippines |
| CINAI | Centros Infantiles de Atención Integral - Costa Rica |
| CPC | Colegio de Profesores de Chile |
| CPE | Centres de la Petite Enfance - Québec, Canada |
| CSQ | Centrale des syndicats du Québec, Canada |
| CTA | Central de Trabajadores de la Argentina |
| CTERA | Confederación de trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina |
| CWC | Council for the Welfare of Children – The Philippines |
| DepEd | The Department of Education – The Philippines |
| DSWD | Department of Social Welfare and Development – The Philippines |
| ECCD | Early Childhood Care and Development |
| ECD | National Early Childhood Development Policy Framework, Gambia |
| ECE | Early Childhood Education |
| ECEC | Early Childhood Education and Care |
| EI | Education International |
| EPE | L'éducation de la petite enfance |
| EPI | Educación de la Primera Infancia |
| F.U.M.- T.E.P. | Federación Uruguaya de Magisterio - Trabajadores de Educación Primaria, Uruguay |
| GATS | General Trade Agreement on Trade in Services |
| GES | Ghana Education Service |
| GNAT | Ghana National Association of Teachers |
| GOALS | Gambia Active Open Learning Spaces |
| GoG | Government of Ghana |
| GTU | Gambia Teachers Union |
| HEI | Higher Learning Institutions |
| HSE | Health Service Executive, Ireland |
| IIEP | International Institute for Education Planning - UNESCO |
| IIPMV | Instituto de Investigaciones Pedagógicas "Marina Vilte" |
| ILO | International Labour Organization |
| INAU | Instituto del Niño y del Adolescente del Uruguay |
| INTO | Irish National Teachers' Organisation |
| IRPP | Institute for Research on Public Policy - Canada |
| JUNJI | Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles - Chile |
| MEC | Ministerio de Educación y Cultura - Uruguay |
| MEP | Ministerio de Educación Pública - Costa Rica |
| MINEDUC | Ministerio de Educación - Chile |
| NAP | Núcleos de Aprendizajes Prioritarios - Argentina |
| NCCA | National Council for Curriculum and Assessment - Ireland |
| NGO | Non-government organisations |
| NTA | Nepal Teachers' Association |
| NUT | National Union of Teachers-UK |

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| NZEI | New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa - New Zealand |
| OCDE | Organización para la Cooperación y Desarrollo Económicos (OECD) |
| PDIFE | Politique de Développement Intégrée de la Petite Enfance – Sénégal |
| PFI | Private Finance Initiatives |
| PPP | Public-Private Partnerships |
| RSG | Les Responsables de Services de Garde en milieu familial in Québec, Canada |
| SEC | Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores de la Educación Costarricense |
| SMP NATOW | National Alliance of Teachers and Office Workers – The Philippines |
| SNEEL/CNTS | Le Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Élémentaire - Sénégal |
| TOPPS | Teachers Organization of the Philippines Public Sector – The Philippines |
| UDEN | Union Démocratique des Enseignantes du Sénégal |
| UEN | Union of Education Norway |
| UNE | Unión Nacional de Educadores, Ecuador |

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

Note on Terminology

One of the central challenges for the field of Early Childhood Education, Care and Development has been the fragmentation of its services and institutions, and the multitude of professional and paraprofessional roles of those working with young children, their families and communities. In addition to a wide variety of providers (public, private-for-profit, private-non-profit), there is a persistent conceptual (and practical) split between activities and services seen as providing 'early education' and those providing 'childcare'. So-called 'split systems' often differentiate between childcare (to support working parents) for children under the age of three, and preschool for children from three to compulsory school age. In recent years, there has been growing recognition by policy makers that this artificial divide is not sustainable and that children's education, care, and upbringing are inseparable. International actors (OECD, Education International, UNICEF, UNESCO, European Union) recognise the need to overcome the divide, and integrating the term 'Early Childhood Education and Care' (ECEC) is now widely accepted. At local level, countries are increasingly moving towards 'integrated systems' with early childhood institutions providing care and education as part of the same programme and under the auspices of one (lead) government department (either education or welfare). However, as we have argued in a previous study commissioned by EI (Urban, 2009), the term ECEC can be limiting, too: as much as it brings education and care together, it also maintains the conceptual difference between 'care' and 'education' practices. Recent research has shown that, even in countries with fully integrated systems (e.g. the Scandinavian countries), a conceptual split persists between 'care' and 'education' practices. 'Education' continues to be valued higher than 'care' (Urban, Vandebroek et al., 2011, 2012). Therefore, we argue for the use of the term 'Early Childhood Education' (ECE), with a definition of education in the broadest sense.

For the purposes of this study, it is important to note that, until recently, teachers' unions seemed to be reluctant to acknowledge the contribution made by practitioners with low or no formal qualifications to the development and education of young children. While qualified preschool teachers were represented by teachers' unions, paraprofessionals, childcare workers, *madres comunitarias* were represented partially or not. This is changing, not least thanks to the advocacy of organisations such as EI. The International Labour Organization (ILO) has adopted 'Policy Guidelines on the promotion of decent work for early childhood education personnel' (ILO, 2014) which were developed in consultation with social partners including EI. The 'Policy Guidelines' offer a broad and integrating definition of all practitioners working with young children from birth to compulsory school age. ECE 'personnel', the document states, encompasses teachers and educators as well as auxiliary staff, care workers, assistants and 'similar staff' (ILO, 2014, p.3). We welcome these guidelines and refer to all staff with the generic term 'practitioner'. However, where the participants of our country case studies chose to use a different term (most often, 'teacher'), the terminology was kept unchanged.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, privatisation has become a ubiquitous phenomenon in education systems around the world, nurtured by an increasingly unashamed embracing of neo-liberal ideology in all aspects of human life.

Although an ongoing controversial debate about privatisation addresses issues such as its trends, developments, purposes, and forms (Ball and Youdell, 2007; Macpherson et al., 2014), less is known about its impacts and implications in specific educational fields such as early childhood education (ECE). There are indications, however, that private provision of early childhood education and care can result in poor quality of provision and an increase of social exclusion (OECD, 2006; Lloyd and Penn, 2012; UNICEF, 2008; Ebrahim, 2010; and Islam, 2010).

Proponents of public education realise that various forms of privatisation impact on the organisation, management, and delivery of education, and that privatisation tendencies change the nature of teachers' day-to-day activities and the way they experience their working lives (Ball and Youdell, 2007).

Based on this realisation, Education International (EI) has supported and initiated research into various aspects of ECE, including the impacts of privatisation on access, quality, and equity, and on conditions of service for teaching and support staff (EI, 2011). This study builds on prior work of the authors in ECE as well as on previous EI reports and studies on privatisation of education and public-private partnerships. It extends the scope of these reports with a specific focus on the impacts and implications of privatisation of early childhood provision. The purpose of the study is to gather practice-based evidence (Urban, 2010) which can be used by EI and its affiliates, and other interested organisations, to advocate for public provision of ECE and the need to regulate the private ECE sector.

This report presents the outcomes of a qualitative inquiry that explores privatisation in ECE through the perceptions of various stakeholders, specifically early childhood practitioners and union representatives from 14 countries: *Argentina, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, The Gambia, Ghana, Ireland, Nepal, New Zealand, Norway, The Philippines, Senegal, and Uruguay*. The study attempts to open a discussion through generating questions for reflection on the risks of privatisation in early childhood provision for the outcomes for young children and their families and for the quality of provision in ECE.

The report is presented in four sections: section one provides an overview of privatisation in education and discusses specific developments in ECE. The second section presents the research methodology, background information of the participating countries, and the specific procedures applied to collect and analyse the information. The third section reports the impacts of privatisation in ECE as perceived and interpreted by the participants (*case studies*). In the fourth and final section, the authors develop a discussion on different understandings of privatisation trends in ECE and their implications with an emphasis on learning from the case studies' experiences. The debate concludes with a discussion of the challenges to promoting and achieving free and public early childhood provision for *all* children and by posing questions for reflection and further exploration.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

This explorative study which should be seen as a pilot for an urgent larger-scale investigation shows that there is a trend towards increasing privatisation in ECE envisaged in endogenous and exogenous forms of privatisation¹ along with a privatisation tendency that threatens to overshadow public ECE. The participating country case studies show that the expansion of the private sector has implications for the quality of the provision and that this is fostering ways of discrimination against members of the ECE workforce. The inquiry also reveals that the ECE profession is actively resisting different forms of power regarding the phenomenon of privatisation, while governments and unions are facing challenges around achieving free and public ECE provision for *all*. The findings suggest that there is a need to create 'democratic spaces' and conditions for active democratic practice (Moss, 2007; Moss and Urban, 2010) in order to counterbalance the ideology of the market.

¹ *Endogenous* privatisation refers to the adoption of ideas, methods and practices from the private sector in the public sector. It is about privatisation 'in' the public sector. *Exogenous* privatisation means replacing some or all of public education by services offered by the private sector. This includes the use of private sector providers to design, manage, or provide various aspects of public education. *Exogenous* privatisation, in short, means privatisation 'of' the public sector.

1. PRIVATISATION IN EDUCATION

1.1. An Overview

Privatisation of education is a common trend in national and global arenas, extending from primary to secondary, post-secondary, and higher education. Private educational activities have become an increasingly regular part of educational provision in many countries. The expansion of private educational provision, and the support this expansion has received from the World Bank, for example, is framed by a wider discourse on the development of Knowledge Economies on a global scale – as outlined in the 2002 World Bank publication, ‘Constructing Knowledge Societies’: ‘The ability of a society to produce, select, adapt, *commercialize*, and use knowledge is critical for sustained economic growth and improved living standards’ (World Bank, 2002, p.7, emphasis added).

In line with this school of thought, private agencies play an important role in helping entire national education systems to adapt to the perceived challenges of the ‘learning’ economy through the formation of ‘a strong human capital base [...] and the construction of an effective national innovation system’ (ibid). These challenges consist of ‘well-articulated networks of firms, research centres, universities, and think tanks that work together to take advantage of the growing stock of global knowledge, assimilate and adapt it to local needs, and create new technology’ (World Bank, 2009). Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) are seen as a key instrument for promoting lifelong learning and for supporting private education, especially in developing countries where, it is claimed, governments cannot support public schools for all:

‘However, there are other providers of education. Private education encompasses a wide range of providers including for-profit schools (that operate as enterprises), religious schools, non-profit schools run by NGOs, publicly funded schools operated by private boards, and community owned schools. In other words, there is a market for education. In low income countries excess demand for schooling results in private supply when the state cannot afford schooling for all. (World Bank, 2010)

The concept of lifelong learning is closely linked to the overall frame of ‘knowledge economy’. It is, however, a highly problematic concept and has been widely criticised for its overemphasis on individualism and neo-liberal values. The values underpinning the lifelong learning agenda are deeply embedded in Western societies with their emphasis on personal autonomy and are not necessarily shared by societies and communities that emphasise collectivist values (as is the case in many Asian, Muslim, African, and Indigenous communities). They differ markedly from the values promoted by entities such as the European Union or the World Bank and cross-cultural psychologists strongly argue against the idea that Western educational values should be seen as universal (Elliott and Grigorenko, 2008; Triandis, 2001).

‘In fact, the values that the World Bank is recommending instilling in children are those of a competitive marketplace that emphasises individual competition. The World Bank is advocating changing the cultural values of many groups of peoples’ (Spring, 2008, p.41)

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

Promoting private (for-profit) education and PPPs as a solution for developing countries whose governments apparently 'cannot afford schooling for all' is questionable for other reasons, as well. Most importantly, it completely avoids any discussion on why it might be and whether it should be acceptable that countries under the influence of international agencies are left without sufficient funds for public education for all. As a matter of political and ethical choice, many agencies strongly argue for a renewed effort to strengthen education as a public responsibility instead. In Europe, for instance, the Barcelona-based teachers' association, Rosa Sensat, has published a call for 'a new public education' as a key to democratisation and social justice (Associació de Mestres Rosa Sensat, 2010; Balaguer in Miller, Dalli, and Urban, 2011).

On a global scale, EI insists that education cannot be treated as a commodity but is in fact a basic human right and a public good. All governments are responsible for providing free public education for all children. As privatisation and globalisation of education soars, EI has expressed concerns that further 'liberalisation' of international trade regulations will see educational services covered by commercial trade agreements and will result in further commoditisation of a 'res publica' and basic human right (Education International, 2009).

1.2. Privatisation Trends and Developments

In the last decades, privatisation has been defined as a policy tool (Murphy et al., 1998, p.5; Ball and Youdell, 2007, p.9) mostly encouraged by the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS²) on an international scale (Fitz and Beers, 2002, p.138). The GATS seeks an expanded role both for market forces and for private investment in education and it is expected that participating countries develop appropriate policy frameworks (ibid) in which governments tend to consider 'privatisation at both the core of the new political-economic axis supporting society' (Murphy et al., 1998, p.3) and a fundamental element in the restructuring of education as an answer 'for sustained economic growth and improved living standards' (World Bank, 2002).

In the dynamics of global change, privatisation of education has evolved under a variety of forms and purposes. For example, initiatives such as contracting, grant/subsidy, vouchers, and volunteerism have been identified as ways to privatise education when governments aim to replace their services and look for other sources to finance the provision of services (Murphy et al, 1998). Moreover, the number of fully privately managed and funded schools appear to provide an answer to an increasingly diversified demand in terms of content or teaching methods, and to the desire of families to choose the schools for their children (Levin and Belfield, 2002). Furthermore, some privatisation strategies are camouflaged by the language of 'educational reform' (Ball and Youdell, 2007). These strategies have been classified as *endogenous* and *exogenous* (ibid, p.9). According to Ball and Youdell, the former involve the importing of ideas, techniques, and practices from the private sector in order to make the public sector more business-like. And the latter imply that public education services are open to private sector participation on a for-profit basis and to using the

² (E.g. the Uruguay meeting of the World Trade Organisation in WTO, in Fitz and Beers, 2002, p.138).

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

private sector to design, manage, or deliver aspects of public education (ibid). Examples of these forms of privatisation are summarised in Figure 1:

Figure 1 - Examples of forms of privatisation.

| | | 1998 | | 2002 | | 2007 | | | | |
|--|--|---|--------------------|--------------------|--|--|---------|--|---|--|
| Provision/Distribution | Government | Government | Private | Government | Private | Government | | | | |
| | Private | Government | Private | | | | Private | | | |
| | | <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Government Service</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Government Vending</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"> Contracting Grant/Subsidy Voucher Franchise Deregulation </td> <td style="text-align: center;"> User Fees Market & Volunteer Volunteerism Self Help Load-Shedding Asset Sales </td> </tr> </table> | Government Service | Government Vending | Contracting Grant/Subsidy Voucher Franchise Deregulation | User Fees Market & Volunteer Volunteerism Self Help Load-Shedding Asset Sales | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully privately managed and funded schools • Privately managed schools financed by public funds • Public schools fully or partially financed by private funds • Public schools run as private institutions and which compete for public funds • Private courses complementing the education provided in public schools or universities • Private contracting of certain services • Distance courses • New information technology opens the way to many new forms of privately financed education to satisfy many different needs <p style="text-align: right;">(Levin and Belfield, 2002, p.9)</p> | <p>Schools being business-like or like businesses: 'endogenous' privatisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quasi-markets • Performance management, accountability, and performance-related pay • The Manager and New Public Management <p>Bringing the Private Sector into Public Schools: 'exogenous' privatisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public education for private profit • Private sector supply of education: contracting out services • Private sector supply of education: contracting out schools • Public-Private Partnerships • International capital in public education • Commercialisation or Cola-isation • Philanthropy, subsidy, aid <p style="text-align: right;">(Ball and Youdell, 2007)</p> |
| Government Service | Government Vending | | | | | | | | | |
| Contracting Grant/Subsidy Voucher Franchise Deregulation | User Fees Market & Volunteer Volunteerism Self Help Load-Shedding Asset Sales | | | | | | | | | |

(Murphy et al., p. 8)

Because of the remarkable growth in these forms and nuances of privatisation in education, it should be noted that there are studies that have focused on its causes, consequences and implications. For instance, the UNESCO International Institute for Education Planning (IIEP) has found that the motives for privatisation in developed and developing countries vary and that any form of privatisation adopted is also specific to the country and its economic and demographic situation (Levin and Belfield, 2002). The IIEP identifies four main factors motivating privatisation in education. The first factor is related to parents' desire: *'many parents want it'*. In many countries, education is viewed as an important way to gain social and economic advancement. If governments cannot afford to provide and fund all the education that parents expect for their children, then those parents look for private suppliers (ibid, p.29).

The second factor is linked to *the quality and the reductions in funds available to the public sector*: the decline in the quality of education may be a consequence of a fall in per-student funding (ibid, p.31). The third concern is about *the global economic and social change*: globalisation, linked with market liberalisation, has both pressured and encouraged governments to seek more efficient,

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

flexible, and expansive education systems (ibid, p.32). The IIEP has identified this last factor as *the encouragement of world aid agencies, such as the World Bank*. This latter has given assistance to some countries to encourage:

- competition between public and private institutions
- formal private-sector participation in vocational training - training of teachers
- better management of private contractors by the public sector, and
- private banks to operate as financiers for student scholarships

According to Levin and Belfield (2002), the World Bank and other supranational agencies have invigorated reforms which lean towards privatisation of the education system and have extended a wider discourse on the development of Knowledge Economies.

As a consequence, there have been reactions against those educational reforms and teachers' unions, teachers, and students have been joining efforts through campaigns, protests and strikes against the privatisation of education worldwide (see Annex 1). In England, for example, the National Union of Teachers (NUT) opposes the government's moves to force schools to become academies (Mulholland and Shepherd, 2012). In France, teachers, unions, and students are resisting privatisation reforms that undermine public education and weaken collective rights and teacher status (GCE, 2012). In Spain, unions along with parents' and students' associations are fighting against policies that may lead to the privatisation of education services (EI, 2012). In India, teacher educators and students have had to defend education and discuss the impact of privatisation of education on the quality of education in live debates (Goswami, 2012). In Colombia, teachers' and students' unions are resisting the enactment of the new education reform in which 'privatisation trends jeopardize public education' (El Colombiano, 2011). Immersed in this climate of anti-privatisation, the NUT has expressed fears that, in England, 'the education system could be completely privatised by 2015' (Mulholland and Shepherd, 2012):

"Unless we, as the trade union movement, in conjunction with community campaigning, are able to mount a significant campaign ... which is to oppose academies and free schools, there is the spectre of a completely fragmented and privatised [education] service that is not in anybody's interest" (Blower³ in Mulholland and Shepherd, 2012).

These scenarios demonstrate that privatisation of education distorts education as 'the key to uniting nations and bringing beings closely together' (EI, 2000) and emphasises the purpose of the privatisation trends 'towards promoting markets which are an important policy tool of neo-liberalism' (Torres, 2010, p.374). Besides that, privatisation in education boosts 'a free market system in which most services required by the community are supplied by private organisations seeking profit. In other words, the free market approach that leads to a marketised civil society in which competing providers increasingly offer services to individual consumers (Cronje et al., 2004, in Ebrahim, 2010, p.40).

³ Christine Blower, General Secretary of the National Union of Teachers (NUT) in England.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

The impacts and developments of the privatisation trends in education call into question one fundamental political and ethical assumption that underpins the preliminary report presented to the 5th EI World Congress in 2007: is education about giving each child, each young person, the opportunity to develop his or her full potential as a person and as a member of society? Or is education to be a service sold to clients, who are considered from a young age to be consumers and targets for marketing? (van Leeuwen in Ball and Youdell, 2007). There is no doubt that privatisation is a very complex phenomenon that permeates the field of (ECE) in pursuit of profit, and is flourishing in a neo-liberal climate embracing marketisation and competition.

1.3. Privatisation of Early Childhood Education and Early Childhood Development Provision

While the dangers of the privatisation, commodification, and globalisation of higher education are fairly well documented and researched (Spring, 2008), it seems that much less attention has been paid to the impacts of privatisation on the youngest children, their families, and communities. In their landmark international comparison, 'Starting Strong' (OECD, 2001, 2006), the authors express concern about the situation of the childcare sector in particular in many OECD countries:

'... the level of regulation of services for children under 3 gives rise for concern: much of the child care sector is private and unregulated, with staff training and pedagogical programming being particularly weak' (OECD, 2006, p. 14).

Internationally, there is an emerging discussion on the private provision of ECE and the expansion of services through privatisation resulting in lower quality. In the **United Kingdom**, for example, 'policies since 1997 have actively promoted the expansion of early education and care provision (of all kinds). As in other areas of state services, across the UK, the government has moved rapidly away from the concept of public provision of early education and care' (Penn, 2011, p.151). According to Penn (2011), the rationales for expansion of early education and childcare services have been threefold: the Labour government policy wanted to encourage mothers to work and predicted that mothers' earnings would lift children out of poverty and enable single mothers in particular to contribute to tax revenues rather than remain in receipt of benefits. There are also rationales for the expansion of nursery education for all three- and four-year-olds to improve educational outcomes. Moreover, there exists a motivation for the provision of services that has arisen through the government strategy, *Every Child Matters*, which was launched in England with a particular emphasis on 'keeping children safe' (ibid).

Penn (2011) points out that the UK Government has stimulated Private Finance Initiatives (PFIs) to provide capital for new projects in health and education. It has withdrawn from the direct provision of services in many aspects of social welfare and has encouraged business entrepreneurs or social enterprise organisations to deliver services on a business model, partly funded and regulated by the state. Penn (2011) adds that in the case of the UK, it is possible to argue that reliance on the for-profit sector in the field of early childhood education and care is problematic given that for-profit

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

care is volatile, dependent on local markets for uptake of places, expensive for parents, and frequently of poor quality. She claims that there is substantial evidence to suggest that it does not offer parents increased choice, nor does it provide more flexible provision. She suggests that the childcare market sector warrants more focused attention and emphasises the need for new strategies for monitoring and analysing its impact and evaluating its contribution to the wellbeing of young children, and to the wider social good.

In **Canada**, the Quebec Liberal party opposed the *Centres de la Petite Enfance (CPE)* in which parents were very happy to have access to high quality educational services for their children at an affordable price. This initiative was placed by the *Parti Québécois* as a *modèle unique* and the political party reassured families that waiting lists would end, that access would be better adapted to their needs (part-time care, flexible and atypical hours, etc.), and promised high quality services that set the children on a path towards educational success (Allaire, 2011). According to Allaire, the development of commercial for-profit day-care centres has been greatly encouraged by the Liberal government, which has substantially increased their subsidies. This ideological shift threatens to have very serious consequences for the quality of services offered to children:

“Working conditions in private day care centers are deplorable, and that affects the quality of care for children ... The battle for the quality of services is central ... We have a lot of solid data for the past 30 years, particularly research by the OECD, which shows that investment in early childhood is a factor in the development of countries” (Nathalie Bigras in Allaire, 2011, p.7)

Allaire (2011) points out that an Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP) study on the quality of childcare services analysed the quality of services offered in the various day-care environments and found that the *CPEs* and the regulated family environment services are generally of higher quality than the other types of service. Comparing *CPEs* with for-profit day-care centres, twice as many *CPEs* achieved a score of 5 to 5.9⁴, corresponding to good quality (28 per cent versus 14 per cent). Likewise, the percentage of *CPEs* rated as very good to excellent (a score of 6 or more) was over one in 20 (six per cent) while only 0.3 per cent of the latter achieved such a score. Moreover, seven per cent of for-profit day-care centres were judged inadequate, compared to only 0.6 per cent of *CPEs*.

Recent research from **South Africa** (Ebrahim, 2010) and **Bangladesh** (Islam, 2010) underlines the connection between private early childhood provision and social exclusion. In South Africa, the government has adopted a poverty targeted approach to early care and education provision which prioritises public funding for vulnerable and disadvantaged children (Ebrahim, 2010). Given the need to address past imbalances and the context of limited financial resources, the private sector has been given an increased role in financing and delivering early care and education (ibid). Ebrahim (2010) argues that little attention has been paid to how private providers configure their services and that the business approach in early care and education, with the focus on parents as customers, is narrow and limiting. Through the analysis of the discourses of private entrepreneurs and their staff

⁴ According to the Early Childhood Environments Rating Scale – Revised/ECERS-R, each centre gets a quality score starting from 1 “inadequate”, 3 “minimal”, 5 “good”, and 7 “excellent”.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

in two early childhood centres in urban KwaZulu-Natal, she points out that the business approach marginalises access for young children from disadvantaged groups and downplays the diversity that characterises young children's lives in South Africa.

In **Bangladesh** the prevailing thoughts and practices around early childhood as a professional field are a continuation of the trend that was introduced through colonisation in which, it is claimed, children will become the holders of rights, privileged and affluent. Islam (2010) argues that this approach does not reveal knowledge of young children's situation 'as it really is'; rather, it provides twisted understandings of young children. Drawing on a postmodern perspective, a study carried out to investigate the paradigm of early childhood professional practices in Bangladesh suggests an alternative paradigm of efficient professionalism, respectful of 'little narratives' – local voices, diversity, and the child's perspective – which is appropriate to the Bangladeshi context and embraces openness (ibid). Islam (2010) points out that in order to decolonise professional practices, this paradigm dismantles the colonial trend, challenges claims of transcendent forms of knowledge, and encourages new understandings of children in terms of their own circumstances.

Although previous studies on privatisation in ECE have examined how the flexibility of commercial for-profit services threatens quality, access for young children, and the ideal for children to become holders of rights, there has not been an emphasis on how the phenomenon of privatisation has been experienced by individuals on a day-to-day basis.

Therefore, this study builds on perceptions and interpretations of the impacts of privatisation in ECE in particular contexts. The understanding of this phenomenon is relevant for considering the growing attention to, and expectations of, ECE on a global scale. The study supports EI's global ECE task force in its efforts to look systematically into ECE practices and policies in different countries. It builds mainly on two previous EI reports: 'Early Childhood Education in Europe' (Urban, 2009) and 'Early Childhood Education: a global scenario' (Education International, 2010).

2. AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY

This explorative inquiry aims at describing new understandings of the impacts of privatisation in ECE and identifying questions to guide and deepen possible subsequent studies regarding privatisation in ECE.

The objectives of the study are:

1. To identify trends and impacts of privatisation in ECE in 14 countries with different socio-cultural backgrounds.
2. To capture situations in which we can learn about the implications of privatisation in ECE for accessibility and affordability, the quality of the provision, the workforce and ECE as a profession from the data generated in this study.
3. To provide insights in order to stimulate a discussion on the impacts and implications of privatisation in ECE.

This inquiry utilises 'case study' as a research strategy to make sense of the data and a phenomenological⁵ approach to interpret the information.

The *case study* approach, understood as 'an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context' (Yin, 1994, p.13) focuses on 'cases' from which the researchers gain insight into an issue (Stake, 1998, p.86). From this research basis, the empirical inquiry investigates the phenomenon of *privatisation* looking at *cases* in order to explore and understand its impacts and repercussions in the field of ECE. This qualitative inquiry emphasises the process of learning from 'the case' (Stake, 1998) and takes into consideration the difficulty of generalising from 'the particular' (Simons, 1996).

The phenomenological approach (Bowden and Green, 2005; Bowden and Walsh, 2000) maps the different ways in which people experience the phenomenon of privatisation. The analysis of the information builds on Simons' (1996, p.36) search for 'new ways of seeing and new forms of understanding, not only to represent what we come to know, but to see what we do not'. This particular research approach opens possibilities for exploring new ways and forms of understanding the impacts of privatisation in various socio-cultural contexts. It allows the researchers to reflect on these understandings and addresses them as implications for the quality of the ECE provision, ECE workforce, and ECE as a profession.

⁵ Phenomenography is a qualitative research methodology that explores the qualitatively different ways in which people experience something or think about something.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

Participants

EI identified member organisations that were invited and contacted directly by EI to take part in the study. Eighteen member organisations from four regions (Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe, Latin America, and North America) participated in the study (see Annex 2). The organisations are:

Africa

- Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT)
- Gambia Teachers Union (GTU)
- Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Élémentaire (SNEEL/CNTS/Senegal)
- Union Démocratique des Enseignantes du Sénégal (UDEN)

Asia-Pacific

- Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT/The Philippines)
- National Alliance of Teachers and Office Workers (SMP-NATOW/The Philippines)
- Nepal Teachers' Association (NTA), New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI Te Riu Roa)
- Teachers Organization of the Philippines Public Sector (TOPPS/The Philippines)

Europe

- Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO)
- Union of Education Norway (UEN)

Americas

- Asociación Nacional de Educadores (ANDE/Costa Rica)
- Colegio de Profesores de Chile (CPC/Chile)
- Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina (CTERA)
- Federación Uruguaya de Magisterio - Trabajadores de Educación Primaria (F.U.M.-T.E.P.)
- Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores de la Educación Costarricense (SEC/Costa Rica)
- Unión Nacional de Educadores (UNE/Ecuador)
- Centrale des Syndicats du Québec (CSQ/Canada).

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

2.1. The Survey

The survey aimed at exploring six topic areas in which participants were asked to report on the impacts of privatisation in ECE and the implications for policy and practice in their specific contexts. The survey (Cohen et al, 2007) addressed the following issues:

| | |
|---|--|
| Trends and developments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What are the current general (global) trends with regard to private early childhood provision? – What are international organisations’ and agencies’ perspectives on privatisation of early childhood provision? – What are the specific regional and local trends and developments with regard to privatisation of early childhood provision? |
| Accessibility and quality of provision for young children and their families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How does privatisation of early childhood provision affect the accessibility of early childhood provision for young children and families? – What are the implications for the quality of provision? |
| Outcomes for young children and families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are there identifiable implications of privatisation of early childhood provision for the outcomes for children and families? |
| Workforce issues in early childhood provision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – How does privatisation of early childhood provision affect practitioners? – What are the challenges the workforce face in the daily practice? – What are the implications of privatisation with regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - professionalisation and qualifications of the workforce - practitioner recruitment and retention - career and qualification pathways for practitioners - remuneration - diversity and equity within the early childhood workforce, e.g. gender, minority groups? |
| Governance and regulation of private ECE provision | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What strategies of governance and regulation have countries developed and adopted with regard to privatisation of early childhood provision? – What are the identifiable implications and consequences of these strategies? |
| Alternatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are there possible / plausible alternatives to privatisation of early childhood provision? – What strategies do countries/organisations employ to promote and achieve free and public early childhood provision for all children and families? |

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

It is worth mentioning that the survey was disseminated among EI affiliates in two different batches. It was first circulated at the end of 2011 (see Annex 3), and a slightly amended version of the instrument was distributed at the end of 2013 (see Annex 4). For the purpose of describing the information gathered, we refer to the 'first group' and 'second group' of participating countries.

The information provided by the first group of participating countries (Ireland, Nepal, Norway, and New Zealand) was the basis for interpreting different understandings of privatisation in ECE. Data from the second group of participating countries (Argentina, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, The Gambia, Ghana, the Philippines, Senegal, and Uruguay) complemented these views and provided additional insights.

2.2. Case Studies - Background Information Provided by Participating Unions

The participating countries are identified as 'case studies' which allows for the inclusion of more than one point of view from each country. It also emphasises the concept of learning from the different experiences unveiled by each case study in their particular socio-cultural context.

CASE STUDIES – FIRST GROUP

The Irish case study

In Ireland's ECE field, the Primary School Curriculum values the unique potential of each and every child. It is a child-centred curriculum, according to the Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO). The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) has developed a curriculum framework for children from birth to six called *Aistear* (Irish for 'journey'). *Aistear's* philosophy and approaches will inform the revision of the Primary School Curriculum. A 'Free Pre-school Year' (15 hours per week) is in place for all children, and providers must adhere to the principles of *Síolta* (Irish for 'seeds') - the national quality framework for early years care and education. In addition, there is a state-provided intervention preschool programme, 'Early Start', for three-year-old children in areas of acute social and educational disadvantage. ECE providers outside the state sector have varying philosophies and approaches, such as High Scope and Montessori. Moreover, the values of solidarity, diversity, equality, autonomy, and self-management underpin the Primary School Curriculum, at least in theory. According to the INTO:

Though most primary schools are denominational schools, they are inclusive and open to all pupils. In practice, the environmental conditions in many classrooms are inappropriate for young children. For example, many classrooms have 30 children or more with one teacher. The physical size of classrooms is often too small to facilitate active learning. Besides, globalisation has also led to an increase in migrant children and their families. The population of migrant families has led to increased diversity in the school system.

The Norwegian case study

In Norway, the government has integrated Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the ECE Act. Policies have been inspired by the OECD's 'Starting Strong' reports and their recommendations have had an impact both nationally and locally in the municipalities.

"In a globalised and changing world, our policies are seeking to offer an integrated pedagogy, promoting a holistic model, nationally and internationally, combining care and education based on research and experiences, first and foremost from practice in the Nordic countries. Over the years, there has been a stronger goal orientation with a focus on learning and assessment." (UEN)

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

The Union of Education Norway (UEN) reports that the Government has published guidelines and textbooks about diversity, equality, autonomy, and self-management and clarifies that UEN is awaiting a new White Paper⁶ about gender equality, discrimination, and structures for equality. The union adds that one interesting proposal aims at recruiting 20 per cent of men into the sector. This gender target quota is facilitated by overall legislation on equality.

In Norway, public municipal *barnehager* (kindergarten) cater for 57 per cent of children, and private *barnehager*, which are more numerous but smaller, cater for 43 per cent of Norway's children (OECD, 2006 in Education International, 2010, p.70).

The Nepalese case study

The Education Department of the Ministry of Education in Nepal is responsible for ECE and prepares the curricula, arranges training programmes for teachers, and manages the ECE structure in the country (EI, 2010). According to the Nepal Teachers' Association (NTA):

'Children are taught about diversity, equality, autonomy, self-management from a very early stage. These principles are put in practice in school itself by celebrating each other's festivals, treating every one of the children equally, making or facilitating children to solve their own problems.'

The NTA adds that, 'in Nepal, ECE is provided by the central government, as well as communities, non-government organisations (NGOs), and the private sector'. Approximately, 70 per cent of ECE provision is private and largely based in urban areas (Education International, 2010).

The New Zealand case study

According to the New Zealand Educational Institute (NZEI Te Riu Roa), the early childhood system in that country is based on a holistic curriculum document, *Te-Whāriki*, which is bicultural and relates to the local context:

'However, the delivery of this curriculum is threatened (or may be threatened) by the current ideological direction of education in the school system. The move to national standards, league tables, charter schools, performance pay, measurement of outcomes, and the subsequent pressures particularly on new entrant testing may have a negative impact on ECE service delivery. In addition, New Zealand is involved in talks on the Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, which is characterised as a trade agreement but which also includes services, including, very likely, education. This may bind the hand of future New Zealand governments in the area of educational autonomy in future.'

⁶ This is correct at the time the first phase of the study was conducted. The new White Paper can be found in Norwegian at <http://www.regjeringen.no/pages/38371282/PDFS/STM201220130044000DDDPDFS.pdf> or in English language: <http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld/topics/equality-and-discrimination/gender-equality.html?id=670481>

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

NZEI Te Riu Roa points out that the highly privatised ECE sector (although diverse in terms of ownership) is always at risk of international buyouts. This did happen with the Australian-based multinational, ABC, which owned a significant market share in New Zealand. The parent company went into receivership and the local centres were eventually bought by a New Zealand company. This company is now the largest single player in the sector. With high government subsidies guaranteeing cash flow and a steady growth in the sector, ECE will continue to be a potential attractive investment to international companies. Under Australian ownership, there were tensions between the educational goals of the ECE system (qualification requirements for teachers, professional autonomy, leadership, collaboration with families etc.) and the business model of the centres which was derived from the Australian commercial childcare approach.

NZEI Te Riu Roa states that ‘our curriculum document emphasises the critical role of socially and culturally mediated learning and of reciprocal relationships. It includes four principles – Relationships, Family and Community, Holistic Development, and Empowerment – and five strands – belonging, wellbeing, contribution, communication, and exploration. It includes concepts of diversity, equality, autonomy, and self-management. A government review body assess all services on a three yearly cycle, or more often if necessary, to check that they are delivering effective education’.

In New Zealand, the government funds and regulates ECE provision, but does not provide ECE services. Instead, services are provided by a mix of community groups and private business (Education International, 2010, p.61). The possible extension of charter schools into the preschool area is also noteworthy.⁷

CASE STUDIES – SECOND GROUP

The Argentinian case study

The ‘Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina’ (CTERA) says that educational policies to be implemented in Argentina should promote a sense of integration in order to overcome the fragmentation of the educational system:

...breaking with the reproduction of social gaps in education is an imperative for children to have equal opportunities in education, given that ECE is still a phenomenon that involves mostly four and five-year-old children (the age group to be universalized according to the LEN -national education law). The right to education for children under four years, who belong to the most economically neglected sectors, is violated even more because of the poor provision coverage for this age group. ECE provision for this age group is not mandatory and is supposed to be guaranteed by the State (CTERA).

⁷ http://www.nzei.org.nz/NZEI/Media/Releases/2014/6/Baby_charter_schools_raise_more_questions.aspx?

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

In Argentina, the National Law of Education (2006) defines ECE as a Pedagogic Unit which serves children from 45 days old to five years of age. According to feedback from the case study, ECE is still a largely urban phenomenon (report of the ECE situation: IIPMV, 2010):

'La expansión de EPI es dispar en su implementación y todavía nos falta mucho para consolidar este nivel educativo en todo el territorio argentino.'

The expansion of the ECE is uneven in its implementation and there is still a long way to consolidate this educational level throughout the Argentinian territory.

Public policies in Argentina that focus on improving ECE address issues such as reclaiming the child's centrality as a subject of rights; incorporating a variety of pedagogical approaches, teaching spaces and learning pathways; reconceptualising 'play' as a pedagogical approach, and facilitating the link between ECE and primary education.

The Canadian case study

ECE is a provincial responsibility in Canada, therefore the information provided by the 'Centrale des syndicats du Québec' (CSQ) for this case study relates only to the Province of Quebec.

According to CSQ, in 1997, the Quebec government decided to invest heavily in ECE services by creating low parental contribution educational childcare provision which was meant to be accessible to all parents with children under the age of five. Currently, parents can send their children to state-regulated childcare provision at a daily cost of \$7.

'Il existe ce qu'on appelle des «places protocoles» dans les Centres de Petite Enfance (CPE) québécois, c'est –à-dire que les parents bénéficiaires de l'aide sociale peuvent avoir accès à des services de garde gratuits pendant trois jours dans la semaine. Toutefois, les parents doivent prouver chaque mois qu'ils sont prestataires de l'aide sociale pour se prémunir de cette mesure spéciale' (CSQ).

There are so-called 'protocol places' in early childhood centres (CPE) in Quebec. This means parents on welfare benefits can access free childcare three days per week. However, to qualify for this special arrangement, they have to prove their benefit claimant status each month (our translation).

In Quebec, there are state-funded childcare centres (CPE) and family day-care provision, alongside state-subsidised and non-state-subsidised private childminders. Overall, 98 per cent of Quebec children aged five attend pre-primary school even though this is not compulsory for this age group. In addition, the Quebec government allowed full-time pre-primary school classes to be provided for four-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds in 2013.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

The Chilean case study

The Chilean education system defines ECE as the phase which promotes quality learning for all children in a systematic, suitable, and relevant way through various institutions and which complements the education provided by families.

The Colegio de Profesores de Chile (CPC) says that, in Chile, ECE is of a very poor standard due to the lack of resources and, above all, lack of coordination, both pedagogically and financially at national level:

‘La educación preescolar, en nuestro país, es impartida hoy por 5 instituciones diferentes, dentro de un sistema mixto; esto incluye a instituciones privadas, particulares subvencionadas, Ministerio de Educación de Chile, Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles y Fundación Integral.’

Preschool education in our country is provided today by five different institutions within a mixed system; this includes private institutions, private subsidised bodies, MINEDUC, JUNJI and Fundación Integral (our translation).

According to the CPC, these institutions have different educational standards in regard to child /teacher ratios, material and economic resources, plans and programmes, but they share the same administrative organisation: ‘Sala Cuna Menor’: children aged between 84 days and one year; ‘Sala Cuna Mayor’: one- and two-year-old children; ‘Nivel Medio Menor’: two- and three-year-olds; ‘Nivel Medio Mayor’: three- and four-year-olds; ‘Primer Nivel Transición’: four- to five-year-olds; and ‘Segundo Nivel de Transición’: five- to six-year-old children.

CPC points out that the current public educational policy tends to emphasise the instructional preschool with a bias on a school readiness, which in contrast to what unions suggest, is detrimental for the comprehensive conception of an education that focuses on a child’s overall aspects.

The Costa Rican case study

This case study is informed by two participating unions: the ‘Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores de La Educación Costarricense’ (SEC) and ‘The Asociación Nacional de Educadores (ANDE).

According to the SEC, Act 78 of the Costa Rican Constitution states that preschool and general basic education is mandatory, free, and subsidised by the state. The only requirement for entry into ECE is the infant’s chronological age: 4.3 months old for the interactive cycle II and 5.3 years of age for the transition cycle. The main challenge, according to SEC, is to achieve universal access for these age groups, given that preschool education is mandatory.

The SEC emphasises that Costa Rica promotes free and public ECE for under six-year-olds through sensitisation strategies for families and/or caregivers that reassures them of their relevant role in childhood socialisation. The Ministry of Education is responsible for promoting and providing

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

appropriate and effective ECE that reaches all places across the country and for recruiting specialist teachers in the area as well. The Ministry of Health is in charge of delivering stimulation and nutrition to children under six years through the Education and Child Nutrition Centre (CEN) and the Comprehensive Care Centers (CINAI) for children aged from six months up to seven years old. Besides, the so-called Community Homes supported by international organisations represent a comprehensive care programme for children from birth to six years of age living in single-family homes.

Currently, the President of Costa Rica has implemented 'La Red Nacional de Cuido' (The National Care Network), a day-care service exclusively for working single mothers' children living in poverty and social vulnerability. This service aims to foster the participation and coordination of public and private stakeholders to promote strategies, programmes, and projects that guarantee the protection, care, and overall development of children.

The Ecuadorian case study

In Ecuador, the Decennial Education Plan 2006-2015 (DEP) identifies 10 policies including one relating to care of children from birth up to five years of age through ECE. The 'Unión Nacional de Educadores' (UNE) argues that the current government does not have a political will to comply with this initiative given that the Ministry of Education indicated that care from birth to two years of age came under government programmes exclusively, while care for children aged three and four years old was optional.

The Gambian case study

According to the Gambia Teachers Union (GTU), a National Early Childhood Development (ECD) Policy framework was developed for 2009-2015 due to the following concerns: 1) Un-coordinated services stemming from the historically sector-based policies and strategies used for the administration of social services for families and young children; 2) Poor services which are a result of the lack of appropriate curricular practices and lack of educational, health, sanitary, and environmental facilities and services; 3) Inadequate early learning services for the under three-year-olds and the three- to six-year-olds; 4) Urban rural differences in access to services with more choices and better quality services found in urban settings; 5) High cost of services from private providers; and 6) Poor regulation of early years services.

The Basic and Secondary Education Directorate is responsible for leading and coordinating the National ECD which aims at 'promoting the holistic development (physical, personal, social and cognitive development) of all children 0-6 years regardless of creed, ethnicity, special needs and gender and to strive to provide all the support children, families and communities need to promote their children's development by addressing weaknesses in current provisions, addressing emerging needs in ECD and consolidating the gains registered in the ECD sector' (National Integrated ECD policy Framework 2009-2015).

These goals are based on a comprehensive assessment of the situation of early learning in particular scenarios in Gambia. They are currently considered apt for ensuring continued commitment and

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

investment in promoting the survival and life chances of the young children, especially those who are vulnerable by virtue of their socio-economic backgrounds.

The Ghanaian case study

According to the Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT), “in 2007 the Government of Ghana mainstreamed Kindergarten Education leaving out Pre-School education (i.e. Crèches and nurseries) to the Department of Social Protection under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection for the development of policy and its implementation.”

GNAT points out that there are compulsory ECE programmes for children aged from three to the obligatory school age. The union organises colloquia periodically to sensitise the Ghanaian public around issues of early childhood care and education through the national Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Coordinating Committee. This committee comprises representatives of all public sector workers who deal with children. This structure has been decentralised at local level in districts across the country.

The Philippine case study

Three different member organisations represent this case study. Their views complement each other. The National Alliance of Teachers and Office Workers (SMP-NATOW) says that the ECCD Law was enacted in the Philippines in 2000. This legislation recognises the importance of early childhood and its special needs, affirms parents as primary caregivers and the child’s first teachers, and establishes parent effectiveness, seminars and nutrition counselling for pregnant and lactating mothers. The Law also requires the establishment of a National Coordinating Council for the Welfare of Children which: (a) establishes guidelines, standards, and culturally relevant practices for ECCD programmes; (b) develops a national system for the recruitment, training, and accrediting of caregivers; (c) monitors the delivery of ECCD services and the impact on beneficiaries; (d) provides additional resources to poor and disadvantaged communities in order to increase the supply of ECCD programmes; and (e) encourages the development of private sector initiatives.

While SMP-NATOW points out that preschool education at the kindergarten level must aim at developing children in all aspects (physical, social, emotional, and cognitive) so that they will be better prepared to adjust and cope with life situations and the demands of formal schooling, the Teachers Organization of the Philippines Public Sector (TOPPS) affirms that this is the first stage in the formal basic education for children at five years of age. According to TOPPS, this level of education prepares young children for primary education utilising age-appropriate learning materials. In addition, the Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) says that valuation for formal ECE varies according to socio-economic status and location given that in the Philippines, ECE is predominantly privatised or profit oriented, and its cost is way beyond the means of many underprivileged families.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

The Senegalese case study

This case study is informed by the 'Union Démocratique des Enseignantes et Enseignants du Sénégal' (UDEN) and 'Le Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Élémentaire' (SNEEL/CNTS). According to UDEN, ECE in Senegal is organised within an early childhood integrated development policy (Politique de Développement Intégrée de la Petite Enfance/PDIPE). This aims to cater for all the needs of young children (education, welfare, health, nutrition) from birth until their assimilation into the school system. SNEEL/CNTS adds that enrolment in ECE programmes depends on the willingness and means of children's parents.

UDEN explains that PDIPE focuses on two age groups: (i) the under-three-year-olds, where the aim is parent education and early learning through the development of "children's huts", community crèches, and day-care centres; and (ii) children aged between three and six years old, who attend nursery schools, community day-care centres and children's huts. Education at this level has a shaping function and aims to nurture the emergence of personality, awaken underlying potentialities, and generally prepare the child for future knowledge learning.

'The holistic approach principle focuses on promoting a set of the child's needs in a comprehensive, coordinated approach as part of a continuum from the prenatal period to accessing primary education. Then, the principle of a community approach to early childhood development is that active involvement by parents and local communities can ensure the success of provision for disadvantaged children through low cost services. Last but by no means least, is the principle that firmly embeds this policy in local cultural values while assimilating scientific knowledge.'

SNEEL/CNTS adds that the goals of early childhood education (birth to six years of age) in Senegal are: to increase access by varying and adapting early childhood services, to develop a curriculum for early childhood, to experiment with new early childhood care facilities, and to innovate in the recruitment and management of teaching staff.

UDEN comments that ECE is not part of Senegal's compulsory education system; however, a study on increasing and extending it to preschool children is being conducted as part of the implementation of Act 2004-37 of 15 December 2004 amending and supplementing the National Education (General Principles) Act No. 91-22 of 16 February 1991.

The Uruguayan case study

The 'Federación Uruguaya de Magisterio - Trabajadores de Educación Primaria' (F.U.M.-T.E.P) says that ECE principles and values are integrated in the 'Ley General de Educación N°18437' which defines education as a public good and a fundamental human right. This Law establishes that while Initial Education aims at promoting the affective, social, cognitive and intellectual development of three-, four- and five-year-olds (Article 24), ECE encompasses the life cycle from birth to three years of age and constitutes the first stage of the educational process of each person throughout life (Article 38).

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

F.U.M.-T.E.P specifies that ECE is the responsibility of the 'Instituto del Niño y del Adolescente del Uruguay' (INAU), the Administración Nacional de Educación Pública (ANEP), and the Ministerio de Educación y Cultura (MEC). The Law provides for the creation of the ECE Coordinating Council at the Ministry of Education and Culture, under the Board of Education. This Council aims to (a) promote quality ECE, (b) articulate and coordinate ECE programmes and projects developed according to the principles and guidelines stated in this Law, (c) develop proposals for ECE, (d) support the articulation of educational policies with public policies for ECE, (e) support the professionalisation of early childhood educators, and (f) provide advice to the MEC for the authorisation, supervision and guidance of private ECE centres.

The Uruguayan case study reveals that:

'En la etapa de la Primera Infancia la oferta pública y gratuita no es para todos los niños, sino que está focalizada en los sectores de mayor vulnerabilidad social ya sea a partir de la atención por parte del INAU así como por parte del Plan CAIF (estrategia que se viene desarrollando desde hace más de veinte años) que son gestionados por O.N.G. con recursos públicos'.

In the Early Childhood phase, the free and public offer is not available for all children, but it focuses on the areas of highest social vulnerability either from the needs of the INAU and the CAIF Plan (strategy that has been developed for more than 20 years) which are managed by NGOs with public resources.

In Uruguay, ECE is compulsory for four-year-old children and public ECE provision is increasing for three-year-olds.

2.3. Analysis of the Responses

The information gathered in this study is analysed from an interrelational perspective bearing in mind that 'early childhood education systems differ greatly, not only across continents, but also within and between neighbouring countries, largely due to their socio-cultural and socio-economic and political contexts' (Education International, 2010, p.16).

Figure 2 - Aspects of privatisation: dimensionality and interrelationality.



Figure 2 illustrates a dynamic process of critical thinking regarding different topics included in the survey which aims to generate understandings of the impacts of privatisation in ECE in 14 different contexts throughout the world.

These understandings are described and discussed in the following two sections. Section 3 presents the impacts of privatisation in ECE as perceived and interpreted by participants of each case study. Section 4 develops a discussion on different possibilities for understanding new impacts of the phenomenon when the researchers seek to analyse the implications of privatisation for the quality of ECE provision, workforce, and for the field of ECE education as a profession.

3. IMPACTS OF PRIVATISATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Bearing in mind the interrelationality of the different themes considered in the survey and drawing on the data gathered in this study, this section presents the case studies' perceptions and interpretations on the impacts of privatisation in ECE summarised in five main aspects:

1. Their views on specific trends and developments regarding privatisation of early childhood provision;
2. Their understandings on the way privatisation of early childhood provision has affected the accessibility of ECE provision;
3. Their views on identifiable implications for the outcomes for children and families;
4. Their opinions on workforce issues regarding the effects of privatisation;
5. Their reflections on the governance of the private provision of ECE in their countries.

3.1. Specific Trends and Developments

The term 'specific' here means that the development of privatisation in ECE can materialise under different forms, purposes, and strategies in each particular context. Taking into consideration this dimensionality, this section illustrates trends and developments regarding privatisation in ECE described by each case study.

Responses from the Irish case study, for example, point out that the main trend concerning privatisation in ECE is related to the government decision to provide a universal free preschool year through the private and voluntary sector:

'The free pre-school provision for all three-year-olds in the year before they enter primary school is being provided by the private and voluntary sector, rather than directly by the State, as is the case for primary and post-primary education. The INTO would have preferred the State to have provided the free pre-school year through the primary education system, so that it would be graduate-led, be of high quality, and where the terms and conditions of the teachers and childcare workers are better. It was INTO policy since the 1970s that there would be a free pre-school year for all three-year-olds prior to starting primary school' (union leader).

The INTO indicates that another tendency regarding privatisation in ECE is the fact that philanthropic organisations have provided funding to support provision in communities of socio-economic disadvantage, in the absence of sufficient state support.

From the *Nepalese case study*, it is noted that 'privatisation in the academic field is an increasing trend and has become more commercialised, disregarding the need of the country and the desire of the people'. From the NTA's point of view, 'the main policy of the country at present is public-private partnerships where the government seeks support from the private sector to regulate educational institutions. This action is still ineffective because of the poor co-ordination and implementation of

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

rules from government's side. As a consequence, there is a need for the government to supervise ECE and organise a separate resourceful body to make it more effective and innovative'.

The *Norwegian case study* illustrates that over 50 per cent of the ECE [providers] are privately owned, but all ECE services, both private and public, are funded by public authorities, regulated in the Act, and they are almost equally and publicly financed. The private ECE providers receive 91 per cent public funding today and will receive 100 per cent in 2014. 'The sector is under reform and financing ECE has many challenges ranging from 'earmarked to frame-marked' principles. This is a great challenge for the municipalities and there are big differences throughout the country in how to treat the institutions equally according to legislation'. UEN sees an increase in commercial organisations that want to offer ECE services and is concerned about the consequences when private owners 'make a lot of money'. The union states that there is evidence that in some profit-oriented ECE institutions, the child/preschool teacher ratio or child/adult ratio is not as good as in public institutions.

The *New Zealand case study* indicates that the system is becoming more privatised, with rapid expansion in the private sector in the past decade, while the community owned services have remained largely static. 'This picture is expected to continue, as only the private sector has the capital to fund expansion.' The NZEI adds that there is limited public funding available for property for publicly owned services and that the move to national standards, league tables, charter schools, performance pay, measurement of outcomes, and the subsequent pressures particularly on new entrant testing may have a negative impact on ECE service delivery.

The *Argentinian case study* outlines that private sector involvement in ECE provision for children from birth to age two is evident due to its uneven quality in a sector where state control is weak. According to CTERA, although ECE is presented as a teaching unit in the LEN, there is an age group (45 days to 36 months) whose right to education has been violated because the state does not provide the necessary services or effectively regulate private ECE provision. The case study points out that this vulnerability is twice as high when this age group comes from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

The *Canadian case study* shows that the main discernible trend of privatisation in Quebec is the growth and development of for-profit private childcare provision, which has expanded substantially since the previous government made it more accessible to parents through tax credits for child care expenses. "We calculate that the tax break makes it cheaper for a family on an income of \$40,000 per year to send their children to a private childminder than to State-regulated childcare provision at \$7 a day." CSQ adds that several surveys and studies have reported that these private childminders fall short of the standards of regulated child care. 'A number of early childhood practitioners in regulated child care claim to be losing "clients" to private day-care provision. The most recent Quebec budget (February 2014) has announced a price increase in child care provision from \$7 to \$8 a day from autumn 2014 rising to \$9 a day in 2015.' According to CSQ, this announcement has divided opinions: many are against the rise, but many others think it makes sense to make the more affluent pay and that this move would help state finances (even though the better-off pay more through taxes).

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

The *Chilean case study* indicates that the Chilean privatisation is a mature system. The CPC argues that, until recently, ECE provided by public state institutions has prevailed. However, given the institutional variety and the inflated expansion of the provision, it has been offered with precarious employment for ECE practitioners and teaching conditions. This situation has increased the funding through a subsidy claim (a voucher for every child) and encouraged private players to boost the expansion of the ECE private sector. As a consequence, there is an educational precariousness for the most disadvantaged children, restrictive opportunities for comprehensive child development, and a lack of social integration in the public education setting.

‘Observación: en Chile no consideramos establecimiento público aquel que es administrado por privados con financiamiento público, son establecimientos privados con financiamiento público. Lo determinante para definir lo público en educación no es solo la propiedad y el financiamiento, sino también la universalidad, no selección, gratuidad, el laicismo, entre otros. Principios que por Libertad de Enseñanza no se exigen a los privados’.

Comment: In Chile, we do not consider public institutions the ones that are managed by private parties with public funding; they are private institutions with public funding. What is crucial to define ‘public’ in education is not only the ownership and funding, but also universality, non-selection, gratuity, laicism, among others. Principles of freedom in teaching are not required in the private sector.

The union points out that, currently, 36.2 per cent of institutions are state public, 57.5 per cent are private with state funds (including Integra Foundation and with a subsidy voucher), and six per cent are fully private without any funds from the state.

In the case of *Costa Rica*, the Government provides free, compulsory education of high quality which has deteriorated with the expansion of new private institutions or companies that offer ECE programmes with curricula mainly based on technology as a determinant factor to meet the students’ needs and interests. The SEC points out that there is a trend towards increasing private ECE for under six-year-olds in Costa Rica given the fact that this kind of provision meets the current demands of society regarding the early years. The outcomes or productivity in terms of performance are seen as higher in private schools compared to public institutions. Higher rates of investment, competitiveness, and perceived modernity attract the attention of parents.

The SEC also indicates that there are private ECE services, such as ‘Asociaciones solidaristas’, that establish contracts with nurseries, the State which has its own extended day centre, and the ‘Red de Cuido y Desarrollo Infantil’ (The Care and Child Development Network). Some private institutions work as nurseries and as educational institutions with extended hours approved and supervised by the Ministry of Education (Ministerio de Educación Pública/MEP). Overall, ‘the MEP, with its technical and curricular structure covers *the transition*: 5.3 years and the infant-maternal or *Interactive II*: 4.3 years cycles. The ECE for children under 4.2 years is a real challenge because of the limited ECE provision by the MEP’.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

The *Ecuadorian case study* shows that the main factor contributing to privatisation in ECE in Ecuador is the limited ECE service provided by the state. Another reason is that some working parents who wish to obtain better outcomes for their children opt to pay for private care services.

The *Gambian case study* explains that ECD service options in Gambia are not fully diversified. 'Most prominent and widespread are half-day services running from 8.30am-1p.m. Crèches, parenting education support, are uncommon. Most expensive private international schools offer additional services including after-school clubs, and care that runs through to the evening.

'Parents, especially working mothers, do not have flexible options to choose to suit their work and other socio-economic activities. Curricula activities vary with few settings providing international curricula. A good number of private settings provide poor quality ad hoc curricula services. In both, private and state ECD services, the support for curriculum improvement and access to ECD provisions are vulnerable to socio-economic shocks including poor and inappropriate curriculum practices, ill equipped work force, and subsequently poorly prepared children. In practice, these diversity issues reflect deeper issues of equity – those with purchasing power have the advantage of ensuring that their children have access to a right environment for a right quality start in life. Equity and diversity of opportunities through which all families are offered (regardless of their socio-economic background) flexible services is farfetched.' (GTU)

From GTU's point of view and as part of globalisation trends, private provision has rooted and dominated both policy and practice of ECE. This has been the main strategy for the provision of ECE for many years in the Gambia.

The *Ghanaian case study* shows that 70 per cent of quality ECE in Ghana is provided by the private sector, with the remainder – 30 per cent – provided by public sector. 'In remote communities where there are no public early childhood centres, one can visibly find a private early childhood development centre. Though private education in the communities is affordable, moderate fees are charged for parents to pay, but some are not able to afford them.' The GNAT clarifies that there are private ECE centres managed by private-for-profit providers, NGOs in partnership with the Ghana Education Service (GES), and communities running ECE centres, including ECE development churches and faith-based organisations.

The *Philippine case study* explains that privatised ECE and privatisation of different agencies in the Philippines have placed financially disadvantaged families in a very difficult situation. 'These trends will deprive children of poor families from receiving necessary services and will set them apart from the affluent groups' (Teachers Organization of the Philippines Public Sector - TOPPS). In addition, SMP-NATOW reveals that President Aquino stated that PPPs would resolve the shortages in infrastructure such as school buildings and hospitals. According to SMP-NATOW, the private sector will finance and build classrooms while the government pays them an annual amortisation over a period of several years. Moreover, ACT adds that another reason for the privatisation in ECE is 'the emergence of new philosophies and teaching strategies implemented by private ECE providers'.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

The *Uruguayan case study* outlines how there is a ...

‘Existe una creciente tendencia privatizadora en nuestro país. La oferta privada tradicionalmente fue ofrecida para los sectores de mejores ingresos económicos, especialmente en colegios donde los pequeños continuaban su ciclo escolar’.

... a growing privatisation trend in our country. The private ECE provision was traditionally offered in better income sectors, where children used to continue their formal school life (F.U.M.-T.E.P.).

F.U.M.-T.E.P. explains that public ECE provision is limited, especially for the most disadvantaged. However, a voucher system has been implemented in the last year and families receive vouchers to engage with private provision.

Conversely, in the case of *Senegal*, “the trend of privatisation has reversed slightly: between 2007 and 2010, the private sector share in early childhood provision fell from 51.3 per cent to 47.2 per cent, i.e. down by 4.1 per cent”⁸. According to UDEN, the figures for 2012-2013 amply bear this out with an increase in public provision versus a decrease in private provision: the number of Community Huts has risen from 159 to 286, Children’s Huts⁹ from 519 to 579, nursery schools from 830 to 856, while private day-care provision has contracted from 780 to 603. UDEN said that parents pay enrolment fees even in public provision. However, very low incomes and rising poverty leave families struggling to provide their children with preschool education (UDEN). In contrast, SNEEL/CNTS said that ‘privatisation trends do exist, and children are inclined to have better opportunities when leaving school than those who have not received ECE due to a lack of means and a suitable environment’.

3.2. Accessibility and Quality of Provision for Young Children and their Families

The case studies express various concerns about the way the previous trends and developments of privatisation in early childhood provision have affected the accessibility and quality of provision for young children and families. For example, the *New Zealand case study* states that ‘as the system is becoming more privatised, there is little choice for families in many communities, with many having no alternative but a private service. While there are high quality private services and poor quality community services, in general the community services have more qualified teachers, better ratios, and above-minimum physical surroundings. Private services tend to cater to children of working parents who can afford to pay. Private services are more likely to be set up in more well-off neighbourhoods and to cater for the needs of working parents. Moreover, the disadvantaged

⁸ Survey from UDEN/Senegal

⁹ Children’s Huts are run on a local community basis and aim to provide holistic preschool education such as infant education, health and hygiene, and nutritional management.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

families, particularly those where parents are unemployed or in precarious or low wage employment, are more likely to miss out’.

The *Nepalese case study* states that ‘the quality education which has been provided is accessible to limited communities only. The government was not been able to provide access to quality education to all and it can potentially create two classes of individuals which later fuels economic disparity. Furthermore, children's overall development gets affected according to the availability of trained tutors as well’.

Another concern is noted by the *Argentinian case study*, which says that families opt for private institutions when there is no option for them to place their children in public institutions with state management. Private provision is the only option in provinces where there is limited access to state institutions for the under-three-year-olds. ‘By increasing the universality for four- and five-year-old children, families opt for public ECE provision managed by the state. The Argentinian society is aware that state educational institutions have better ECE conditions and outcomes than private institutions’.

Other case studies express similar views in this regard:

‘There is concern that with private day-care provision being of lesser quality than State-regulated childcare provision, and low-income families having more to gain from claiming tax credit for childcare expenses (i.e. opting for private childcare provision) than the low parental contribution \$7 a day provision, children from less well-off backgrounds may be getting less access to good quality childcare provision’ (Canadian case study).

‘Access to ECE is also about social participation - when tied to purchasing power, financial limitations imply access only to services of lesser quality compared to the rich. The link to outcomes for children, families, and communities is the ability of privatisation policies to foster poor outcomes for the poor and quality outcomes for rich families and communities. This is a factor that has the long term effect of denying these families opportunities for productive adulthood, therefore promoting poverty cycles’ (Gambian case study).

The *Ecuadorian case study* explains that most of the existing ECE provision in that country is private and that ECE provided by the state is limited in the big cities; as a consequence, poor people do not have access to private or public ECE provision. The UNE points out those private for-profit providers have management roles in both the provision of private and some public ECE centres.

Furthermore, the *Philippines case study* states that, as ECE is almost 100 per cent private and localised in urban centres, access to ECE by the marginalised and those living in rural areas are limited. Because of this, young children are deprived of opportunities to develop more holistically: “Children who enter primary education without the benefit of ECE tend to lag behind and face some difficulties that could have been avoided if ECE had been available to them” (ACT). ‘For the family, the high cost of quality ECE often lures the parents to avail of ECE services that do not meet the quality and standards set by the ECCD council. In such cases, these children may develop a negative attitude towards learning instead.’ In the public sector, significant gaps persist despite government

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

efforts to improve facilities and access. Until now, parents have not been fully convinced that children need to be in school at an early age (SMP-NATOW).

In addition, the *Senegalese case study* considers that 'in a traditional society, the child belongs to an extended family in which everyone has the right to a say in its education. It represents a valuable commodity, an asset to the economy and society. But collective responsibility is no longer exercised because of the disintegration and dissolution of social and family ties. Therefore, this makes ECE an alternative. Unfortunately, families are affected by rising poverty due to the high cost of living and inequitable distribution of resources. The focus on the family's survival makes the provision of costly early childhood education a secondary consideration' (UDEN).

UDEN explains that ECE lays the groundwork for primary education. This becomes increasingly important, they point out, as the contribution of extended families to children's education is diminishing due to modernisation processes in society, and privatisation holds back universal education. SNEEL/CNTS points out that privatisation in ECE leads to inequality between the poor and the rich, between people living in rural or urban environments, and results in unequal opportunities.

3.3. Outcomes for Young Children and Families

The impacts of privatisation in ECE on the outcomes for children and families have become visible in different situations described by the case studies. One example is illustrated by the *New Zealand case study* where private services tend to adhere to minimum regulations, only seeking to maximise occupancy and promote full-time places regardless of family preferences. 'The private sector also lobbies for reduced regulation. For example it successfully lobbied against a planned requirement for a separate sleeping room for children under two in all day services. Recently, it has lobbied to increase the group size in services, and the maximum group size has gone from 50 children to 150 children in a service. Advocates for children are keen to improve quality by strengthening regulations but this becomes difficult with an increasingly privatised sector.'

The *Norwegian case study* declares that the outcomes for children and families are subjected to the increase in commercial organisations who want to offer ECE. This proves a challenge for the municipalities which must approve all ECE institutions, grant subsidies to their own and non-municipal institutions, supervise their own and non-municipal ECE, and impose sanctions against the institutions that do not meet regulatory requirements. From the UEN's point of view, the composition of municipal and private ECE reinforces the need for a clear and transparent regulatory framework.

Other situations in which privatisation have influenced the outcomes for young children and families emerge from an interrelational perspective. For example, the *Argentinian case study* explains that the expansion of private provision is due to the demand of families based on the social importance of ECE and the incorporation of parents in the employment market. The government does not guarantee universality for children under three years of age in state-run 'Jardines Maternales' and, as a consequence, private ECE with private management emerges.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

The *Chilean case study* reports a correlation between poor conditions of the teaching- learning environments and the development of children in disadvantaged sectors. Privatisation based on school per-student subsidy (voucher) places families and children in search for better academic results given that standardised tests are applied in ECE. Currently, most ECE provision is private and educational policies promote an increase in private provision.

From the same perspective, privatisation is perceived as a threat for the outcomes for children and families. According to the *Costa Rican case study*, education becomes more expensive and it can be seen as a filter because it excludes the most disadvantaged and vulnerable sectors, and families suffer from the absence of real opportunities for all. Privatization may become an obstacle for the poorest families that have no access to private institutions because they cannot afford this service. The *Ecuadorian case study* highlights how children are cared for by relatives, neighbours, grandparents, and friends or just locked up with older sisters and brothers, which constitutes a serious social problem of child abuse.

Privatisation has also promoted inequality for children and families:

The nature of the quality of service families have access to depends on their buying power. In particular, some policies – those that are considered innately as an instrument for social divisibility and inequality – are most likely have limited access and poor provision of services for poor families and quality services for the rich. The consequences have been a rural-urban divide in terms of both access and quality, and within urban and rural divide in terms of both access and quality (Gambian case study).

‘Since the private sector can provide better facilities for the children, there will be a big gap or comparison between the public and private sector ECE providers, hence, education will not be a matter of right but a privilege’ (*The Philippines case study*).

3.4. Workforce issues in early childhood provision

Bearing in mind the dimensionality and interrelationality of the phenomenon of privatisation in ECE, its impacts on the workforce are presented in three main aspects according to the case studies’ perceptions: a) the situation of the ECE workforce, b) participants’ views on the effects of privatisation in the ECE workforce, and c) challenges practitioners face in daily practice.

3.4.1. Situation of the ECE Workforce

In *Ireland*, although the quality of teaching is generally high, the level of qualification required of the staff is very low (currently the equivalent of one year post-secondary level)¹⁰ in comparison to primary education, where all teachers are graduates. In *Norway*, ‘nearly

¹⁰ This is correct at the time the first phase of the study was conducted. Qualification requirements for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) practitioners have changed; a qualification at QQI Level 5 is now the standard requirement.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

33 per cent of ECE staff is educated at Bachelors' level. This education is developed particularly for ECE institutions and the Framework Plan for ECE-teacher education is also under reform. Nearly 30 per cent have no formal education after primary school' (UEN). In *Nepal*, there are considerable differences between teaching staff in public (government supported) and private ECE structures (EI, 2010) and, in general, most of the ECE workforce is untrained.

In *New Zealand*, about 70 per cent of the ECE workforce is qualified teachers. Many of these are people who have long experience in the sector and who have been trained on the job. Increasingly though, university graduates, including graduates from other disciplines doing post-graduate study, are attracted to ECE.

ECE teachers in *Argentina* hold the qualification required for working in early childhood and in Chile, the ECE workforce is 80 per cent predominantly female and is composed of university graduates, teacher assistants, and high-skilled technicians. In *Costa Rica*, the minimum profile requirement to be recruited as an ECE professional is to have at least a Bachelor's degree. This profile can be improved and adjusted by the ECE teacher according to her expectations. For practical purposes, this profile is organised into two categories: personal and professional qualities. ECE professionals can be recruited at government level by the Ministry of Education (MEP), and privately by any company offering ECE services. Private companies have lately been increasing their recruitment requirements.

In the Canadian province of *Quebec*, there are two main job classes: early childhood centre workers and heads of family day-care provision (RSG). Both would like to be better equipped to deal with children with special needs (training). In *Gambia*, training leads to certificate courses: ECD modules are integrated into the primary teacher training curriculum, school-based training, and intensive five- to eight-day training workshops on a term basis. To be part of the state provision workforce, facilitators need only to complete grade 10. Teachers entering Gambia College training courses need to complete secondary school with at least two credit and two passes.

In *Ghana*, the National Teacher Training Centre is training educators all over the country in developing the skills needed to deal with children from birth up to eight years. GNAT collaborates with the Ghana Education Service to organise in-service training for educators in service in state and private sectors. NGOs also play a role in improving ECE in Ghana. In the public sector, 80 per cent of the educators have undergone some 'sandwich' training (a training course with alternate periods of formal instruction and practical experience) to improve their teaching skills. However, close to about 40 per cent of educators have not had any training in ECE at all and there is a conscious effort to upgrade their status.

In the *Philippines*, the workforce includes the Bachelor of Science in Education (BSE) graduates specialising in Early Childhood/Kindergarten Education and those who are trained by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to become preschool teachers/day-care workers. Since ECE is not part of the Philippines' basic education system, teachers trained in ECE cannot seek state employment. To be employed in a small school leads to a very small salary; thus, many job seekers, especially those with the capital, take the entrepreneurial route and set up a private profit-driven school.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

In *Senegal*, initial training provision generally has steadily developed. Public school personnel with an upper secondary completion diploma underwent one year of initial training; those holding a lower secondary completion diploma underwent four years of training. According to UDEN, there are different types of staff: some in the private and community schools are trained on the job. In-service training is provided, in which school principals have a supporting and supervisory role. This category of teachers therefore face training challenges both in terms of shorter initial training time, and a change of method induced by a curriculum reform based on entry level skills in force in Senegal. This requires staff retraining.

3.4.2. Views on Effects of Privatisation in the ECE Workforce

According to the *Irish case study*, the global economic downturn has impacted the primary school sector and, 'as a consequence, teachers have had pay cuts, increased taxes, child-to-teacher ratios have been increased and grants reduced. In primary schools, teachers face challenges relating to large class sizes, a lack of professional development, and sometimes inappropriate facilities. Increased challenges in classrooms include a greater number of children with special needs and an increasing number of children for whom English is an additional language. They are also facing pressures to enhance children's achievement in literacy and numeracy. The state plays no role in the terms and conditions or salary levels of the staff and the workforce in the non-school sector' (INTO).

The *New Zealand case study* states that 'kindergarten teachers, about 12 per cent of the workforce, have pay parity with school teachers and have broadly similar conditions, but the rest of the sector is generally paid less than this. In the private sector, experienced teachers in particular are paid considerably less than school teachers, because there tends to be a flat rate'.

The *Chilean case study* relates that ECE teachers are offered pay-hour and fixed-term contracts mainly with the National Preschool Board/Junta Nacional de Jardines Infantiles (JUNJI), but these contracts are precarious. According to the *Costa Rican case study*, ECE professionals are affected by diminishing incomes, as the private sector becomes the main source of employment. Working conditions and job stability are at risk even though ECE teachers are responsible for improving the quality of the provision, which relies on their professional development and updated knowledge.

A nivel privado si existe una gran competencia de mercado laboral incluso compitiendo y mejorando al sector público, dando diferentes beneficios con el fin de mantener y mejorar las garantías del docente contratado. Esto se puede desmedido en la actualidad por la sobreoferta de profesionales en el área de preescolar no absorbidos por el sector público, y aprovechados por el sector privado, que se arriesga a igualar o rebajar el salario base promedio a pagar y obligar a cumplir con mayores horas de trabajo y más obligaciones (SEC).

In the private sector, there is a highly competitive labour market even competing with and surpassing the public sector, which is offering benefits in order to keep and improve ECE teachers' guarantees. Currently, this can be distorted by the oversupply of preschool professionals who are not employed by public ECE. Instead, they are hired by the private sector which risks equalling or lowering the average wage and forces ECE teachers' compliance with longer working hours and more responsibilities.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

The Ecuadorian case study notes that the phenomenon of privatisation has stimulated unemployment for ECE professionals and the *Ghanaian case study* adds that ‘per the private sector, more educators are being trained to be more skilful in handling the children. However, most educators in the private sector are poorly paid, have fewer allowances, and shorter leave periods, thus, their working conditions are perceived as extremely poor’.

The Uruguayan case study explains that there are notable differences in salaries among private institutions. ECE practitioners’ remuneration is determined by the population and by children’s socio-cultural background or social strata.

3.4.3. Challenges Facing ECE Practitioners

One of the main challenges the ECE sector faces is related to the need to increase the status of and preparation for ECE as a valued profession i.e. qualification, training, and professional development status of the ECE workforce (*Irish, Argentinian and Uruguayan case studies*). The *Nepalese case study* notes that most of its ECE workforce is untrained and that it seems that ‘as they are untrained or poorly trained, they cannot handle the classes skilfully’. In this respect, the *New Zealand case study* points out that this challenge includes how to provide quality with unqualified teachers and the *Chilean case study* claims that there is a need to provide in-service training to improve the teaching and learning conditions. The *Senegalese case study* explains that ECE staff has problems in terms of training, educational level, and recruitment. Only a few of them have received training and the sector is not well organised. In addition, ECE practitioners are not highly motivated (SNEEL/CNTS).

A second challenge for the ECE workforce seems to be associated with determining decent working conditions, remuneration, and working environments for ECE personnel (*Irish case study*). The *Ecuadorian case study* mentions that the precarious ECE service in the country relies on getting a job, being updated permanently, and balancing job recruitment, promotion, and stability. Moreover, the *Gambian case study* adds that the ECE workforce is confronted with low wages/salaries, lack of accreditation, and limited opportunities for career development. Lack of accreditation systems means that qualified ECE teachers are still considered as unqualified teachers, subject to a lack of standards for minimum pay and qualification, and cannot avail of permanent employment opportunities from the state. Furthermore, the *Ghanaian case study* notes that ‘in the private sector, the recruitment of educators is sometimes done verbally depending on the relationship with the educator; some proprietors recruit through advertisement. There are not evidential career paths, promotion - some earn their promotion by long service, but not necessary by hard work - but there is no compromise on quality of service by the private sector’. In addition, the *Philippines case study* points out that most teachers who are hired in day-care centres and privatised ECE are non-licensed. They are not paid well compared to the standardised salary of teachers: ‘Private ECE schools proliferate and, in many cases, are owned by former (retired) DepEd employees. Finally, the *New Zealand case study* indicates that the commitment to achieve 100 per cent qualified teachers has now been reduced to 80 per cent; the sector has experienced funding cuts as a consequence. ‘However, there remains a commitment to quality and raising standards both within the sector and from government’; conditions such as non-contact time, paid leave, and professional development leave also tend to be considerably inferior.

A third challenge for the ECE workforce is related to the need to improve the child-to-ECE teacher ratio (*Norwegian, New Zealand and Chilean case studies*). The *Norwegian case study* shows that

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

smaller groups of children allow for time to support individual children and better systems for using substitute workers to replace staff on sick leave. The *New Zealand case study* reports that ‘the ratios, particularly for very young children, are below best practice, with 1:10 for children over two and 1:5 for children under two’.

A fourth challenge is the issue of space requirements, infrastructure, and necessary equipment, especially for very young children (*Chilean and New Zealand case studies*). ‘The regulations about space and outdoor areas are also minimal, meaning that many children are spending long hours in less than optimal environments. Recent reports have highlighted some of these problems, including the widespread practice for the youngest children to be left with the least qualified teachers’ (*New Zealand case study*).

The fifth challenge presented by the *Canadian case study* is the ECE governance and social protection provided to all ECE personnel. ‘The RSG [Les Responsables de Services de Garde en milieu familial/Family Day-Care] workforce faces singular challenges in being considered as self-employed workers but having to meet the many requirements of the coordinating offices and their compliance officers. The coordinating offices are the link between the RSG and the Family Ministry. As these are heavily female-dominated jobs, maternity leave and turnover are both high.’

The need to conduct child-centred research because of the phenomenon of globalisation becomes a sixth challenge for the ECE workforce (*Costa Rican case study*). According to this case study, nowadays, children are more critical, analytical, and communicative than in the past due to the complexity of the technological world they are exploring skilfully. As a consequence, ECE practitioners require constant in-service professional development in order to be competent and efficient.

A final challenge for the ECE workforce is presented by the *Uruguayan case study* that comments on the significance of raising awareness around ECE. This involves sensitising the public, families, teachers, and communities, and strengthening and improving communication with them, especially with parents and families, to reassess the relevance of ECE in child development.

3.5. Governance and Regulation of Private ECE Provision

The *Irish case study* points out that ECE provision in the non-state sector is regulated through the Child Care Act and its accompanying regulations, which are the responsibility of the Health Service Executive (HSE). The Department of Children and Youth Affairs also has responsibility in this area and the Early Years Policy Unit of the Department of Education and Skills has a role in ensuring quality of educational provision. A preschool inspectorate is employed by the HSE, whose responsibility includes ensuring that providers comply with the regulations. All preschool providers, whether or not they are participating in the free preschool scheme, must register as providers with the HSE.

The *Norwegian case study* notes that the Ministry of Education and Research has responsibility for ECE policy at national level and that Norway has, in general, national and overall legislation for the sector, regulating all kinds of institutions. But the municipalities have responsibility for ECE as part of the education system and there are differences in administration, as well as in the financing of the

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

sector. *The Canadian case study* comments that the creation of low parental contribution state-regulated educational childcare places is itself an equal opportunities measure. Quebec childcare centres (CPE) are non-profit social economy enterprises with their own boards of governors which include a large contingent of parents. Although governed by multiple regulations, each CPE enjoys a measure of autonomy in self-management.

The *New Zealand case* shows that in order to receive funding, all services have to be licensed. To be licensed, all services have to meet regulations. The regulations cover four main areas: (i) curriculum delivery which includes professional practice, culture and identity, children as learners and working with others; (ii) premises and facilities which includes space, light, heating, layout, sleep facilities, and sanitation; (iii) health and safety which includes emergency management, child protection, hygiene excursions and hazards; and (iv) governance and management which includes parent involvement, planning and documentation, and human resource management. In general, the private sector meets the minimum regulations to maximise profits.

The Argentinian case study declares that, since 2006, the Argentinian government has enacted educational policies that aim to guarantee the comprehensive development of children. Nevertheless, CTERA asserts that these initiatives contain present gaps regarding ECE regulations, and that some responsibilities overlap among the different state institutions. It also argues that there is a lack of control on private ECE that is offered primarily by unlicensed private providers. 'It is essential to define responsibilities for ECE regulation and the state needs to control private institutions that provide ECE for the under three-year-olds'. *The Chilean case study* declares that there exist different types of regulations of ECE provision with weak supervision, although a Superintendent of Education has been created recently to improve this aspect. 'Overall, the Chilean quality assurance model is a model of market regulation, based on standardised tests, with equal treatment for public and private provision.'

The Ecuadorian case study declares that the teacher union demands the government to comply with the constitutional precept and the Decennial Plan about the importance of ECE and the provision of sufficient and adequate infrastructure for ECE. 'The country has not developed any strategy towards governance and regulation of ECE provision which makes room for the expansion of ECE as a business enterprise' (UNE). *The Costa Rican case study* highlights that ECE programmes have not been updated there in the last 20 years, indicating a weakness in Costa Rica's modernization strategies. According to ANDE, this is where private institutions have surpassed the public ones as the former have incorporated technological change guidelines, languages, sports, culture, music, and other areas into their curricula. These changes significantly improve the quality of private ECE.

The Gambian case study comments that the national orientation towards ECE as depicted in the Constitution and other legal documents and policies supports privatisation as a strategy for providing diverse services for families and their children. 'In Gambia, however, the effect has been both positive and negative. Positive in the sense that it encourages growth in the sector through private participation in both selling and buying the service. The negative sides are that it fosters the division between the poor and the rich. In fact, those with the most resources also have the best services and those with the least buying power are likely to make use of poor services. It also means a rural-urban divide as a result of more mothers in the urban areas needing the services for reasons of work and affordability. The poor regulation of services means that there are a lot of inappropriate

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

services offered to vulnerable families. Private providers can define and determine the nature of their programmes including service components, curriculum practices, pay scales for staff, cost of services etc. They are expected only to meet particular structural criteria – safe and adequate structures, environmental sanitation and curriculum sustainability plans’ (GTU).

The Ghanaian case study notes that the Government of Ghana (GoG), private individuals, some NGOs and a few communities are involved in private provision of education. The Ghana Education Service and the Ministry of Education play different roles at different levels around the regulation of ECE provision. However, the District Education Directorates of the Ghana Education Service have the mandate to inspect and advise on the establishment of an ECE centre. But they do not have the power to close down any ECE centre until such a move is recommended by the Director General of Education. Though the Educational Act of 1998 has made some reforms, some communities which have sub-standard private schools may suffer closure of those facilities.

The Philippines case study says that since the approval of the ECCD Act in 2000, the national government has increased inter-agency, inter-ministry, and multi-sectorial coordination for policy development and overall management of national ECCD programmes. ‘There has been a marked increase in programming and standard-setting activities that are jointly undertaken by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), the Department of Education, and the Council for the Welfare of Children, along with their partners in civil society. The Act removed certain unclear and arbitrary distinctions between various ECCD programmes, while at the same time leaving undisturbed the difference in emphasis between the “socialisation” function of the day-care programme and the “educational” function of the preschool or kindergarten, with a convenient separation of programme management responsibilities between the two government agencies’. Recently, the regulation on Universal Kindergarten law and the Enhanced Basic Education Law of 2013 put the operation of ECE schools/learning centres in the country in perspective. All learning institutions are required to abide by the laws and are sanctioned by the concerned government agencies and accrediting institutions. ‘Laws that were passed in our country, if appropriately implemented and closely monitored, will not only address the need for us Filipinos to intensify our values for love of country and our identity as a people who are connected to a bigger community around the globe but will also control, if not totally eliminate, business in the offering of ECE’ (TOPPS).

The Senegalese case study notes that the Government of Senegal attaches particular importance to holistic early childhood provision. The priority aim is that early childhood development should be community provision-based. This means expanding the responsibilities of local authorities to develop initiatives in this area in collaboration with communities. The charter signed with the state’s key partners places a particular focus on this option and spells out the broad policy lines and terms for making it operational. In addition, the state will provide financial and technical support to local authorities’ actions through its decentralised agencies. Policymakers need to focus on governance to give more joined-up effect to the government policy applied by public agencies, different levels of administration, and programmes (UDEN). However, private stakeholders often do not comply with the texts due to a lack of supervision (SNEEL/CNTS).

The Uruguayan case study explains that the MEC has established a regulatory framework for ECE offered by private institutions as well as programmes and curricula to be implemented in this kind of

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

provision. The regulations include references to infrastructure and child/adult ratios. Indeed, the limited public service and the existing regulation of ECE provision in a prescriptive and agreed regulatory framework have boosted the increase in private provision and therefore its reliability among families.

4. DISCUSSION OF IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS OF PRIVATISATION IN ECE

The previous section illustrated trends and strategies of privatisation in ECE as well as the perceived impacts on the outcomes for children and families, the workforce, and the governability of ECE. This was done by drawing on the perceptions and descriptions provided by participants in the study based on their experiences in their specific contexts. The following discussion focuses on three main issues:

1. Understanding the trends and impacts of privatisation in ECE generated in this study
2. Learning from the experiences of the case studies
3. Discussing the challenges to promoting and achieving free and public early childhood provision

Each of these sections concludes with questions for reflection and further exploration.

4.1. Understanding Trends and Impacts of Privatisation in ECE in 14 Different Socio-Cultural Contexts

Drawing on the country case studies, the trends and strategies identified to promote privatisation in ECE are summarised in Table 1:

Table 1 : Summary of trends and strategies of privatisation in ECE

| <i>Source</i> | <i>Increased privatisation</i> | <i>Specific trends and developments</i> | <i>Strategies to promote privatisation</i> |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Irish case study | Yes | The decision to provide a universal free preschool year through the private and voluntary sector. | Philanthropic organisations have provided funding to support provision in communities of socio-economic disadvantage, in the absence of sufficient state support. |
| Norwegian case study | Yes | An increase in commercial organisations that want to offer ECE. | Private ECE receives 91 per cent in public funding today and will receive 100 per cent in 2014. |
| Nepalese case study | Yes | ECE as academic field has become more commercialised, disregarding the need of the country and desire of the people. | The main policy of the country at present is public-private partnerships in which the government seeks support from private institutions. |
| New Zealand case study | Yes | Rapid expansion in the private sector in the past decade, while the community owned services have remained largely static. | There is limited public money available for property for publicly owned services. |

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

| | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Argentinian case study | Yes | The private provision regarding the 'Jardines Maternales' is higher than 75 per cent and 'Salas' (five years) is nearly 90 per cent. | The coverage of the age group 0-24 months by the private sector. |
| Canadian case study | Yes | The growth of for-profit private childcare provision. | Tax credits for childcare expenses. |
| Chilean case study | Yes | The decision to increase coverage in JUNJI through the outsourcing of services to private providers. | ECE funding through subsidy claim (voucher administrator for every child). |
| Costa Rican case study | Yes | New developments of ECE provision based on technology to meet the students' needs and interests. | Private ECE institutions establish agreements with nurseries and offer extended hours. |
| Ecuadorian case study | Yes | The expansion of private ECE centres managed by private for-profit providers and public ECE centres managed by private for-profit providers. | State ECE provision is limited and working parents pay private institutions. |
| Gambian case study | Yes | ECE half-day services provided by the Government and expensive and extended services offered by international schools. | ECE provided by private individuals, companies, NGOs, private for-profit/not for-profit and ECE services funded by charity organisations or philanthropists where parents do not pay. |
| Ghanaian case study | Yes | Private sector participation in the provision of quality ECE is 70 per cent compared to 30 per cent public sector. | Private ECE centres for-profit; NGO partnerships with GES and communities in running ECE centres; and communities' early childhood development churches. |
| The Philippines case study | Yes | The decision to promote public-private partnerships in financing preschool education and resolving the shortages in infrastructure. | The promotion of ECE service for non-formal education, voucher initiatives, infrastructure, and the emergence of new philosophies to provide ECE. |
| Senegalese case study | The trend of privatisation has reversed slightly. There is an increase in public ECE and a decrease in private provision. | | |
| Uruguayan case study | Yes | There is a growing privatisation trend and public education provision is deemed insufficient. | The voucher system has been implemented and families engage with private ECE. |

The responses show developments relating to privatisation in ECE that can be described as: a trend towards increasing privatisation in ECE, a privatisation trend that threatens to overshadow public ECE, and an emergent trend in ECE aiming to reverse privatisation.

4.1.1. A Trend towards Increasing Privatisation in ECE

Thirteen out of 14 participating case studies note that there is a growing trend toward privatisation in ECE in their countries (Ireland, Nepal, Norway, New Zealand, Argentina, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, the Gambia, Ghana, The Philippines, and Uruguay). This trend is envisaged in endogenous and exogenous forms of privatisation (Ball and Youdell, 2007). In the former, tax credits for childcare expenses, funding through subsidiary claims for every child, voucher initiatives implemented for families to use private ECE providers, an expansion of public ECE centres managed by private for-profit providers, and new private provision based on technological developments and programmes

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

are making the public ECE more like business (Canada, Chile, The Philippines, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Costa Rica).

In the latter, policies to promote PPPs to finance preschool education and to overcome shortages in infrastructure, to encourage agreements between private and public nurseries to offer extended hours, the presence of owner-provider companies, NGO partnerships with the state, as well as churches, charities and philanthropic organisations funding and supporting ECE imply that public ECE is open to the participation of the private sector (Nepal, The Philippines, Costa Rica, Ireland, the Gambia, Ghana).

These forms of privatisation in ECE lead us to argue that there is a biased trend of privatisation that attempts to eclipse public ECE.

4.1.2. A Privatisation Trend that Threatens to Overshadow Public ECE

This trend seems to be subsumed in the notion of ‘social investment which refers to strategies promoting social policy as a productive factor with the promise of a future return’ (Adamson and Brennan, 2014, p.49). Within the social investment frame, many types of social expenditure are seen as productive and supportive of economic and employment growth, which explains the investment of the state in early childhood education and care (ibid).

This fact is illustrated in the case studies whereby budgets are allocated to private ECE provision (e.g. *Norway*). ‘Over 50 per cent of the ECE providers are privately owned, but all ECE services, both private and public, is funded by public authorities, regulated in the Act, and they are almost equally and publicly financed. Private ECE receives 91 per cent public funding today and will receive 100 per cent in 2014’). This scenario confirms that public expenditure on children and families in the form of ECE services and subsidies does not necessarily equate to access to publicly provided social services (Adamson and Brennan, 2014); rather, there is a reliance on market mechanisms and private providers.

This biased tendency of privatisation that attempts to overshadow the notion of public ECE raises questions around the notion of *public* in ECE. This issue is presented by the *Chilean case study* that declares: ‘We do not consider public institutions the ones that are managed by private parties with public funding; they are private institutions with public funding’. From this reflection, it appears that clear tensions emerge in relation to one of EI’s central goals: to promote ECE that is publicly funded and universally accessible.

4.1.3. An emergent trend in ECE aiming to reverse privatisation

This trend seems to be encapsulated in the broad discussion on the tensions between the public and the private where the goals for evaluating educational outcomes in western societies have implications for social justice (Levin et al., 2013). According to Levin et al., these goals are freedom of choice, productive efficiency, equity, and social cohesion:

All four of these goals address social justice to some extent. For example, freedom of choice is a measure of availability of the types of school most desired by individual

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

families and students and their availability to both individual families and different social groups (e.g. gender, disability, social class, language, and ethnicity). Productive efficiency addresses the use of social resources in their most efficacious way for education for society and its constituent families and individual groups. Equity refers to fairness in the distribution of educational resources and outcomes, and social cohesion refers to the educational experience provided in contributing to the creation of a fair and productive society promoting full acceptance of and participation of all (Levin et al., 2013, p.517).

These four goals seem to underpin an emergent trend to reverse privatisation. They become evident when case studies express views about educational policies that should promote a sense of integration, e.g. to overcome the fragmentation of the educational system, and with the reduction of social gaps in education, which is an imperative if children are to have equal opportunities (*Argentinian case study*). In some instances, this emerging trend to counter the worst impacts of privatisation can lead to a new institutionalism for public education (e.g. quality standards, effective regulations, a focus on teacher preparation, infrastructure and comprehensive care) that generates unity in ECE provided by the state (*Chilean case study*).

This tendency can also be associated with the situation presented by the *Senegalese case study* that confirms that the privatisation trend there has reversed in the last five years.

| Questions |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>How can 'public ECE' be defined; who takes part in the process and who is excluded?</i>• <i>What is meant by 'promoting ECE that is publicly funded? Does this include private (for-profit or non-profit) provision?</i>• <i>What are the processes that can counter privatisation in specific contexts?</i>• <i>To what extent are the private benefits of ECE generating equity and social cohesion?</i> |

4.2. Learning from the Case Studies

The developments discussed in the previous sections have repercussions for the outcomes for children and families, the ECE workforce, and for the governance and regulation of this field. The table in annex 5 shows a condensed version of participants' perceptions.

Taking into consideration the case studies' perspective and bearing in mind that case study as a research methodology carried the risk of being criticised for its weakness to arrive at generalisations, the authors emphasise the factor of learning from the cases (Stake, 1998) which introduces us to new ways of seeing and understanding (Simons, 1996) the phenomenon of privatisation in ECE.

Oriented by these principles to guide the exploration, the data brought invaluable insights which are presented and interpreted in this section as *implications* for the quality of the provision, the ECE workforce, and for ECE as a profession.

4.2.1. Implications for the quality of ECE provision

With the evident expansion of the private ECE sector, case studies express their concerns for the quality of ECE provision, echoing a statement made by the OECD (2012) in the 'Starting Strong III' report:

'Expanding access to services without attention to quality will not deliver good outcomes for children or the long-term productivity benefits for society. Furthermore, research has shown that if quality is low, it can have long-lasting detrimental effects on child development, instead of bringing positive effects' (OECD, 2012, p.9).

Perhaps surprisingly, the OECD has repeatedly expressed concerns about the links between marketised systems, private provision, and consistent low quality of early childhood services. 'Starting Strong II' (2006) takes this as a starting point to argue that governments take responsibility and action:

'In addition, early childhood services in market situations are subject to critical shortages and low quality – all of which indicate that government intervention is appropriate. Government involvement is also justified by the fact that the benefits delivered to societies by high quality early childhood services are greater than its costs (OECD, 2006, p.37).

The implications of this picture point to three main concerns:

- Space and child/adult ratios
- Variety of ECE programmes being offered
- Training and qualifications of many ECE educators

The first concern is illustrated by the *Irish case study*. It points out that many classrooms have 30 children or more with one teacher and that the physical size of classrooms is often too small to facilitate active learning. The *Norwegian case study* reports that the regulations about space and outdoor areas are minimal with many children spending long hours in less than optimal environments as a consequence. The *Philippines case study* argues that indoor and outdoor play areas are essential whatever approach the preschool follows. These perceptions seem to resonate with the assumption that 'successful business competes and expands' (Penn, 2011, p.157), which may explain why private services tend to adhere to minimum regulations and that the private sector lobbies to reduce regulations (New Zealand case study), with detrimental effects on the quality of provision.

A critical point in this respect is noted in the *Chilean case study* where the quality of provision in Chile is seen as synonymous with access and universality, regardless of the conditions and the consequences:

... 'en la práctica hay una obsesión por mejorar los indicadores de cobertura (Acceso) y mostrarse como buen alumno de la OCDE, sin asegurar

...in practice, there is an obsession with improving coverage indicators (access) and show oneself as a good student of the OECD, without simultaneously

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

simultáneamente buenas condiciones de enseñanza y buena educación (Calidad).'

ensuring good conditions for teaching and good education (quality) (our translation).

The second concern about the multiplicity of ECE programmes is exemplified by the *Costa Rican case study*:

'La Educación es un servicio gratuito costado por el Estado y a la vez con carácter obligatorio y de buena calidad, sin embargo ésta calidad se ve desmejorada ante nuevas instituciones o empresas privadas que amplían el programa de estudio en cuanto a contenidos de aprendizajes y ofrecen mayores oportunidades'.

Education is a free service funded by the state; it is also mandatory and of good quality. However, this quality has deteriorated as new institutions or private companies expand the curriculum and the learning content and offer greater opportunities (our translation).

This represents an interesting contradiction: the quality of provision deteriorates in new private institutions because services that also offer private kindergarten seek to provide extracurricular and expanded ECE programmes (e.g. second and third language programmes) in order to become more appealing to fee-paying families.

The third concern with regards to expanding access to services without attention to quality of ECE provision refers to the perceived way the lack of training and qualifications of many ECE educators makes the provision less desirable ...

'We insisted that quality education is dependent on teachers' competence to execute the kindergarten curriculum, hence they must be professionally trained and paid equally as regular teachers. Contractualisation/hiring of so-called "volunteers" must be addressed and so with the perennial problems of shortages on basic inputs on education such as lack of classrooms, teachers, textbooks, facilities, and insufficient budgets' (ACT).

To summarise this section, it is worth mentioning that case studies mention explicitly the following aspects as relevant issues in regards to quality of the provision:

- ECE as initial universal and compulsory education
- Governance and organisation of ECE
- Group size and child/adult ratio
- Children's wellbeing
- Provision of adequate resources
- Standards for setting up and operating kindergartens
- Improvement in infrastructure and equipment for child development
- Value placed on the language spoken by the child
- Overall coherence of early childhood provision through an integrated approach engaging with the entire child's needs (education, health, nutrition, protection)
- Fairness and accessibility through guaranteed equal access for all children

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

- ECE educators' qualification, training, and professional development
- Institutional and pedagogical organisation and the teachers' work
- Standardised core training programme component whose curriculum addresses skills and attitudes to promote integration

4.2.2. Implications for the ECE workforce

According to the responses, privatisation of ECE provision has impacted the workforce at different levels. Firstly, there is a certain level of discrimination with regards to ECE teachers' qualifications in relation to the employment terms and conditions including contract types and remuneration and benefits.

This supposition is exemplified by the *Irish case study*. It highlights the decision by the government to provide a universal free preschool year through the private and voluntary sector, even though there is an issue with the qualifications of ECE teachers (public) and practitioners in the private sector of the country. The following information demonstrates this point¹¹:

| | <i>State sector</i> | <i>Non-state sector</i> |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| <i>Irish case study</i> | <i>Primary school teachers graduate from University with a Bachelor Degree in Education (B.Ed), which is currently a three-year degree programme but will become a four-year degree programme from 2012. Alternatively, graduates may become primary teachers by undertaking a post-graduate Diploma in Primary Teaching, which is currently 18 months duration, but increasing to two years in 2014.</i> | <i>Practitioners in the non-state sector hold a variety of qualifications, with many holding no qualifications.</i> |

In this particular example, it could be argued that indirectly, this bias may be a result of a possible ambiguity in the statement: 'It is not the qualification *per se* that has an impact on child outcomes. What matters on the ground is the ability of the staff to create a high-quality pedagogic environment that makes the difference for children' (OECD, 2012, p.11).

This situation leads to a reflection on a second level of impact of privatisation on the ECE workforce: a kind of discrimination that involves possible features of power or domination related to political, social, and economic change that influences ECE and subsequently the ECE workforce. These features of power can be captured when there is a sense of *confusion*, a sense of *oppression* and a sense of *hegemony* identified in particular circumstances (Adams et al. 2007, p.5).

¹¹ We are aware that the qualification requirements for early childhood practitioners in the private and voluntary sector in Ireland are changing. The information above was provided by the Irish respondents and was correct at the time of the survey.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

For example, *a sense of confusion* is perceived when there is ‘a bias that emphasises the pervasive nature of social inequality woven through social institutions as well as embedded within individuals’ consciousness (ibid). This is illustrated by the *New Zealand case study* when respondents state that ‘in the private sector, experienced teachers in particular are paid considerably less than school teachers, because there tends to be a flat rate’. In this situation, the discrimination towards experienced ECE teachers may be present in the pervasive tendency of the market ideology to expand private services and to adhere to minimum regulations.

A different situation in this respect is illustrated by the *Chilean case study*:

‘No existe ninguna regulación entre las diferentes instituciones con respecto a las remuneración de los trabajadores de la educación inicial más aún son los que tienen los más bajos sueldos’.

There is no regulation between different institutions regarding the remuneration of early education workers, most of whom are those with the lowest wages (our translation).

In this example, the fact that there are no regulations for the recruitment of ECE workers allows employers and institutions to decide ECE workers’ compensation. It contributes to ECE workers being paid low wages.

The Philippines case study expresses that most parents of children from affluent families consider *private ECE better* than public education and that this is also a common belief shared by part of the average and below-average socio-economic groups. In this example, the nature of social inequality is embedded in parents’ negative attitude towards public education and in their elite mentality that private education makes their children better learners/ persons.

Moreover, *a sense of oppression* is identified when there is ‘a hierarchical relationship in which dominant groups reap advantage from the disempowerment of targeted groups’ (Adams et al., 2007, p.523). This feature of power is noted in circumstances described in the *Irish case study* when the INTO explains that:

‘What is of most interest is that that the free preschool provision for all three-year-olds in the year before they enter primary school is being provided by the private and voluntary sector, rather than directly by the state, as is the case for primary and post-primary education. The state could have chosen to expand the state-provided preschool service Early Start¹², which is staffed by primary teachers and qualified childcare workers, whose terms and conditions and salary levels are determined through collective bargaining mechanisms’.

Other examples of the sense of oppression are evident in the *Costa Rican* and *Ghanaian case studies*. In Costa Rica, where there is an oversupply of ECE teachers, the private sector takes advantage of

¹² Early Start is a yearlong preventative programme targeting children aged 3 or 4 from disadvantaged areas (See http://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/education/pre_school_education_and_childcare/early_start.html).

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

this situation by reducing the average base salary and forcing ECE educators to work longer hours and take on more responsibilities.

In Ghana, 'close to about 40 per cent of educators have not had any training in ECE at all and there is a conscious effort to upgrade their status. For the private sector, more educators are being trained to be more skilful in working with children, However, most educators in the private sector are poorly paid, receive fewer allowances, have shorter leave periods, and their working conditions are extremely poor'.

Furthermore, *a sense of hegemony* is recognised when there is an internalised oppression that not only resides in external social institutions and norms but lodges in the human psyche as well (ibid). This can be maintained through 'dominant discourses', which are embedded in networks of social and political control - regimes of truths - (Foucault, 1980) and can be identified in statements such as:

'Philanthropic organisations have provided funding to support provision in communities of socio-economic disadvantage, in the absence of sufficient state support.' (Irish case study)

In this example, there is an internalised assumption that the private sector finds its *raison d'être* due to insufficient state funding to support ECE provision in communities that are socio-economically disadvantaged.

A further example is provided by the *Ghanaian case study*: 'In the private sector, the recruitment of educators is sometimes done verbally depending on the relationship with the educator; some proprietors recruit through advertisement'. It seems that the way the private ECE sector operates is perceived as normal and that ECE teachers working for them are of a lower profile.

The following example from *the Philippines case study* illustrates how the discourse of privatisation in ECE is promulgated in the teacher education programme:

There are higher learning institutions (HEI) that train teachers specifically on how to handle ECE since 1924. However, in their curricula, HEI's place the emphasis on owning and managing your own preschool. Since ECE is not part of the Philippines' basic education, teachers trained in ECE cannot seek state employment. To be employed in small schools leads to a very small salary as such. Many job-seekers, especially those with capital, take the entrepreneurial route and set up a private profit-driven school.

These features of the private sector's power or domination over the ECE workforce confirm the assumption that market mechanisms and concepts have a significant impact on equity in education. These impacts are not just in widening gaps between the privileged and the disadvantaged, but also in changing how equity and social justice in education are understood (Ball and Youdell, 2007). This has wide-ranging implications for the early childhood profession.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

4.2.3. Implications for ECE as a Profession

The implications for ECE as a profession are associated with the constant reconstruction and co-construction of the professional body of knowledge of early childhood education (Urban and Dalli, 2012).

This reconstruction places democracy at the core of the reflection on the impacts of privatisation in ECE generated in this study, and its implications for the ECE profession envisaged by the 14 case studies with the following characteristics:

Table 2: - Characteristics of the ECE profession in 14 different contexts

| Characteristics of the ECE profession: the combined picture |
|---|
| <i>'The government funds and regulates ECE provision, but does not provide ECE services, rather services are provided by a mix of community groups and private business.'</i> |
| <i>'ECE will continue to be a possible attractive investment to international companies.'</i> |
| <i>'ECE has become more commercialised, disregarding the need of the country and the desire of people.'</i> |
| <i>'Providers outside the state have varying philosophies and approaches.'</i> |
| <i>'The private sector has the capital to fund expansion.'</i> |
| <i>'Private services tend to cater to children of working parents who can afford to pay.'</i> |
| <i>'There is little monitoring of educational outcomes for children attending preschool offered by the private sector.'</i> |
| <i>'In the private sector, the level of qualification required of the staff is very low.'</i> |
| <i>'The state plays no role in terms and conditions or salary levels of the staff in the private sector.'</i> |
| <i>'Conditions such as non-contact time, paid leave and professional development tend to be considerably inferior' in the private sector.'</i> |
| <i>'Private services tend to adhere to minimum regulations and want to maximise occupancy so encourage full-time places, regardless of family preferences.'</i> |
| <i>'The private sector meets the minimum regulations to maximise profits.'</i> |
| <i>'There is a shortage of early childhood educators.'</i> |
| <i>'ECE has very poor quality due to lack of resources and, above all, the lack of coordination at the national level, both pedagogical and financially.'</i> |
| <i>'There is an oversupply of qualified ECE teachers to work in the public and private sector.'</i> |
| <i>'ECE is used as an electoral process programme which offers places for care of children and it is not in compliance with the law.'</i> |
| <i>'The professional profile is not important for recruitment in the private sector.'</i> |
| <i>'There are no regulations between different institutions or organisations of ECE providers to remunerate ECE and care practitioners.'</i> |
| <i>'ECE in the context of the education policy is interpreted as part of the Basic Education.'</i> |
| <i>'ECE private provisions have taken root and have dominated both policy and practice.'</i> |
| <i>'The private sector participation in the provision of quality ECE is 70 per cent compared to 30 per cent by the public sector.'</i> |
| <i>'ECE is predominantly privatised or profit-oriented, its cost is way beyond the means of many of the underprivileged families.'</i> |
| <i>'Public private partnerships would resolve the shortages in infrastructure such as school buildings and hospitals.'</i> |
| <i>'The private sector will finance and build classrooms while government pays them an annual amortisation over a period of several years.'</i> |
| <i>'A serious lack of funding, at least from the government sector – which often leads to unregulated, private-sector-dominated ECE provision.'</i> |
| <i>'Small private schools in particular do not require new teachers to be professionally licensed or board-passers.'</i> |
| <i>'There is an increase in ECE private provision because of the limited public offer.'</i> |

Contemplating these characteristics is like witnessing the anatomy of the ECE profession. The alternative is to turn to democracy to co-construct the field, and to acknowledge that democracy can

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

play a vital role in strengthening ECE as profession that has 'grown up' (Miller, Dalli and Urban, 2012).

'Democracy provides means for resisting power and its will to govern, and the forms of oppression and injustice that arise from the unfettered and unaccountable exercise of power. Democracy is the best defence against totalitarianism, whether in government or other institutions' (Moss, 2007, p.3).

In this regard, the case studies can teach us many lessons and the data demonstrates that the profession is actively resisting different forms of power by navigating the phenomenon of privatisation in ECE. On the one hand, case study participants have identified both direct and indirect factors that contribute to the expansion of private ECE provision – the most prominent direct factor being government or state responsibility for the expansion:

Direct Factors

- The government does not guarantee universal provision for the three-year-old age group in the 'Jardines Infantiles' under state management (*Argentinian case study*)
- The tax credit for childcare expenses has led to a huge expansion in private provision (*Canadian case study*)
- A shortage of places in state-regulated childcare provision (*Canadian case study*)
- A shortage of public provision which allows ECE to remain a growing business (*Ecuadorian case study*)
- Lack of diversity in public ECE provision (*Senegalese case study*)
- The state providing the policy environment for the participation of the business community in providing ECE services (*Gambian case study*), e.g. the promotion of Universal Kindergarten (Republic Act 10157 known as the "Kindergarten Education Act" which can be provided by both public and private sector institutions (*Philippine case study*)
- Moderate government commitment towards construction of some classrooms for Kindergarten 1 and Kindergarten 2 children's occupancy (*Ghana case study*)
- Teachers trained in ECE cannot seek state employment, they take the entrepreneurial route and set up a private profit-driven school (*Philippine case study*)
- Expansion of market forces (*Chilean, Costa Rican and Gambian case studies*)
- The increased flexibility of the committees with regard to the opening of ECE provision, but also population growth and the creation of new urban centres (*Senegalese case study*)

Indirect Factors

- Working parents support the private provision of ECE because they believe it is more efficient and has better academic outcomes, infrastructure, complex and enriched curricula, more competitiveness and is learner centred (*Costa Rican and Ecuadorian case studies*)
- Parents' negative attitude towards public education and their elite mentality that private education makes their children better learners/persons (*The Philippines case study*)
- Parents have more confidence about childcare in specialised centres rather than at home with childminders (*Uruguayan case study*)
- Ignorance of the true value of public education (*Costa Rican case study*)

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

- The need for parents, particularly women, to participate in paid work (*Gambian case study*)
- HEIs train teachers specifically on how to handle ECE and, in their curricula, emphasise the ownership and management of teachers' own preschools (*The Philippines case study*)
- The emergence of new philosophies of ECE also led to the expansion of private ECE providers (*The Philippines case study*)
- Poorly qualified staff in some public or community provision (*Senegalese case study*)

On the other hand, case studies demonstrate their sense of struggle against totalitarianism using different expressions of freedom, tolerance, emancipation, hope, leadership, belonging to the ECE profession, and achievement in terms of quality. Among the examples provided in the data, these illustrate each expression:

Expression of freedom: the desire to break free from the oppression of the private sector is illustrated by the *Chilean case study*:

'We have a proposal for a new institutional framework for public education, which aims to reverse privatisation, creating a unified ECE offered by state institutions' (Colegio de Profesores de Chile).

Expression of tolerance: the benevolence towards the phenomenon of privatisation in ECE is perceived in these examples:

The relationships between privatisation of early childhood education provision and outcomes for children, families and communities are 'good, most parents have the perception that the private sector provides better and quality service for the development of their children' (Ghanaian case study).

'ECE is very well organised in the private sector, and it is not well organised in the public sector' (Senegalese case study).

Expression of emancipation: the ideal of establishing dialogical encounters between policy and daily practice in ECE is illustrated by the *Ecuadorian case study*:

'Teachers generate a pedagogical proposal for the Ecuadorian reality aiming to reach the consciousness of the educational community; this proposal could be applied in some institutions, but fear and apprehensiveness of government retaliation do not allow us to advance on this' (Ecuadorian case study).

Expression of hope: the fact that the trend of privatisation can be reversed. This is the case in Senegal:

'The trend of privatisation has reversed slightly: between 2007 and 2010, the private sector share in early childhood provision fell from 51.3 per cent to 47.2 per cent.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

Expression of belonging to the profession: the awareness of ECE educators and their love for the profession:

'In my opinion, the Laws that were passed in our country, if appropriately implemented and closely monitored, will not only address the need for us Filipinos to intensify our values for love of country and our identity as a people who are connected to a bigger community around the globe but will also control, if not totally eliminate, business in the offering of ECE (Philippine case study).

Expression of leadership: the decision to regulate private ECE provision:

'The Ministry of Education's monitoring activities are limited to regulating private provision to ensure access, inadequate structures, and human resources and this still remains a challenge. But, recently, a task force was set up for monitoring of these private settings leading to the closure of many nurseries and day-care services (Gambian case study)

Expression of achieving in terms of quality: the defence of state or public ECE provision:

The Argentinian society is aware that public ECE has better conditions and outcomes than the private provision.

Surveys done on quality of provision in Quebec found that the quality of state-regulated childcare provision was better than private childcare provision.

The information presented in this section suggests that raising awareness of the factors contributing to an expansion of private ECE provision, together with support for resistance to privatisation, are important features in the constant reconstruction of the professional body of knowledge of ECE as a profession.

Questions

- *What does 'quality of the provision in ECE' involve? What is the role of evaluation regarding 'quality of the provision in ECE'?*
- *What are the social and humanistic regulations for expanding access to ECE services?*
- *To what extent is the ECE teacher responsible for the quality of ECE provision?*
- *In what way(s) are the market mechanisms in ECE promoting equity and social justice?*

4.3. Challenges to promoting and achieving free and public early childhood provision for all children

This exploratory study shows that governments and teachers' unions are using various strategies to promote and achieve free and public early childhood provision for all children and families in 14 different countries and socio-cultural contexts. Although case studies present a detailed account of these strategies, the authors focus on the highlights and identify two main categories:

The first category emphasises the monitoring role of the unions. For example, CTERA monitors the ECE situation and the appropriate budget from the government for each province (*Argentinian case study*). UNE demands that the socialisation of the status of care and its appropriate infrastructure meet the requirements of the Constitutional precept and the Decennial Plan (*Ecuadorian case study*). In Chile, the teachers' union has a proposal for a new institutional framework for public education, which aims to reverse privatisation, creating a unified early childhood institution served by the state (*Chilean case study*). In Ghana, GNAT has representation on public education sector committees to provide fair balance to policy issues (*Ghanaian case study*).

The second category refers to the achievements of the state or the government in promoting free and public ECE for all children. For instance, in Ireland, the free preschool year was introduced when a universal payment to parents of young children to support childcare was abolished. In New Zealand, a policy of 20 hours' free ECE for three- and four-year-olds was enacted which has been very popular and, as a result, the participation in ECE has increased. Moreover, the Quebec government has created 'memorandum places' for parents on welfare benefits who can access free childcare for three days a week. Costa Rica promotes free and public ECE for children under six years of age through awareness strategies on the relevance of the early years among families and /or caregivers. There is reception of infants from a very early age in the CEN-CINAOI (Centros de Educación y Nutrición y Centros Infantiles de Atención Integral) while ECE for the four years and three months age group is considered part of the formal education system. Gambia has increased access especially for the vulnerable rural population by 50 per cent though providing community based services for children from birth to six years of age as well as annexation (the use of primary school facilities to provide access to ECD).

Furthermore, the Philippines affirm that every Filipino child now has access to early childhood education through the Universal Kindergarten. Children start compulsory schooling at five and are given the means to slowly adjust to formal education. In addition, DSWD has established a year-round programme/service for the very young Filipinos (ages four-five). The Senegalese government runs information and awareness campaigns on the importance of early childhood provision because of its positive impact on children staying in education. Other government strategies aim at tackling poverty through providing food supplies to parents, expanding public infrastructure by reference to geographical coverage and (probably most important) through developing alternative community based approaches, including women's advancement groups in areas where provision is non-existent. The Uruguayan case study clarifies that for the Early Years, free and public ECE provision is not universal, as it is focused on areas of extreme social vulnerability and offered either by INAU or

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

through the CAIF Plan (a child and family support strategy that has been in operation for 25 years) which are both run by NGOs with public resources.

In order to paint a clear picture of strategies countries or organisations employ to promote and achieve free and public early childhood provision for all children and families, the authors summarise this information and identify **facts** which demonstrate the achievements, **actions** that illustrate the progress of mandates or policies, and **plans** which illuminate the intentions in promoting and achieving free and public ECE.

Table 3 : Summary of strategies to promoting and achieving free and public ECE

| Facts | Actions (progress) | Plans (intentions) |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPE have “memorandum places” where parents on welfare benefits can access free childcare for three days a week and 98 per cent of Quebec children aged five attend pre-primary school. • The Quebec government allowed full-time pre-primary school classes to be provided for four-year-olds from disadvantaged backgrounds. (Canada). • Formal education system for children from four years and three months (Costa Rica) • Ensure access for 5,423 children in 40 community based settings and 27 annexed settings in the same regions for the three-six-year-olds and 100 communities providing parenting education support programmes for children from birth up to age three (Gambia). • Compulsory and free universal kindergarten education for five-year-olds is part of the Enhance Basic Education Curriculum of the Department of Education (The Philippines). • The DSWD assists Filipino families through a programme/service called “Day Care” for the very young Filipinos aged four-five. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop monitoring reports on ECE situation and state funding in each province (Argentina). • Carry out province, regional and national debates and meetings (Argentina). • Work collaboratively with social sector and workers (Argentina). • Promote free and public ECE for children under six through awareness strategies on the relevance of the early years among families and /or caregivers (Costa Rica). • The union has representation on public education sector committees to provide fair balance to policy issues (Ghana). • ECCD programmes are being expanded to reach all five-year-old children, with emphasis on children of poorest households and at least one ECCE centre is being established in every Local Government Unit (Philippines). • Organise teaching and non-teaching personnel into unions, campaigns, education, and lobbying groups on specific laws in partnership with ACT and Teachers Party list and other friendly lawmakers (the Philippines). • Early childhood programmes were put to the test and positive results seem to be emerging (Senegal). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasise the need for better teaching conditions and development for children (Chile). • Have a proposal for a new institutional framework for public education, which aims to reverse privatisation, creating a unified ECE (Chile). • Demand the socialisation of the importance of ECE and Care and its appropriate infrastructure to meet the constitutional precept and the Decennial Plan requirements (Ecuador). • Increase access especially for the vulnerable, rural populace, by 50 per cent (Gambia). • Provide community based services for children from birth up to six years of age as well as annexation (the use of primary school facilities to provide access to ECD services (Gambia). • The Government has prioritised strengthening ECE as part of the formal education system. Every Filipino child now has access to early childhood education through the Universal Kindergarten (The Philippines). • Expanding public infrastructure by reference to geographical coverage (Senegal). • Developing alternative community based approaches, including women’s advancement groups in areas where provision is non-existent (Senegal). • The government runs information and awareness campaigns on the importance of ECE (Senegal). • Promote free and public ECE provision focused on the areas of |

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | <i>extreme social vulnerability and offered by NGOs with public resources (Uruguay).</i> |
|--|--|--|

One of the main challenges resides in transforming these plans or intentions into actions which, eventually, will become facts in achieving free and public ECE provision for all children and families.

Another challenge consists in creating ‘democratic spaces’ and conditions for active democratic practice (Moss, 2007; Moss and Urban, 2010) in order to counterbalance the ideology of the market. From this perspective, the challenge the countries may face in building consensus on the goals, aligning ECEC goals with the goals of other levels of education or other child-focused services, (OECD, 2012, p.10) and in encouraging a high-quality workforce (ibid, p.12) involves establishing dialogical encounters between the democratic approach and the existing business approach in ECE provision.

It appears that both approaches aim at recognising the Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals, but their principles differ enormously. The following summary table exemplifies this point:

| Democratic approach (Moss, 2007; Moss and Urban, 2010) | Business approach (Van Fleet, 2012) |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Different levels of government have responsibility to create ‘democratic space’ and conditions for active democratic practice.</i> b) <i>Provide a national framework of entitlements and standards that expresses democratically agreed national values, expectations and objectives.</i> c) <i>Have a clear entitlement to access to services for children as citizens together with a funding system that enables all children to exercise their entitlement; a clear statement that early childhood services are a public good and responsibility, not a private commodity.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) <i>Make investments in learning part of the core business of companies.</i> b) <i>Adopt benchmarks to measure learning outcomes and promote equity, and monitor results.</i> c) <i>Enhance government capacity to reach marginalised children and provide a quality education.</i> |

The data collected in the case studies suggests that these challenges can be addressed through supporting ‘qualifying ECE leaders with a deep knowledge of the anatomy of the ECE profession, willing to promote democracy, human rights, and social justice and ensure safety and security for all children, early childhood teachers, and other education employees’ (ETUCE, 2012, p.6). This view embraces a need to generate a new conceptual framework which involves alternative actions to counterbalance the impacts and consequences of privatisation in ECE. In other words, it is essential

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

to develop transformative and democratic research (Urban, 2012) which may directly address the key priorities to ensure that all children have access to quality ECE (Education International, 2011).

'Since we are working on the minds of the youth/babies, research in ECE would help us better understand the prevailing issues affecting the education system which impacted the most important client ...the preschool children' (The Philippines case study).

Questions

- *In what way can intentions be transformed into facts to promote and achieve free and public ECE?*
- *If research has the potential role of enlightenment (Gambian case study), how can it be used to reverse the trends of privatisation in ECE identified in this study?*
- *Which alternative actions may counterbalance the impacts and consequences of privatisation in ECE?*

CONCLUSIONS

The study shows that there is a trend toward increasing privatisation in ECE, a privatisation trend that threatens to overshadow public ECE and an emergent trend in ECE aiming to reverse privatisation. The first trend is envisaged in endogenous and exogenous forms of privatisation: tax credits for childcare expenses, funding through subsidiary claims for every child, voucher initiatives implemented for families to contract private ECE provision, expansion of public ECE centres managed by private for-profit providers, and new private provision based on technological developments and programmes are making the public ECE more like business. Moreover, decisions to promote PPPs to finance preschool education and to overcome shortages in infrastructure, contracts between private providers and nurseries to offer extended hours, the presence of owner-provider companies, NGO partnerships with the state, ECE development churches, charities and philanthropic organisations that want to fund and support ECE imply that public ECE is open to the participation of the private sector.

The privatisation trend that threatens to overshadow public ECE is framed in the concept of social and economic investment that governments promote in ECE and care and this is evident in situations of budget allocation to private ECE provision described by case studies. This trend opens the debate on the notion of *public* in ECE and on the reflection on one of EI's central goals which is to promote publicly funded and universally accessible ECE. Furthermore, the emergent trend in ECE that aims to reverse privatisation serves as a basis for reflecting and exploring ECE goals in relation to social justice and alternative actions to counterbalance the ideology of the market.

The 14 case studies illustrate how we can learn about the impacts and implications of privatisation in ECE. This study identifies that there are implications for the quality of the provision regarding child/adult ratios, the variety of ECE programmes being offered, and the training/qualifications of many ECE educators. The increasing privatisation trend has fostered discrimination towards the ECE workforce in terms of the reciprocity between teachers' qualifications, contracts and remuneration. And it has boosted possible features of power or domination related to political, social, and economic change that influences ECE and subsequently the ECE workforce. These features confirm the assumption that market mechanisms have a significant impact on equity in education, not just in widening gaps between the privileged and the disadvantaged, but also in changing how equity and social justice in education are understood (Ball and Youdell, 2007).

The different situations captured in this study demonstrate that the ECE profession is actively resisting different forms of power regarding the phenomenon of privatisation through the case studies' sense of struggle against totalitarianism using expressions of freedom, tolerance, emancipation, hope, leadership, belonging to the profession and achievement in terms of quality in ECE. These expressions, together with their awareness on the factors contributing to an expansion of private ECE provision, constitute important features in the constant reconstruction of the professional body of knowledge of ECE as a profession.

The study suggests that although governments and organisations are using different strategies to promote and achieve free and public early childhood provision for all children and families, the

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

challenges reside in a) transforming plans or intentions into actions which eventually become facts in achieving free and public ECE provision for all, and in b) creating 'democratic spaces' and conditions for active democratic practice (Moss, 2007; Moss and Urban, 2010) in order to counterbalance the impacts of privatisation in ECE. Democratic spaces promote dialogical encounters to reflect on issues such as: How can 'public ECE' be defined, who takes part in the process and who is excluded? What do we mean by 'promoting ECE that is publicly funded? Does this include private (for-profit or non-profit) provision? What are the processes that can counter privatisation in specific contexts? To what extent are the private benefits of ECE generating equity and social cohesion? What does 'quality of the provision in ECE' involve? What is the role of evaluation regarding 'quality of the provision in ECE'? What are the social and humanistic regulations for expanding access to ECE services? To what extent is the ECE teacher responsible for the quality of ECE provision? In what way(s) are the market mechanisms in ECE promoting equity and social justice? In what way can intentions be transformed into facts to promote and achieve free and public ECE? If research has the potential role of enlightenment (Gambian case study), how can it be used to reverse the trends of privatisation in ECE identified in this study? Which alternative actions may counterbalance the impacts and consequences of privatisation in ECE?

This pilot study represents a way of making sense of the findings with the awareness that there may be other ways of reading the data generated from this inquiry. However, it may constitute a contribution to generating a new conceptual framework to counterbalance the dangers of privatisation in ECE. The authors are also conscious that privatisation and its impacts are complex and that in order to develop plausible alternatives, communities around the world need to clarify for themselves what their dreams are, and how to put them into action (Freire, 2007).

*'L'utopie est un mode de pensée qui a des effets sur le réel.'*¹³ (Drovin-Hans, 2004)

¹³ Utopia is a way of thinking that affects reality

RECOMMENDATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

This study is a first exploration of the impacts of the privatisation of ECE in 14 countries in Africa, Asia-Pacific, The Americas, and Europe. It provides insights into participants' descriptions of the reality of early childhood practice in their countries and offers possible interpretations and explanations of the phenomena at stake. This is a first step that needs to be followed up with a sustainable and long-term strategy to counter neo-liberal practices and policies and to continuously make the case for ECE as a public good, a human right, a public responsibility, and a democratic practice in civil society. Based on the discussion of the findings of this study, this report suggests that EI consider three pillars when building and implementing such a strategy:

1. Critical debate about the impacts of the privatisation of ECE
2. Follow-up research to this study to deepen the understandings of local and global privatisation processes in ECE
3. Building capacity, leadership, and a critical knowledge base at global and local level

1. Initiate and facilitate a critical debate about the impacts of the privatisation of ECE

EI is a global advocate for free and public education for all. As this study shows, the implications of widespread privatisation of ECE are far reaching; they go beyond a simple dichotomy of public (desirable) vs. private (undesirable). On the contrary, privatisation, marketisation, and commodification are implicit and explicit manifestations of a neo-liberal mindset that affects all aspects of life including early childhood education.

- In order to better understand how neo-liberal beliefs affect early childhood practices in different contexts, EI could initiate critical discussions with civil society actors in a wide range of countries, starting with the participants in this study who provided first insights as responses to the survey.
- One way of starting and organising such a process could be to extend the brief of EI's existing global Early Childhood Task Force.

2. Build on and follow up on the initial findings of this study to deepen understandings of the processes and implications of privatisation locally and globally

This 14-country study has provided first insights and possible interpretations of the impacts of privatisation of ECE. This is a first step that needs following up in order to develop conceptual

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

frameworks and practical approaches to counter the taken-for-granted neo-liberal narrative and to develop, support and showcase plausible alternatives.

- A next step in this process could involve more in-depth interviews and observations with the participants of this study in their local/regional context. This would then feed directly into the work of EI's global Early Childhood Education Network.

3. Build global and local leadership capacity and a knowledge base for ECE as a public good and public responsibility

Much of the difficulty in countering the neo-liberal tendencies in ECE is related to the weakness and fragmentation of the field compared to the well-organised protagonists of corporate and private 'solutions' to global and local educational challenges. Regarding the promotion of ECE as a public good and public responsibility, there is an unsustainable lack of leadership at local, regional, and global level.

- EI should use its role as a global advocate and become a focal point for leadership and capacity building around public education, social justice, and human rights. As a concrete step, EI, together with its global Early Childhood Education Network, the member organisations that participated in this study, and an external research partner, could seek and identify resources for a unique capacity building activity to:
 - a) build leadership capacity to drive change locally;
 - b) build a global but locally rooted research and knowledge base to counter privatisation and to promote public education and social justice in ECE;
 - c) strengthen EI's role as a global leader and advocate for free and public ECE.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

Notes on authors

Mathias Urban, PhD, is Professor of Early Childhood, and Director of the Early Childhood Research Centre (ECRC) at the University of Roehampton, London, UK, and Chair of the international DECET network (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training). He works and publishes on questions of diversity and equality, social justice, participatory evaluation, and professionalism in working with young children, families, and communities in diverse socio-cultural contexts.

Clara Inés Rubiano is a PhD student at the Early Childhood Research Centre, University of Roehampton, Senior lecturer in education at the Universidad Distrital Francisco José de Caldas, Bogotá, Colombia. Her research focuses on teacher education towards teaching for social justice in pre-service early childhood education.

REFERENCES

Adams, M., Bell, L. A. and Griffing, P. (Eds.) (2007) *Teaching for Diversity and Social Justice*. Second Edition. New York, London: Routledge.

Adamson, E. and Brennan, D. (2014) 'Social Investment or Private Profit? Diverging Notions of 'Investment' in Early Childhood Education and Care'. *International Journal of Early Childhood*, 46, pp. 47–61.

Allaire, L. (2011) *An endangered model? Quebec's Seven-Dollar-a-Day public Daycare Centres*, *Inroads Journal, Day Care section*.

Associació de Mestres Rosa Sensat (2010) *Per una nova educació pública*. Retrieved 7 October 2010 from <http://www.rosasensat.org/documents/2/?tmplng=ca>.

Ball, S. J. & Youdell, D. (2007) *Hidden privatisation in public education*. Preliminary report. Brussels: Education International.

Bowden, J. A. and Green, P. (2005) *Doing developmental phenomenography*. Melbourne: RMIT University Press.

Bowden, J. A. and Walsh, E. (Eds.). (2000) *Phenomenography*. Melbourne: RMIT University Press.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and K. Morrison. (2007) *Research Methods in Education*. Sixth Edition. London and New York: Routledge.

Drovin-Hans, A. M. (2004) *Education et Utopies*. Paris: Librairie Philosophique Vrin.

Ebrahim, H. B. (2010). 'Conflicting Discourses of Private Nursery Entrepreneurs in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa'. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 11(1), pp. 40-49.

Education International (2000) *Peace Education*. Retrieved DATE from http://www.ei-ie.org/en/websections/content_detail/5411.

Education International (2009) *Public Private Partnerships in Education*. Brussels: Education International.

Education International (Ed.). (2010) *Early Childhood Education: A global scenario*. Brussels: Education International.

Education International (2011) Education International's commitment to quality Early Childhood Education. ECE Strategy Paper.

Education International (2012) Education International News. *Spain: a red-hot spring in defence of state education*. Retrieved 16 May 2012 from http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news_details/2164.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

El Colombiano (2011) *El cara y sello de la reforma a la educación*. Retrieved 18 October 2011 from http://www.elcolombiano.com/BancoConocimiento/E/el_cara_y_sello_de_la_reforma_a_la_educacion/el_cara_y_sello_de_la_reforma_a_la_educacion.asp.

Elliott, J. and Grigorenko, E. (2008) *Western psychological and educational theory in diverse contexts*. London: Routledge.

ETUCE (2012) ETUCE Policy on Early Childhood Education. Working document presented in the European Trade Union Committee for Education Conference, 26-28 November 2012, Hungary.

Fitz, J. and Beers, B. (2002) 'Education Management Organisations and the Privatisation of Public Education: A cross-national comparison of the USA and Britain', *Comparative Education*, Vol. 38 (2), 137–154.

Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and other Writings, 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon.

Freire, P. (2007) *Daring to dream: toward a pedagogy of the unfinished*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

GCE - Global Campaign for Education (2012) France: *Demonstrations against privatisation in education*. Retrieved 16 May 2012 from <http://www.campaignforeducation.org/en/news/education-news/275>.

Goswami, A. (2012) 'Privatisation of Education has brought down the quality of education', *Youth Debates*, Delhi: third edition: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DEuavzI24cE>.

ILO (2014) *Policy Guidelines on the promotion of decent work for early childhood education personnel*. Retrieved 28 August 2014 from http://www.ilo.org/sector/Resources/codes-of-practice-and-guidelines/WCMS_236528/lang--en/index.htm.

Islam, Z. (2010) 'From 'Marginality' to 'Mainstream': a narrative of early childhood professionalism in Bangladesh'. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, 11(1), pp. 30-39.

Levin, H. and Belfield, C. (2002) 'Education privatization: causes, consequences and planning implications'. *International Institute for Educational Planning*. <http://www.unesco.org/iiep>.

Levin, H., Cornelisz, I. and Harnisch-Cerda, B. (2013) 'Does educational privatization promote social justice?'. *Oxford Review of Education*. 39(4), pp. 514–532.

Lloyd, E. and Penn, H. (Eds.). (2012) *Childcare markets: Can they deliver an equitable service?* Bristol: Policy Press.

Macpherson, I., Robertson, S., and Walford, G. (Eds.). (2014) *Education, Privatisation and Social Justice: case studies from Africa, South Africa and South East Asia*. Oxford: Symposium Books.

Miller, S. M., Dalli, C., and Urban, M. (Eds.). (2011) *Towards a Critical Ecology of the Profession: Early Childhood grows up*. Dordrecht and London: Springer.

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

- Moss, P. (2007) 'Bringing politics into the nursery: Early childhood education as a democratic practice'. *Working Papers in Early Childhood Development*, Bernard van Leer Foundation: No. 43.
- Moss, P. and Urban M. (2010) *Democracy and Experimentation: two fundamental values for education*, Bertelsmann Stiftung, Germany.
- Mulholland, H. and Shepherd, J. (2012) 'Education system could be completely privatised by 2015, Union predicts', *The Guardian*, Wednesday 28 March 2012.
Online: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2012/mar/28/education-system-privatised-2015-union>.
- Murphy, J., Gilmer, S., Weise, R. and Page, A. (1998) *Pathways to privatization in education*. USA: Ablex Publishing.
- OECD (2001). *Starting Strong. Early Childhood Education and Care*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD (2006). *Starting Strong II. Early Childhood Education and Care*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD (2012). *Starting Strong III. Early Childhood Education and Care*. Executive summary. Retrieved 18 April 2012 from <http://www.oecd.org/edu/school/49325825.pdf>.
- Penn, H. (2011) 'Gambling on the market: The role of for-profit provision in early childhood education and care'. *Journal of Early Childhood Research*, 9(2), pp. 150–161.
- Simons, H. (1996) 'The Paradox of case study'. *Cambridge Journal of Education*. 26(2), pp. 225-248.
- Spring, J. H. (2008). *Globalization of education: an introduction*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Stake, R. (1998) *Case studies*. In Denzin, N. and Y. Lincoln (Eds.). *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA; London: Sage.
- Torres, C. (2010) 'The State, Privatisation and Educational Policy: A critique of neo-liberalism in Latin America and some ethical and political implications'. *Comparative Education*.
Online: <http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/cced20>.
- Triandis, H. C. (2001) 'Individualism and Collectivism: Past, Present and Future'. In Matsumoto, D. R. (Ed.). *The handbook of culture & psychology* (pp.35-50). New York: Oxford University Press.
- UNESCO (2006) 'Nepal. Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE) programmes'. *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2007*.
Online: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001472/147200e.pdf>.
- UNESCO (2007) 'Strong Foundations. Early childhood care and education'. *Education For All Global Monitoring Report 2007*. Paris: UNESCO.
- UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre (2008) 'Report Card 8. The child care transition'. *A league table of early childhood education and care in economically advanced countries*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.
- Urban, M. (2009) *Early Childhood Education in Europe. Achievements, Challenges and Possibilities*. Brussels: Education International.

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

Urban, M. (2010) 'Zones of professional development: arguments for reclaiming practice-based evidence in early childhood practice and research'. In Hayden, J. and A. Tuna (Eds.). *Moving Forward Together: Early childhood programs as the doorway to social cohesion. An East-West Perspective*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars.

Urban, M. and Dalli, C. (2012) 'A Profession Speaking and Thinking for Itself', in Miller, L., Dalli, C. and Urban, M. (Eds.) *Early Childhood Grows Up. Towards a critical ecology of the profession*. Dordrecht, London, New York: Springer.

Urban, M., Vandenbroeck, M., Van Laere, K., Lazzari, A., and Peeters, J. (2011) *Competence requirements in early childhood education and care. Final report*. London and Brussels: European Commission, Directorate General for Education and Culture.

Urban, M., Vandenbroeck, M., Van Laere, K., Lazzari, A., and Peeters, J. (2012) 'Towards competent systems in early childhood education and care: Implications for policy and practice'. *European Journal of Education*, 47(4), pp. 508-526.

Van Fleet, J. W. (2012) *Scaling Up Corporate Social Investments in Education: Five Strategies that Work*. Retrieved 15 July 2014 from http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2012/5/corporate%20investments%20vanfleet/05_corporate_investments_vanfleet.pdf.

World Bank (2010) *Public-Private Partnerships in Education*. Retrieved 15 July 2014 from <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/education/brief/economics-of-education>.

World Bank (2002) *Constructing knowledge societies: new challenges for tertiary education*. Washington, DC: World Bank.

World Bank (2009) *Education for the Knowledge Economy*. Retrieved 23 December 2010 from <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:20161496~menuPK:540092~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:282386,00.html>.

Yin, R. K. (1994) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Second edition. London: Sage.

Annex 1. Reactions against privatisation in education



ENGLAND: The government has come under renewed attack for trying to force Downhills primary school in north London, to turn into an academy. Photograph: David Levene



FRANCE: Demonstrations against privatisation in education. Thousands of students, parents and teachers took to the streets in France again to protest against the Government's proposed education reforms. The movement is demanding in particular that the University Reform laws recently voted by Parliament be scrapped. This new legislation is part of a move towards what is called "autonomy" of universities but what teachers, Unions, and students denounce as privatisation reforms which undermine public education and weaken collective rights and teacher status.

Global Campaign for Education (2012) France: Demonstrations against privatisation in education. <http://www.campaignforeducation.org/en/news/education-news/275>



SPAIN: 'Spain: a red-hot spring in defence of state education'. Education unions along with parents' and students' associations have called for a strike in Spain on May 22. The strike will make history, covering the whole education sector from Early Childhood Education up to university. The consequences of these policies will have a direct impact on the quality of the state education service. They will lead to, among other things, cuts in staff levels, overcrowded classrooms, a standstill in the creation of new vocational training courses, the privatisation of education services, increased university fees, fewer scholarships, and a loss of labour rights for teaching staff.

Education International News
Spain: a red-hot spring in defence of state education (16 May 2012)
http://www.ei-ie.org/en/news/news_details/2164



COLOMBIA: 'El cara y sello de la reforma a la educación'. [The heads and tails of the education reform] Profesores y estudiantes buscan evitar el trámite del proyecto de reforma de la educación, por considerar que "la privatización acabaría la educación pública". [Teacher and student unions in Colombia are seeking to torpedo the enactment of the education reform because they consider that 'Privatisation could dismantle public education']

EL COLOMBIANO. 'El cara y sello de la reforma a la educación'. October 18th 2011. http://www.elcolombiano.com/BancoConocimiento/E/el_cara_y_sello_de_la_reforma_a_la_educacion/el_cara_y_sello_de_la_reforma_a_la_educacion.asp

Annex 2. Participants

| Annex 2 | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|--|------------------|
| PARTICIPANTS IN THE EXPLORATIVE STUDY | | | | | |
| Country | Respondent | Organisation | Address | Website | Telephone |
| Argentina | Coordinadora del equipo de Educación Inicial | Confederación de Trabajadores de la Educación de la República Argentina (CTERA) | informaciones@ctera.org.ar | www.ctera.org.ar | 54 11 4300 8694 |
| Canada | Véronique Brouillette (Conseillère syndicale) | Centrale des syndicats du Québec (CSQ) | 9405 Sherbrooke Est, Montréal, Québec, H1L 6P3 | www.csq.qc.net | 1-514-356-8888 |
| Chile | Guillermo Schierping Villegas (Director Revista Docencia) | Colegio de Profesores de Chile | schierping@colegioprofesores.cl | www.colegioprofesores.cl | 02-24704206 |
| Costa Rica | Gretel Mora Chacón (Secretaria de Asuntos Legales y laborales) | Sindicato de Trabajadoras y Trabajadores de La Educación Costarricense (SECE) | gmora@yahoo.com.mx | | 88 32 88 67 |
| | Gina Sevilla Aguilar (Coordinadora Comisión de la Mujer) | Asociación Nacional de Educadores in Costa Rica (ANDE) | Costa Rica, San José, Av. 5, | info@ande.cr | 22 57 9898 |
| Ecuador | Enma Rosana Palacios Barriga (Presidente UNE) | Unión Nacional de Educadores (UNE) | une.nacional@yahoo.es | www.une.org.ec | 22527666 |
| Ghana | Pallam Anthonio Kwesi Oviye (National Coordinator for Early Childhood Education in GNAT) | Ghana National Association of Teachers (GNAT) | P.O. BOX GP 209, ACCRA | www.gnatteachers.org | 233 302 22151576 |
| Ireland | Deirdre Nic Craith (Education Officer) | Irish National Teachers' Organisation (INTO) | 35 Parnell Square, Dublin 1, Ireland | www.into.ie | 00 353 1 8047730 |
| Nepal | Chandra Prakash Rajbhandari (Central Representative NTA) | Nepal Teachers' Association (NTA) | Nepal Teachers' Association, Kathmandu, Nepal. P.O Box 13609 | meetnre_cp@yahoo.com | 977-9851051997 |
| New Zealand | Jenny Davies (Executive Officer, Early Childhood Education) | NZEI Te Ru Roa, New Zealand Educational Institute | P O Box 466, Wellington 6140, New Zealand | www.nzei.org.nz | 64 4 43822702 |
| Norway | Gun Aamodt and Einar Juell (Senior consultants, and advisers on ECE) | Union of Education Norway | Hausmanns gate 17 0182 Oslo, Norway | www.udanningsforbundet.no | 47 24 14 20 93 |
| | Milagros C. O'ginda (General Secretary) | National Alliance of Teachers and Office Workers (SMP NA TOW) | 4th Floor S-5C Omega 1 Condominium, P. Martinez Street, Mandaluyong City 1550, Philippines | www.smpnatow.org | 63 2 6613133 |
| Philippines | Maria Cynthia Dizon-Gealogo (Member, National Education Committee) | Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT) | 22 Manga Rd. cor. Aurora Blvd. Quezon City, Philippines | | 63 02 9320168 |
| | Marlou C. Pantaleon (Chair for Tertiary Level, Luzon) | Teachers Organization of the Philippines Public Sector (TOPPS) | 555 GMC Bagumbayan, Teresa Rizal Philippines | marloucelis@yahoo.com | 9178530239 |
| Sénégal | Amy Sylla SARRE (Secretary responsible for administration) | Le Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Élémentaire (SNEEL/CNTE) | Bourse du travail, 7 avenue Lamine Gueye BP 937 Dakar | sneel-cnts@orange.sn | 221 33 821 75 24 |
| | Awa Wade /Mamadou Haby Ly (SG / Adjoint à l'Administration et à la Communication) | Union Démocratique des Enseignantes et Enseignants du Sénégal (UDES) | Daklé, Rue 13 x P Villa n°2 -BP- 10 841 Dakar HLM | www.udenseneegal.org | 338233261 |
| The Gambia | Marie Antoinette Corr (General Secretary GTU) | The Gambia Teachers Union (GTU) | P.O Box 133, MDI Road, Kanifing | www.gtu.gm | 4392075 |
| Uruguay | Teresita Rey (Directora Revista Quehacer Educativo) | Federación Uruguaya de Magisterio - Trabajadores de Educación Primaria (F.U.M.-T.E.P) | funtep45@gmail.com | www.funtep.lv | 29013987 |

Annex 3. Survey (first batch)

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

An explorative study on impacts and implications

Please complete this survey on your computer by typing into the grey boxes. Please return the completed form by e-mail to m.urban@uel.ac.uk by 16th December. Alternatively, print out the form and post to the address above. Thank you for your time and support!

| | |
|--|---|
| Name of Organisation | Please provide the full name of your organisation |
| Address | Please provide the full mailing address |
| Website | Your organisation's website |
| Name of Respondent | Please provide the name of the person that has completed this questionnaire |
| Role / Position in the Organisation | What is your current role / your position in the organisation? |

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 Values and Goals: | How would you describe the overall goals, values or principles of Early Childhood Education (ECE*) in your country? Use additional pages if necessary. |
| 1.1 ECE policies, globalisation and local needs: | From your point of view, how do current policies in ECE in your country address the relationship between globalization and early childhood education? How does the way in which this relationship is addressed reflect local interests and needs in ECE? Use additional pages if necessary. |
| 1.2 Values made concrete: | How do current policies in ECE in your country embrace the values of solidarity, diversity, equality, autonomy, self-management in theory and in practice? In what way is 'quality of provision' understood in the field of ECE in your context? Use additional pages if necessary. |

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>2</p> <p>Privatisation and 'outcomes':</p> | <p>How would you describe privatisation trends in your country? If there are any, how do you see the consequences for children, families, communities and early childhood practitioners?</p> <p>From your point of view, what are the relationships between privatisation of early childhood education provision and outcomes for children, families and communities?</p> <p>Use additional pages if necessary.</p> |
| <p>3</p> <p>Workforce issues:</p> | <p>How would you describe the ECE workforce in your country?</p> <p>What are the challenges the workforce face in daily practice?</p> <p>Use additional pages if necessary.</p> |
| <p>3.1</p> <p>Workforce (cont.):</p> | <p>Can you give us some information about the existing routes for preparing early childhood practitioners in your country? E.g. what are the career and qualification routes? What are the requirements to get access to these pathways and for recruiting ECE practitioners in general?</p> <p>Are there existing commitments or regulations between different institutions or organisations of providers to remunerate early childhood and care practitioners?</p> <p>Which institutions or organisations provide preparation and qualification courses or programmes for early childhood education practitioners?</p> <p>What is the role of universities?</p> <p>Use additional pages if necessary.</p> |
| <p>4</p> <p>Governance and regulation:</p> | <p>Which strategies has your country developed towards governance and regulation of ECE provision?</p> <p>How would you describe the implications and consequences of these strategies in relation to the privatisation of early childhood education provision?</p> <p>Use additional pages if necessary.</p> |
| <p>5</p> <p>Research and professional knowledge:</p> | <p>Which intellectual groups and /or institutions are working on the construction and dissemination of knowledge about young children and professional practice in your country?</p> <p>How would you describe the role of research in ECE?</p> <p>From your point of view, what is the aim (and what are the consequences) of existing research practices in your country?</p> <p>Who is in charge of carrying out these practices?</p> <p>Use additional pages if necessary.</p> |

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>6</p> <p>Early childhood education as a public good:</p> | <p>What strategies does the country (organisations in the country) employ to promote and achieve free and public early childhood provision for all children and families?</p> <p>What are practitioners/institutions/organizations doing to establish dialogical encounters between policy and daily practice in early childhood education?</p> <p>Use additional pages if necessary.</p> |
| <p>7</p> <p>Any other comments?</p> | <p>Do you have any other comments, ideas or observations etc. about the topic of privatisation of early childhood education you would like to share?</p> <p>Use additional pages if necessary.</p> |
| <p>8</p> <p>Availability for follow-up interview</p> | <p>Would you be available to talk about your work in a follow-up interview on the telephone (or on Skype)?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no</p> <p>Telephone number:</p> <p>Best weekday / time to call:</p> |

Annex 4. Survey (second batch)

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

An explorative study on impacts and implications

Please return the completed form to Undarmaa Batsukh via e-mail to undarmaa.batsukh@ei-ie.org or via fax to 0032 2 224 0606 no later than 28 February 2014

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of the organisation/Acronym:.....

Full Name of the respondent:

Position/Role in the Organisation:

Telephone: Fax: Mobile:

Mailing address:

Website:

2. SURVEY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

Please be detailed and specific in your answers to the questions. If you would like to share additional documents or materials on the issue, please send to undarmaa.batsukh@ei-ie.org.

I) Values and Goals / Early childhood education as a public good

1.1. How would you describe the overall goals, values or principles of Early Childhood Education (ECE) in your country?

1.1.1. Are there any compulsory early childhood education programmes in your country? If so, for which age group?

- Compulsory ECE programmes for children under three years of age
- Compulsory ECE programmes for children from three to compulsory school age
- Compulsory ECE programmes for a limited period prior to entering primary school
- Compulsory ECE programmes for specific target groups (please specify)
- Other (please specify)
- None of the above

.....
.....
.....

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

- 1.2. What strategies does the country (organisations in the country) employ to promote and achieve free and public early childhood provision for all children and families?

- 1.3. What are practitioners/institutions/organizations doing to establish dialogical encounters between policy and daily practice in early childhood education?

- 1.4. Values made concrete: How do current policies in ECE in your country embrace the values of solidarity, diversity, equality, and autonomy, self-management in theory and in practice?

II) ECE policies, globalisation and local needs:

- 2.1. From your point of view, how do current policies in ECE in your country address the relationship between globalization and early childhood education?

- 2.2. How does the way in which this relationship is addressed reflect local interests and needs in ECE?

- 2.3. In what way is 'quality of provision' understood in the field of ECE in your context?

III) Privatisation and 'outcomes'

- 3.1. How would you describe privatisation trends in your country? If there are any, how do you see the consequences for children, families, communities and early childhood practitioners?

- 3.1.1 Are any of these forms of private provision of early childhood education present in your country?

- Private ECE centres managed by private for profit providers
- Private ECE centres managed by private not for profit providers
- Public ECE centres managed by private for profit providers
- Public ECE centres managed by not for profit private providers

3.1.2. If there are other forms of private provision of early childhood education which do not correspond to any of the models described above, please describe briefly:

3.1.3. Has there been a particular expansion of any of the forms mentioned in the Questions 2.1.1. in the last five years?

- Yes, all selected
- Yes, but only in certain areas (please specify)
- No, situation remained the same
- Others (please specify)

3.2. From your point of view, what are the relationships between privatisation of early childhood education provision and outcomes for children, families and communities?

3.2.1. What is the extent of private provision in ECE sector? Please indicate an approximate value in percentage (%).

- 0% 0%-25% 25%-50%
- 50%-75% 75%-more

3.2.2. Who is involved in private provision of education in your country/territory? Please specify (domestic or foreign private companies, international development organisations, NGOs etc.)

3.2.4. If there is an expansion of private provision of ECE in your country, what are the main factors contributing to this?

IV) Workforce issues

4.1. How would you describe the ECE workforce in your country? What are the challenges the workforce face in daily practice?

4.2. Can you give us some information about the existing routes for preparing early childhood practitioners in your country? E.g. what are the career and qualification routes, the requirements to get access to these pathways and for recruiting ECE practitioners in general?

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

- 4.3. Are there existing commitments or regulations between different institutions or organisations of providers to remunerate early childhood and care practitioners?

- 4.4. Which institutions or organisations provide preparation and qualification courses or programmes for early childhood education practitioners?

- 4.5. Do universities have a role in the professional preparation of early childhood practitioners? If so, please specify.

V) Governance and regulation

- 5.1. Which strategies has your country developed towards governance and regulation of ECE provision?

- 5.2. How would you describe the implications and consequences of these strategies in relation to the privatisation of early childhood education provision?

VI) Research and professional knowledge

- 6.1. Which intellectual groups and /or institutions are working on the construction and dissemination of knowledge about young children and professional practice in your country?

- 6.2. How would you describe the role of research in ECE?

- 6.3. From your point of view, what is the aim (and what are the consequences) of research, and the way it is carried out in your country?

- 6.4. Who is in charge of carrying out these practices?

- VII) Do you have any other comments, ideas or observations etc. about the topic of privatisation of early childhood education you would like to share?

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications

VIII) Availability for follow-up interview

Would you be available to talk about your work in a follow-up interview either by phone or by an email?

Yes

No

Thank you for your time and support!

Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

Annex 5. Summary of impacts of privatisation in ECE

| Annex 5. Summary of the impacts of privatisation in ECE perceived by the fourteen case studies | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|--|
| | Irish case study | Norwegian case study | Nepalese case study | New Zealand case study | Argentinean case study | Canadian case study | Chilean case study | Costa Rican case study | Ecuadorian case study | Gambian case study | Ghanaian case study | Philippine Case study | Senegalese case study | Uruguayan case study |
| Consequence for the outcomes of children and families | Many classrooms have 30 children or more with one teacher. The physical size of classrooms is often too small to facilitate active learning. | The child to teacher ratios, particularly for very young children, are below best practice. The regulations about space and outdoor areas are also minimal, meaning many children are spending long hours in less than optimal environments. | Quality ECE education has been provided within accessibility of limited communities. | There is not an entitlement to a place for every child, and partly because the system relies heavily on the private sector the most disadvantaged children tend to miss out. | The government guarantees universal access for children under 3 years in state-run 'Jardines Maternales'. | Low-income families having more to gain from claiming tax credit for childcare expenses than the low parental contribution (\$7 a day provision, children from less well-off backgrounds may be getting less access to good quality childcare provision. | Educational precarity of the most disadvantaged children, restrictive opportunities for comprehensive development for children, and lack of social integration in the public education results in ECE and Care segmentation. | The threat that education becomes more expensive and exclusion of the most disadvantaged families in vulnerable sectors. | Poorest families have not access to private institutions because they cannot afford the ECE service. Children are cared for by relatives, neighbors, grandparents, and friends or just left locked up with older sisters and brothers. | The nature of the family of service families have access to depends on their buying power. Lack of access and poor ECE services for poor families and quality ECE provision for the rich. | The trend of privatisation has reversed slightly. There is an increase in public ECE vs a decrease in private provision. | ECE is almost 100% private and localized in the urban centres and there is limited access for the marginalized and living in the rural areas children. | Private developers are less interested in the quality of ECE. They provide than the profits they earn from parents monthly or lump sum fees, while the resulting competition paves the way for all kinds of abuses. | ECE public provision is limited, especially for the most disadvantaged. |
| | Impact on Governance and regulation | There is little monitoring of educational outcomes for children attending pre-school provided by the private and voluntary sector. | The composition of municipal and private ECE reinforces the need for a clear and transparent regulatory framework. | The government has not been able to provide accessibility for limited communities and this can create two classes of individuals which later fuels economic disparity. | The private services tend to adhere to minimum regulations only, and want to maximise occupancy to encourage full time places, regardless of family preferences. | There is lack of control over private services that have not been registered as educational institutions. | Quebec childcare centres (CPE) are non-profit social economy enterprises with their own boards of governors which include a strong contingent of parents. Although governed by multiple regulations, each CPE therefore enjoys a fair measure of autonomy in self-management. | There is a disperse regulation of ECE with weak supervision, although a Superintendent of Education has been created recently to improve this aspect. | ECE programmes have not been updated in the last 20 years but private provision has overcome the public because it has incorporated technological change guidelines, languages, sports, culture, music and others into their curricula. | The country has not developed any strategy towards governance and regulation of ECE provision. | Poor regulation of ECE services means that there are a lot of inappropriate and off-ward families. | There is an increase in public ECE vs a decrease in private provision. | Policy makers need to focus on governance to give more joined-up effort to the government to spread regulatory policy applied by different levels of administration and programmes. | The limited public service and the existing regulation of ECE provision in a prescriptive and spread regulatory frame have boosted the increase of the private provision and therefore its reliability among the families. |
| Impact on the ECE workforce | Though granted by the state, the State plays no role in the terms and conditions or salary levels of the staff in the private and voluntary sector. | There is no regulation for child to teacher ratio at present. | Most of the ECE workforce is untrained. | In the private sector, experienced teachers in particular are paid considerably less than school teachers. | The government in Provinces establishes teacher salaries in state institutions and employers in the private sector determine teachers' wages. | CPE early childhood educators and heads of family day-care provision are unionized and covered by collective agreements. | In the private sector, the predominant contract is term with the almost no possibility of renewal. | Professionals who are hired by the private sector earn much less of the wage bill and this promotes exploitation and precarious work conditions. | Unemployment for ECE professionals. Precarious ECE facing problems such as getting a job, being updated permanently, having job recruitment and promotion and stability. | Low wages salaries, limited opportunities for professional development, accreditation systems and of standards for minimum wage and qualification; ECE teachers are not given permanent employment opportunities by the government. | In the private sector, more educators are being trained to be more skilful in handling the children; however, most educators are poorly paid, less allowances, and few leave periods, thus, their working conditions of service is extremely poor. | Teachers trained in ECE cannot seek employment in the government. Those with the capital set up a private profit driven school. Most teachers who are hired in Day Care centres and privatized ECE are non-licensed and they are not paid well. | Staff that lack proper training and the shambles that often prevails mean that this private provision is by no means working to improve the quality of education. | There are noticeable differences in work wages in private education among educational institutions. |



Privatisation in Early Childhood Education (PECE)

An Explorative Study on Impacts and Implications



Education International

5, boulevard du Roi Albert II
B-1210 Brussels, Belgium
www.ei-ie.org
headoffice@ei-ie.org
[#unite4ed](https://twitter.com/unite4ed)