

Co-production with digital technologies in Danish child welfare service

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Oral presentation.

Introduction:

The aim of this presentation is to discuss digital co-production in Denmark with vulnerable children in child welfare services. With the latest legislative proposal on the Children's Act (Barnets Lov), there is also a focus on ensuring better participation of children, where references are also made to various digital technologies that can support this.

Methods:

This contribution is based on qualitative findings with a participatory practice research approach. The data consist of futureworkshops, interviews, and a document study.

Results:

In Denmark there has been a focus on making Denmark as one of the leading countries in digitization. Although this is based on a strategic cooperation at policy level, the findings show that policy documents rely on each other with intertextuality (Bazermann 2003) and there may still be room to ensure improvement of the possibilities for co-production.

One of the findings is that power in the relationship between child welfare services and children can be both productive and repressive. This dynamic can therefore have an impact on how children are included or excluded in social work and puts them at risk. For some children, the digital options ensure a higher degree of protection and participation when they seek formal help.

For other children, their participation and protection are challenged because they find it difficult to use the digital systems and they miss someone who can support them in contact with children with child welfare services.

Conclusion:

On one hand, technologies have the potential to strengthen empowerment for children, but on the other hand, they can also contribute to disempowerment. This is often depended on the number of digital skills which seems to be required prerequisites for participation with digital technologies. Both children and parents in the project point out that other professionals or civil society organizations can counteract further exclusion.