

Introduction

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Welcome to the latest edition of the *Nordic Journal of Law and Social Research*, where we present a relatively diverse scholarship that spans various facets of law and social sciences. This issue is particularly special as it brings together a tapestry of themes that reflect national and international concerns on some of the dynamic social challenges of our time.

We begin by exploring child rights, a pertinent topic in today's rapidly changing world. The articles in this section delve into the complexities surrounding protecting and promoting children's rights, examining both legal frameworks and societal challenges. Our contributors provide a nuanced understanding of how these rights are being interpreted and implemented and identify areas needing further attention.

Carola Babette Kleemann's article delves into language choice and contextualization dynamics within a Sámi kindergarten setting in Norway. The article offers a unique perspective on how language functions not only as a tool for communication but also as an indicator and creator of social contexts. Through an analysis of interactions among teachers, children, and outsiders, the research highlights how language variation shapes and reflects cultural identity and community engagement. This research contributes to our understanding of language use in Indigenous educational settings and offers broader implications for multicultural education and the preservation of cultural heritage through language.

Jørn Vestergaard's article examines the complexities of Danish law regarding physical interventions against disruptive or violent schoolchildren. It highlights the inadequacies and inconsistencies in the current legal framework, emphasizing the challenges educators face due to unclear guidelines. Criticizing the Public School Act and its supplementary regulations, Vestergaard points out the weak legal basis for interventions affecting pupils' integrity and self-determination. By referring to recent legislative advancements like the Act on Adult Responsibility, the article proposes a regulatory model to provide clarity and uniformity. This analysis addresses the urgent need for reform and suggests practical solutions to improve conflict management, facilitating a safer and more respectful environment for students and teachers.

Synnøve Thomassen Andersen's article explores the impact of teachers' attitudes and cultural sensitivity on children's cultural rights, emphasizing the transformative role of technology in this regard. The research presents a forward-thinking agenda to enhance educators' roles in promoting cultural awareness by examining the intersection of education, cultural sensitivity, and technology. It identifies key areas for improvement in teachers' cultural sensitivity and highlights technology's potential to enhance cultural visibility among children. Acknowledging both the advantages and challenges of technological integration, the article invites further exploration and innovation in this vital field.

Tina Gerdtz-Andresen's article brings insights from her Ph.D. thesis. The article presents a comprehensive analysis of how children's right to family life is managed following the issuance of care orders in Norway. It examines the Child Welfare Tribunal's decisions and discusses their alignment with human rights standards. The research delves into the tribunal's justification for regulating contact rights and explores the weighting of children's views in legal proceedings. Highlighting the challenges and implications of professional discretion, the article invites readers to reflect on the balance between safeguarding children's welfare and preserving family ties amid ongoing national and international debates.

Moving to the theme of academic gender equality, we present a study of the gender gap in universities in Pakistan, as explored in the article coauthored by **Zainab Jehan, Saima Hamid, Shaheen Sardar Ali, Inayat Ali, Azra Yasmin, and Ann Stewart**. This article brings insights from a pilot project to tackle gender disparities in leadership within Pakistan's public sector universities. Through targeted capacity building and mentoring, the project seeks to equip women leaders with essential skills to navigate their roles effectively, including in the face of gender-discriminatory cultural norms that hinder women from reaching academic leadership positions. Drawing from this 18-month project, the article offers recommendations for female leaders, higher education institutions, and policymakers, highlighting the need for professional networking and regular mentoring programs to empower women in academia.

Finally, **Helle Blomquist** features a portrait of Poul Andersen, a distinguished Danish legal scientist whose work has left an indelible mark on legal studies. A large part of Helle's article dwells upon Poul Andersen's opposition to totalitarian regimes and his advocacy of the liberal constitutional state when the latter was under severe pressure and, in some countries, collapsed and gave in to dictatorship. Another pivotal point in her article is that Grundtvig delivered material for Poul Andersen's conception of the liberal state and, al-

though indirectly, cut out the lawyer's work to secure standing for the citizens - all citizens - vis-a-vis the state. The consequence of this is the dissolution of estates and privileges. In other words, Poul Andersen has a development project for the state, and that is an integration, on an equal footing, of all citizens in society, regardless of estate, gender, color, or religion. (Some of these criteria were perhaps less relevant in his time, but they are logical extensions.) Henceforth, Grundtvig's secularism is a cornerstone in that building. An additional cornerstone is education - secular education - to strengthen the individual in obtaining his/her rights (and not privileges).

The gender perspective is also underscored in Hanne Petersen's review of Rubya Mehdi's book "Understanding Gender and Diversity in Europe: Experience of Migrant Single Mothers in Denmark." Petersen reflects on Mehdi's interdisciplinary approach, which challenges traditional academic norms and offers a fresh perspective on the struggles and triumphs of migrant single mothers. Drawing parallels with contemporary work for women's rights and freedom, Petersen highlights the book's relevance and contribution to ongoing dialogues about gender, diversity, and legal transformations. Through this review, readers are invited to explore Mehdi's innovative narrative style and the impact of her research on understanding societal changes in modern welfare states.

Last but not least, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to the contributing authors and peer reviewers. The contributing authors have provided critical perspectives that enhance our understanding of these important topics, and we are delighted to feature your work in our publication. To our peer reviewers, your evaluations and feedback have been important in ensuring that we present good quality research to our readers. We deeply appreciate the time and expertise you have devoted to this process. Together, your contributions have made this issue an insightful resource for researchers, practitioners, and advocates alike. Thank you for your collaboration and dedication to generating new insights in these vital areas.

