Reflections on water: evidence from nature kindergartens

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Learning in Nature Environments: Lessons from Near and Far
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Background and introduction


Terminology

Metsamorri
naturbørnehaven
naturbarnehager
Forest kindergarten
nature kindergarten
Waldkindergartens
skøgsbørnehaven
I ur och Skur
Nature kindergartens: a key laboratory

Why nature kindergartens?

- Concentrated, repetitive
- Nature’s sensorial bonus
- Risk-rich learning
- Adults motivated by and dedicated to outdoors
- Pro-nature, pro-environmentally committed community
- A form of ECE that is socially and culturally regulated.
The lens

Our perspective of LiNE:

• Nature as a pedagogical resource aligned with local practices where participants are viewed as individuals within a,

  ‘societal collective interacting with others’ (Hedegaard and Fleer, 2008, p.12)

• Nature, as a symbol of the *good childhood*, is rooted in the behavioural norms and cultural values interwoven into day-to-day practices at nature kindergartens

  ‘we are disposed towards certain ways of behaving because of the influence exerted by our [culture]’ (Webb, Schirato and Danaher, 2013, p.38)
Overview of the Study

This study has comprised:

- Scoping exercise

- Selection of three examples of nature kindergartens for comparison: Scottish, Finnish and Danish settings

- Seasonal lens and sensory ethnographic methods (Pink, 2009)

- Observation and interview of participants – adults and children (in their pre-school year) engaging in daily routines

- Theoretical tools: *affordance* theory and Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus*
The research process

- 12 visits; 16 months, 53 days = one visit per case per season
- Observation, photographs, video, interview, mute documents and artefacts
- Watching, listening, recording the characteristics of each nature kindergarten
- Data coded for analysis using *attribute coding* (Saldana, 2009) and *process coding* (Strauss and Corbin, 1998)
- Themes identified
Key themes and findings
The data set and the ubiquitous water container
Reflections on water
Summary and relevance

‘when habitus encounters a social world of which it is the product, it finds itself “as a fish in water”, it does not feel the weight of the water and takes the world about itself for granted’ (Bourdieu, 1989, p.43)

Dive deeper..... ...to find what lies beneath.
Key themes and findings

Thank you

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