



BUKS – Tidsskrift for Børne- og Ungdomskultur
Nr. 66 2022 • Årgang 38 • ISSN online 2446-0648 • www.buks.dk

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Bridging troubled water: Preparing school through play and special activities in kindergarten

Abstract

Play is fundamental in the Nordic kindergarten tradition, which is built upon a Froebelian pedagogy where play is intertwined with learning and interactions between the child and adult. However, kindergarten as an institution has gradually been connected to national education strategies as part of the knowledge economy, including a stronger connection between kindergarten and school. How kindergarten teachers manoeuvre the landscape of cross-pressure between making children ready for school and holding on to the importance of play has only been investigated to some degree in the Nordic context. This study investigated this issue through an empirical approach using focus group interviews of 23 kindergarten teachers in six kindergartens. The results showed that all the kindergartens offered special activities for the five-year-old group. However, the kindergartens were worried about the view of learning in school because play was only a small part of their learning approaches. These findings are discussed in light of the huge gap between kindergarten and school pedagogy in the Norwegian context. It is relevant to attempt to understand how different frameworks and traditions can affect pedagogical practice and that there may be room to discuss the role of play in both kindergarten and school.

Keywords

play; view of learning; Framework plan for kindergarten; school start; early literacy

Introduction

The importance of learning and development in the earliest years has largely prevailed as a widely accepted understanding. However, how learning and development happen and how society can facilitate this is under debate.

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) has had a major influence on nation states' education policy, not only for schools but also for kindergartens (Klitmøller & Sommer, 2015). PISA is based on the assumption that education is closely linked to economic growth and that the production of knowledge should be useful (2015). This contrasts the phenomenon of play as a fundamental aspect in the Nordic kindergarten tradition. In this study, kindergarten refers to all kinds of childcare institutions for children in Norway from the age of one to six years, when the children start at school. The Norwegian kindergarten's pedagogy is closely intertwined with the other Nordic countries, such as Denmark and Sweden. Typical for this pedagogy is that play, together with care and learning, is the fundamental element in kindergarten (Børne- og Undervisningsministeriet, 2007; Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017; Skolverket, 2019).

However, in recent decades, Nordic kindergarten pedagogy has had to give way to a more school-based pedagogy. Politically, the kindergarten as an institution has gradually been connected to national education strategies as part of the knowledge economy, including a stronger connection between kindergarten and school (Krejsler, 2013). These trends are also raised high in the political agenda internationally (Klitmøller & Sommer, 2015).

How kindergarten teachers manoeuvre this landscape of cross-pressure between making children ready for school and holding on to the importance of play is of great interest, as this dilemma comes up consistently in debates. These debates often concern the content and degree of teacher involvement. For example, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) points out that the Norwegian kindergarten curriculum is too weak regarding what children should learn, and that this may give kindergarten teachers too much freedom to make choices about learning content (OECD, 2013). Bennet (2010), the leader of the OECD, praised Scandinavian kindergartens for their broad orientations according to content and learning.

The question of how to prepare kindergarten children for school is of great interest, but also of interest is how the teachers themselves describe and reflect on their work in kindergarten. Therefore, the current study used an empirical approach to describe activities that kindergartens offered to five-year-old children in the last year before school started and the contrasting views of learning in kindergarten and school, including the role of play.

Kindergarten as part of childhood

Kindergarten has become the normal part of childhood in Norway, as nearly 93% of children between the ages one and six take part in kindergarten before school (SSB, 2022). Nearly 98% of 5-year-olds are enrolled in their last year of kindergarten before starting at school.

Norway has good social welfare that offers up to 12 months of parental leave after birth. The government guarantees a place in kindergarten for children of ages one year or older and pays most of the costs. This great coverage ensures that kindergarten provides an opportunity for children who may not have stimulating and supporting home environment experiences that might promote learning and development. The kindergarten might compensate, giving nearly all Norwegian children a chance to learn and develop before starting school.

BACKGROUND

Different historical traditions

Kindergarten and school are grounded and built upon very different historical backgrounds. The Nordic kindergarten pedagogy is built upon a Froebelian pedagogy where learning is intertwined with play and interactions between the child and adult (Broström, 2004; Johansson, 2004). Historically, the kindergarten institution originated in the 1840s in Germany, grounded by Friedrich Froebel. The purpose was a pedagogy that supplements home and care. The idea that childcare is not only the parents' responsibility was established through child asylum in the larger and industrialised cities. Many young children were left alone while both parents worked in the factories. Voluntary organisations and foundations started the asylum, which functioned as day care centres (Korsvold, 2005).

The kindergarten's voluntary and play-based nature, without any governmental initiative or regulation, is in stark contrast to the school's origins and status. Schools in Denmark–Norway were introduced at the king's command in the 1730s (Myhre, 1992), and since then children from the age of 6–7 have had a duty to be educated. The subjects to be taught are decided and regulated by the governments through curriculums. Key subjects are language, mathematics, and science.

In summary, the kindergarten was based mainly on volunteering and that »someone« noticed the children's needs, while the school was based on formal teaching. The ages of the children are also central: kindergarten and school are two institutions that cater to different age groups.

Different exterior frames

Kindergarten and school have different exterior frames. Kindergarten is a full-time, voluntary offer paid by the parents, even though the governments pay most of the costs. By contrast, school is a free, compulsory offer divided into a school (compulsory) and an after-school programme (voluntary) (Løndal & Greve, 2015).

The school tradition is influenced by PISA, competences, and basic skills. What to learn is quite clear. The school curriculum lays out concrete learning goals in several subjects throughout the years 6–16 (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020). No such measurable goals are allowed in kindergarten, although content in kindergarten may address the subjects learned in school. For example, the kindergarten learning area »*communication, language, and text*« matches the subject »*Norwegian*« and the learning area »*nature, environment, and technology*« matches the subject science at school (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017). These kinds of content in kindergarten should function as directions regarding what children may experience during their time in kindergarten.

Research of preparing for school

The main impression of the current literature on school preparation is that this theme has not been extensively investigated in the Norwegian context. One reason for this may be that in the kindergarten tradition, »learning how« is much more visible than »learning what« (Håberg, 2022; Johansson, 2004). Special play is emphasised as the main way of learning, whereas learning »what« to a great degree is mostly disregarded. By contrast, school has a clear focus on what children should learn (Utdanningsdirektoratet, 2020).

Hogsnes and Moser (2014) found that it is important for children to know the physical environments at school and to have friends. For the staff in kindergarten, it is most important to hold on to how children learn, that is, by playing and by having a great space for their own activities and experiences (2014). In another study, Moen (2017) found that directors of kindergartens and teachers in schools have some clear nuances related to the view of learning. The disagreements are about the relationship between adult involvement in the learning activities and the provision of space for children's own interest and participation in learning situations. Kindergarten directors associate the school pedagogy with learning objectives, mapping, and measurement. Moen (2017) pointed out that the concern for the school pedagogy is not always related to what the school itself stands for but is often equal to the perception of expectations of learning in the school context.

Some studies conducted on five-year clubs, defined as special school preparation activities for the five-year-old, have shown that learning discipline is important. In his study on Danish kindergartens, Olsen (2007) claimed that the purpose of a five-year club is learning through instruction and discipline. Several studies (Brenna-utvalet, 2010; Haug, 2013; Håberg & Gamlem, 2018) have found that this also can be an element in the Norwegian context:

»These [school preparation activities] concentrated on the practical aspects of being a school pupil, while subjects taught in school were not important. The children should learn to be pupils, sit still, raise their hands, talk when asked to« (Haug, 2013, p. 116).

This can be an expression of a hidden curriculum (Berg, 1995), which is a term for how pedagogical heritage functions as »frozen ideologies«. What children learn in a pedagogical institution is not in accordance with the official curriculum. In this case, discipline is included in the theme of what children should be able to do before they start school, even though it is not a theme in the Framework plan for kindergartens (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017). It is necessary that more empirical research investigates what goes on in kindergarten in the last year before school starts. Therefore, the research question guiding this study is *»How do kindergartens prepare five-year-old children for school?«*

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

The research question was studied through semi-structured qualitative interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). Focus group interviews were chosen because this approach produces empirical group-level data about a topic (Halkier, 2015).

By choosing this approach, the data material was based on questions from a pre-made interview guide and also on the participants' own input. Thus, both deductive and inductive data were created. Semi-structured qualitative interviews provide a considerable opportunity to capture the participants' interpreted reality (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The study produced data about both each informant's meaning and each kindergarten's specific practices.

Choosing and finding the sample

Before the interviews took place in January 2020, an information letter, interview guide and a notification form were submitted to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD). After approval, six relevant kindergartens were contacted through mail. The kindergartens were randomly selected from three municipalities' websites; however, all of them have at least three departments in common. Such a strategic sampling (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015) was justified by the desire to have three or more participants in each focus group interview.

The kindergartens responded positively, and all pedagogical leaders in each kindergarten were invited to participate in one common interview. The pedagogical leaders were chosen because they worked daily with the children, leading ordinary life in a department. The sample consisted of 23 kindergarten teachers working as pedagogical leaders in six kindergartens. The kindergartens were assigned the title A–F and the informants A1, A2 and so on.

Interviews

The focus group interviews were conducted in the kindergartens, and each interview lasted about 35 minutes. The researcher monitored and guided the process as the informants responded, while allowing the participants to present their own moments. They described everyday practices, complemented each other, and remembered moments together.

The impression was that the informants felt safe and willing to be open. The role of the moderator is vital for managing the social interactions in a group (Halkier, 2015). The researcher was aware of this when he conducted the six interviews.

Analysis Processes

The interviews were transcribed by the researcher, and this allowed proximity to the data material. The transcribed data material was categorised deductively using the main points in the interview guide. The participants' moments beyond the interview guide were coded into inductive categories. Together, this created an abductive analysis process (Peirce et al., 1994).

The analysis showed three main findings. The first main finding concerned activities the kindergartens planned for the five-year-old children in the last year before school started. The second concerned whether kindergarten and school had different views of learning. Both the first and the second main findings were built upon questions in the interview guide and a deductive approach. By contrast, the third main finding, which concerned the importance of play, was based on inductive data. The theme was introduced by the informants themselves.

Verification

Several approaches were used to verify the findings. According to Maxwell (1992), qualitative studies gain validity by describing exactly what the participants say and interpreting them from their own perspective. In the interview session, the moderator repeated the responses from the participants and asked whether their statements had been correctly perceived. The participants' statements were recorded and transcribed. The results from the interviews are presented thoroughly using quotations. In focus group interviews, participants can be involved in a validation community by commenting and remembering the same things. This can strengthen the member validity (Kvale & Brinkmann 2015).

Findings in qualitative studies cannot be generalised (Kvale & Brinkman, 2015), but they can inspire others' research and can, as such, be transferred to other situations and settings (Stake, 2000).

RESULTS

Special activities and content

All the kindergartens were organising the last year before school started in ways different from those for the 1–4-year-old children. They used two or more days each week for activities that were new and more challenging than when the children were younger. The informants also reported extraordinary experiences, such as sleeping for one night in the kindergarten, which the children had been looking forward to for years.

More challenging activities

The offers to the five-year-old were often connected to outdoor activities, such as longer walking tours than before, fishing in the sea, using knives and other »dangerous« tools and cooking on a campfire. In some of the kindergartens, the five-year-olds went to the swimming pool once a week.

In all the kindergartens, the offers were also connected to indoor activities. Approximately 30–90 minutes a week were used for the five-year-old club—a more school-like activity. Informant D1 explained that they were doing »...school preparing things, like letters and mathematics«. Some of the kindergartens used books with tasks, such as patterns, forms, letters, and numbers. Further, learning the disciplinary code for school was also a part of the five-year-old club, including »...sitting still and raise your hand« (A1). It is »...a bit like starting school« (A1).

Themes

Different themes were presented to the children in both the outdoor and indoor activities. Typical examples were traffic rules, names of birds, fishes and animals, the view of the space and the Vikings. Emotions were also a theme: »...until now, we have focused on emotions... The children should get to know the emotions, all the emotions« (Kindergarten B).

The informants said that they used some themes that had been successful in earlier years, but they also tried to capture new themes that may be of interest to the current year's five-year-old group. »It's a bit adaptable year by year«, informant F1 reported. The content may therefore change each year.

All the informants emphasised that the children must learn to become independent and that this was one of the most important elements in the content. The children were, for example, »...responsible for the lunch box coming home and washing them from time to time, ... they are not completely free from the responsibility for the food« (E1). To be independent in this context refers to taking responsibility for their own backpack, food, and bottle on the days they were outdoor in nature, for their clothing and for toilet visits.

New and more challenging activities combined weekly with short specific training on the school situation were typical in the offers received by the five-year-olds.

View of learning

None of the kindergartens criticised the school system, but they expressed scepticism about what school offered the youngest pupils. The kindergartens expressed that they did their best to prepare the children for the new life in school.

In particular, one of the kindergartens was concerned about the differences between kindergarten and school. In kindergarten D, the informants reported that they had lots of reflections about the differences between kindergarten and school: *»There are different pedagogies. In the kindergarten, we meet the children where they are and try to help them, while in school, it is 'very strict', with few opportunities to be wrong«* (D1). The other informants agreed, but one also supplied: *»But the schoolteachers have got other frames like learning goals for the children. They have requirements of what the pupils should learn in first grade. They do have a pressure«* (D4). The informant acknowledged that there were other requirements in school than in kindergarten for the children.

The informants in kindergarten D pointed out that kindergarten also had some learning directions, but *»...no one comes to control and say what a child is not able to do«* (D2). One of them said that she felt that it was expected that kindergarten should adapt to school pedagogy, but the school pedagogy did not adapt to the kindergarten (D3).

The main impression was that the informants pointed out the differences between the pedagogy and frames offered in school and kindergarten.

Learning happens through play

The kindergartens shared the great gap between kindergarten and school. The views of learning were quite different because in kindergarten:

»Learning happens a bit naturally. We do not teach them anything, even though we do that. We are not educating them. Learning happens through play; it comes naturally and in dialogues, too. We do not have learning goals in the kindergarten (F1)«.

In all the kindergartens, the importance of play was emphasised. For example, in kindergarten B, statements such as these were expressed: *»I think we still have to strive to learn through play«* (B2), *»Never forget play«* (B3), *»That [play] is the most important thing, and it will be less of it in school«*. The informants linked play not only to learning but also to the value of childhood: *»We must try to protect play and childhood, we must hold on it. The children learn a lot in play«* (B3).

The kindergartens had clear meanings about the role of play in children's learning processes and pointed out that in kindergarten learning happened through play.

DISCUSSION

The study investigated the research question, »*How do kindergartens prepare five-year-old children for school?*« The results of the study were characterised by different aspects. On the one hand, it was typical to organise and conduct different types of activities adapted to the oldest children in kindergarten. On the other hand, the results showed that play was the most important aspect of kindergarten. These two results may point out some dilemmas for kindergarten teachers.

Activities and content for the five-year-old

The five-year-old may experience many funny and learning activities that are new and interesting. These activities may include outdoor experiences of closeness to nature, learning to manage practical tasks, getting and overcoming challenges, and taking part in the five-year-old club. These activities provide opportunities to fulfil the directives in the Framework Plan for Kindergartens (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017) regarding the progression in content during kindergarten years.

The results from this study showed that play was not the only important aspect of kindergarten. The five-year-olds were also offered an array of challenging and interesting activities. The role of play in these activities was not investigated, but the impression was that the informants found no contradiction between the activities and play. On the one hand, this might imply that such activities did not compete with play but were instead acceptable activities. On the other hand, it may be a dilemma when such activities take time from free play. Key researchers in the kindergarten field express concern about too little time for play due to too many organized activities, especially for five-year-olds (Balci, 2016). This statement can be discussed in light of the kindergarten's traditions.

To understand educational institutions, such as kindergarten and school, it is relevant to put them in their own historical context. Durkheim (1977, p. 9) pointed out »...*it is only by carefully studying the past that we can come to and anticipate the future and to understand the present*«. Kindergarten and school are built upon two different foundations, and this may affect the content that the children are offered in the two institutions and the relationships between them.

This study showed that the content in the last year of kindergarten before school started was only slightly directly linked to school content. During the five-year-old club, about an hour a week, the children learned about letters, numbers, and so on. It is not a systematic learning »drive« in academic subjects. This may be an indication of the kindergarten's tradition of aspects regarding learning to read, write, and count belonging in school (Haug, 2013) and can be interpreted as an expression that formal learning is not important and that play should have a large place in kindergarten. The kindergarten may not be too »schoolish«.

In many studies, discipline is emphasised as essential for children to learn the year before school starts (Brenna-utvalet, 2010; Håberg & Gamlem, 2018). However, in the present study, these aspects were not highlighted by the informants. Rather, they placed great emphasis on challenging and fun activities and play. By contrast, in his historical review of the relationship between kindergarten and school, Haug (2013) found that kindergarten emphasises the practical aspect of being a student, while academic content is, to a small extent, considered important. Kindergarten activities largely concentrate on the children learning to sit still, raise their hands, and speak only when asked.

If the children are not to learn anything about the codes of behaviour or academic topics that may be relevant to reading, writing, and arithmetic, there may be a need for a debate about what the content of the kindergarten should be. A relevant question to ask is the extent to which play, and some activities are sufficient for children to be prepared for school.

Play is most important

The results showed that play was the most important aspect of kindergarten. The informants pointed out that children were learning through play, and that this view of learning stood in contrast to the way children learned in school. In a way, the informants were afraid and sceptical about what school offers children. They shared that education was not only about learning and development but also about childhood. Perhaps the kindergartens considered themselves gatekeepers and protectors of the land of childhood. These findings are consistent with those of the study by Hogsnes and Moser (2014), who indicated that children's learning by playing is very important for kindergarten staff. Moen (2017) pointed out some clear nuances related to the views of learning. The disagreements are about the role of the staff and the children's own interests in learning situations.

This scepticism may be understandable in light of the historical background of kindergartens. Play has always been emphasised as vital and as an expression of the »essence« of the child and childhood (Broström, 2004). The contrast to school pedagogy has become greater in recent centuries because of the emphasis on measurable results, assessments, and clear competence goals. In the Norwegian kindergarten context, kindergarten staff and researchers are worried about this development. A political suggestion about assessing all children's Norwegian language skills before they start school was greatly resisted by kindergarten teachers (Gravklev, 2021). The proposal did not pass, and the arguments were that teachers' autonomy and professional assessments are sufficient (2021).

The findings of this study can be interesting in light of the kindergarten research status. Research about »what« to learn is dominated by investigations of the seven *learning areas* in the curriculum (Brenna-utvalet, 2010; Fagerholt et al., 2019; Riksrevisjonen, 2009; Østrem et al., 2009). Research on learning »how« can be interpreted as unnecessary when it focuses on aspects other than play. As an example, effect studies such as *The Agder Project*, which use interventions with planned adult-led activities in the kindergarten, are often criticised (Kaurel, 2018; Petterson & Østrem, 2014). Kaurel (2018), who represents the teacher organisation Union of Education Norway (Utdanningsforbundet) with more than 180,000 members, points out that a study such as *The Agder Project* is based upon an understanding of how to strengthen learning outcomes before school starts. Petterson and Østrem (2014) emphasised that *The Agder Project* has been much discussed to the extent that one gets the impression that the children are not learning enough as the kindergarten works now. When learning is a topic in any debate, there seem to be expressions of criticism and, perhaps, some strong opinions.

Playful learning

A holistic view of learning can be complicated, and many have worked to connect play and learning, including Samuelsson and Carlsson (2008). These scholars are developing a sustainable pedagogy that does not separate play from learning, which they call developmental pedagogy or playful learning (Samuelsson & Carlsson, 2008, p. 623).

»*The Agder Project has investigated the degree to which 'playful learning' may have an effect. Playful learning is defined in this project as '...a playful learning approach... in that the activities were interactive, engaging, and meaningful' together with 'a warm and responsive child-teacher relationship'*« (Rege et al., 2021, p. 10). *The Agder Project* conducted a field experiment with 691 five-year-olds in 71 kindergartens, and the results of this intervention study showed that the impact was particularly large for mathematics, especially in kindergartens of low quality (Rege et al., 2021). However, although the project claims to have used playful learning, this is not acceptable to the critics of the project, who criticize the use of adult-led activities in the intervention (Kaurel, 2018; Petterson & Østrem, 2014). Such criticism can be interpreted as an expression that adult-led activities are considered as contrasts to children's free play. This may point back to the dilemma of the extent to which staff should be involved in children's activities. The consequences of placing great emphasis on free play can present some challenges that need to be highlighted.

Challenges according to the study's results

Inequality

Although about 98% of the five-year-old children take part in a kindergarten offer and experience challenging activities, 5-year-old clubs, and a lot of play, the differences in development and learning outcomes are very significant. For example, the research project DigiHand tested more than 600 pupils in 33 schools in first grade 2–3 weeks after school started and found large differences in the variables of letter recall and phonological analysis (Rogne et al., 2021). The authors argued that:

»*...early mapping of students' reading and writing skills can provide an opportunity to identify, illuminate and address challenges in students' education, and thus facilitate teaching to support their reading and writing education*« (2021, p. 13/14).

Mapping early literacy skills or other skills in kindergarten before school starts has witnessed significant resistance in the Norwegian kindergarten context (Gravklev, 2021). Both the kindergarten tradition and the Framework Plan for Kindergartens (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2017) support a restrictive view of mapping children. Mapping skills is not the optimum strategy, but a discussion about how the teachers may support the children's preparation and transition to school should take place. In light of social inequality, it is not sufficient for the children to go to kindergarten; the offer must also have a certain quality.

It may be a challenge that teachers do not always present children with relevant learning areas. The current study did not observe how the staff conducted the different activities, such as taking a trip in nature or reading books with the children. However, research on feedback practices in 5-year-old clubs shows that the feedback given to children primarily consists of praise and less about the assignments (Håberg & Gamlem, 2018). Research also

shows that the staff, during other activities and daily life, may not be sufficient to support learning processes, and children may experience a lack of explanation and support from the staff (Gjems & Alvestad, 2021). The lack of support to explore and acquire knowledge of a professional area in kindergarten may be criticised in terms of social inequality. Children in poor sociocultural environments can be faced with requirements that they cannot master in kindergarten, or they can choose not to take part in playful and learning activities because they are unsure what those are.

When play is largely emphasised as a way to learn, how the teachers master supporting the children in the play situations will be of great importance. It may be a challenge when play is defined as the children's domain without disturbance or intervention from the teachers (Gjems & Alvestad, 2021). If the kindergarten staff do not take part in play with the children, the children may miss several opportunities to take part in explorative and narrative interactions (2021).

Another challenge is that play situations in kindergarten may not always be positive for all children. Bratterud et al. (2012) have investigated the role of play, and when children were asked what they would like to do, playing came up as number one. However, 16.5% of children in their study reported experiencing not having anyone to play with in kindergarten. On the children's part, playing with other children and, to a certain extent, deciding where they should be and what they should do have a great impact on well-being in kindergarten (Bratterud et al., 2012). Being banned and rejected from play are painful and stressful events for children (Nergaard, 2021). For some of them, it leads to *»...an inner mood of sadness, loneliness and abandonment«* (2021, p. 163).

The theme of play should be discussed not only as the answer for *»everything«* but with a critical view: how do the staff support the children in playing situations, and how do they ensure that all children can join? In 2020, the Kindergarten Act (Kunnskapsdepartementet, 2005) integrated a new formula that imposes on the staff continuous work on promoting the health, well-being, play, and learning of children. Play is important; however, the imposition shows that free play may be overestimated if the staff does not follow up. Making learning in kindergarten largely related to children's own initiative or to learning discipline will not sufficiently bridge the gap between kindergarten and school. These elements are also not sufficient to prepare five-year-olds for the start of school.

Bridging the gap

According to this study, play protects childhood and is a foundation for learning. It is the answer and the leading star in kindergarten. The role of play is based on a historical background and deeply rooted traditions in the field of kindergarten. A relevant question may be whether more play at school, as a learning approach, is the answer and the bridge between the two kinds of institutions. Another relevant question is whether the kindergarten stakeholders, such as teachers, parents, politicians, and teacher educators, may discuss how preparation for school takes place in the kindergarten. Related to existing criticism of approaches other than *»play alone«*, it may be relevant to consider these questions with an open attitude. Based on the kindergartens' traditions, this may be a challenge.

The traditions and historical backgrounds of kindergarten and school are quite different, and as the informants in this study noted, the pedagogy may be different, especially concerning play. Play, as the most important part of kindergarten in preparing for school, may be emphasised and discussed. It may be necessary for kindergartens and school to know each other's pedagogy well because, according to Moen (2017), concerns regarding school pedagogy are not always similar to what the school itself stands for.

Further research is needed, such as the degree to which it is important for kindergartens not to be like school, and whether kindergarten staff, to some degree, are unsure about how learning takes place in school. However, the children need support to build the bridge over this somewhat »troubled water«. More research is needed on these questions in the Norwegian kindergarten field.

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Biography

Liv Ingrid Aske Håberg er ph.d. med afhandlingen Didaktisk arbeid i barnehagen (2015). Hun har været ansat ved Volda University College i Norge de sidste 16 år og underviser i pædagogik og spesialpædagogik i flere typer lærerutdannelser. Før den tid har hun arbeidet som spesialpedagog på børnehavefeltet. Hennes nåværende forskningsprosjekter som gjelder barnehaven omfatter mat og måltid, bruk av drama som fellesskapsarena, samiske perspektiver, og lek og læring. Hun er opptatt av å sette sin forskning inn i et historisk perspektiv, gjerne med tilknytning til barnehavens grunnlegger Frøbel (1782-1852) og den skandinaviske børnehaveteksten.

