Contested terrains within the neo-liberal project; The re-organisation of services for children in Europe: gender, citizenship and the forging of New Public Management within professional child care social work practice in Europe.

Abstract
Abstract Purpose - This paper sets out to explore the relationship between gender, New Public Management (NPM), citizenship and professional and user group identities and relationships within child care social work practice. Design/methodology/approach - The paper utilises findings from a major comparative survey undertaken in Denmark and the UK as part of Doctoral research. In addition the paper draws upon more recent empirical research carried out by the author in Sweden. Findings - Paradigms imported from the private sector have led to the adoption of NPM, fiscal austerity and the reorganisation of childcare social work throughout Europe. This paper illustrates the connectivities between NPM, gender, citizenship and the contested terrains within which professional and user group relationships and identities are being forged. The paper offers a unique insight into the operationalisation of NPM and gender within childcare professional social work practice in different European settings. Research limitations/implications - The paper's findings may be used to contribute to existing theoretical and empirical knowledge within the field of professional childcare social work and practice. Originality/value - The paper offers a unique insight into the operationalisation of gender equality as a normative ideal premised on the development of organisational and legal settings which embrace an awareness of the duality of public and private spheres and the impact of different European welfare settings on the articulations of notions of gender and citizenship, which in turn operationalise processes of inclusion and exclusion of women as citizens, workers and parents. Keywords Gender, Citizenship, Child care, Social workers, Europe Paper type Conceptual paper

Official URL
https://doi.org/10.1108/02610150710749430

URI
https://eresearch.qmu.ac.uk/handle/20.500.12289/2410

Collections
Psychology, Sociology and Education