

Title

Tax and Time Travel: Looking Backwards and Looking Forwards – Two Family Policies with Different Trajectories. The development of the paid parental leave and early childhood education policies in New Zealand and Norway.

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Abstract

This paper¹ reviews two family policies in two countries, paid parental leave and early childhood education or kindergarten, in New Zealand and Norway. Like all social policies, they are funded by taxation, and represent wealth redistribution. This paper reviews the development of these policies through historical data analysis and interviews with contemporary policy stakeholders in Norway. It analyses the policy development using Carol Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to be' methodology. The paper concludes that while early childhood education policies appear relatively stable in both countries, the paid parental leave policies are arguably incomplete, and could look different in the future.

¹ This conference paper is a draft paper based on my ongoing PhD research and as such should not be cited without the author's permission.

1 Introduction

This paper reviews two family policies in two countries, paid parental leave and early childhood education, or kindergarten. It reviews the development of these policies in New Zealand and Norway through historical data analysis and interviews with contemporary policy stakeholders in Norway. The paper includes a preliminary ‘What’s the Problem Represented to be?’ or WPR analysis of the policies. This methodology, devised by Professor Carol Bacchi, provides an innovative tool for critical policy analysis. This paper concludes that while early childhood education policies appear relatively stable in both countries, the paid parental leave policies are arguably incomplete, and could look different in the future.

For a feminist, the question of how policies arise is of particular interest because

‘(p)olicy influences women’s lives, not just materially through legislation, but ideologically through the promotion of certain discourses which enable and constrain women’s choices’ (Kahu and Morgan, 2007:135).

This is particularly relevant for tax policy since

‘tax laws are products of a particular time and place, they do not represent Truth – only truth. An important goal of tax scholarship, then, is to unravel the story about that particular trust – to show that it is only a story and to reveal its origins and its effects, which may be unintended’ (Kornhauser, 1998:1615).

1.1 Link to ongoing research

This paper is based on my ongoing PhD research, which will contribute to the global feminist literature on tax policy making, and satisfy a gap in the literature on tax policy in New Zealand. It will also provide an original application of the WPR methodology to the selected policies and provide a unique comparison of policies in New Zealand and Norway. Finally,

my PhD research will have the potential to improve the gender equality outcomes of policy making by highlighting the problematization process that occurs.

My PhD study will answer the research questions 'What process of problematization led to the paid parental leave and early childhood education policies in New Zealand and Norway?' and 'What 'discourses' were present?'.

My PhD research adopts a respected policy analysis methodology, Professor Carol Bacchi's 'What's the Problem Represented to be?' (WPR) approach. Using the WPR methodology will reveal the process and the underlying knowledges that allowed the problems of the selected policies to be represented in each particular way. As my research is ongoing only a limited WPR analysis is included in this conference paper.

It has been noted that '*(g)ender bias in tax systems is therefore a fruitful area of enquiry*' (Stotsky, J.G. 1997:33). Even recently, others have commented that the '*sociological literature engaging with tax policy...what is wanted from tax on behalf of gender economic equality - is limited*' (Mumford, 2010:15). Even without the gender dimension there has been a '*neglect of tax policy (which) represents an important gap in our knowledge*' (Campbell, 1993:164). My PhD research will significantly contribute to that identified gap. In addition, international comparative research '*provides a means of contributing to the development of a richer international research environment*' (Hantrais, 2009:10). This research will aid that development.

However, this paper will focus on answering the question of this year's conference, how these particular tax welfare policies have been developed to date and how they may continue to be developed in the future.

1.2 Structure of paper

The introduction to this paper will now outline the why both the policies, and the comparison country, were selected. It will then provide a brief summary of the current policies and the methodology adopted for this paper.

Sections two and three represent the main body of the paper and consider the development of paid parental leave and early childhood education in each country. It will be seen that these policies are a fitting subject of analysis when 'Looking Backwards and Looking Forwards' as they arguably have different trajectories. Included in sections two and three is a preliminary WPR analysis of the policies. The paper shows how early childhood education policy is relatively stable in both New Zealand and Norway, but that paid parental leave in both countries continues to undergo policy development. The paper closes with a conclusion.

1.3 Choice of policies

Paid parental leave (PPL) was been selected due to the variety of gender issues arising from it. It is appropriate for this paper because, as will be shown, the policy development is ongoing. Originally provided in many countries as maternity leave, there is a growing trend to promote paternity leave, either through amounts of dedicated leave or through shared parental leave. A move to paternity only leave is supported by the OECD (OECD, 2011) and the importance of dedicated leave, rather than transferable or shared periods of leave, has been established in a number of studies (Lindsay, 2013; Fatherhood Institute, 2013). One of the intended consequences of supporting paternal leave is to encourage the sharing of unpaid household work, recognising that women still undertake much more unpaid work in the home than men (Alesina et al, 2008). This has been acknowledged for many years in New Zealand (Waring, 1988). Other positive consequences can arise from paternal leave including strong father-child relationships (Harrington et al, 2014:2) and lower levels of violence towards both the child and the mother (Fatherhood Institute, 2013). In contrast,

other research indicates that paid parental leave can sometimes result in outcomes which are detrimental to women, such as extended periods of leave resulting in lower levels of female employment (Thevenon and Solaz, 2013). It is this variety of results that make paid parental leave a particularly suitable policy for analysis.

Early childhood education (ECE) has been selected as a proxy for childcare for pre-school age children. Childcare is particularly interesting from a feminist perspective, because of the questions it raises about

*'the proper role of the state, motherhood, women's employment, social class
and the relationship between strategies for short and long-term change'*

(Randall, 1996: 486).

As such, childcare is currently one of the most discussed 'female-focused' policy issues in developed countries. There a number of areas of discussion, including its links to female labour market participation (Women's Business Council, 2014:14; World Economic Forum, 2013:63; Plantenga & Remery, 2013:7), pedagogical claims of benefit in early childhood development (Lawton and Thompson, 2013:5; OECD, 2012) and feminist arguments supporting women's freedom to participate in activities outside the home (Young, 1994:553). Like PPL, the diversity of claims and intentions made about it make childcare policy an appropriate area for research.

In order to narrow 'childcare policy' to a suitable area for research, ECE has been selected. It is care for this age-group that attracts the broadest range of policy arguments, whereas discussion of care for school-age children tends to focus on labour market participation issues. It is also a policy area in which New Zealand and Norway differ greatly.

1.4 Norway as the comparison country

Although they lack physical proximity to one another, New Zealand and Norway have a number of features in common. They are both developed, first-world countries and full

members of the OECD² and United Nations³. Norway's population of 5.1 million⁴ (Statistics Norway) is comparable with New Zealand's population of 4.5 million⁵ (Statistics New Zealand). Both populations have a number of ethnicities, including their indigenous people. 14.9% of New Zealand's population identifies as Māori and 7.4% identifies as Pasifika. There is also a significant and increasing Asian population, currently at 11.8% (2013 Census). The indigenous people of Norway are the Sami, who also live in parts of Sweden, Finland and Russia. Although there is no overall registration of the Sami population, it is known that 0.4 million people live north of Saltfjellet, the most concentrated Sami settlement area (Statistics Norway). This represents 7.8% of the total Norwegian population. Both countries are constitutional monarchies. Norway's King Harald V is the reigning monarch and Norway celebrated the bicentenary of its constitution in 2014⁶. In New Zealand, the Governor-General, Lt Gen The Rt Hon Sir Jerry Mateparae, is the personal representative of New Zealand's Head of State, Queen Elizabeth II of New Zealand⁷.

The political regimes in both countries are stable, with democratically elected national and local governments. Historically, Norway has elected socialist governments while the centre-right National Party in New Zealand has held office longer than the centre-left Labour Party. Currently, both countries have centre-right governments, although Norway operates under a cooperation agreement between the Conservatives, the Progress Party, the social liberal party, and the Christian Democratic Party (Regjeringen).

1.5 Outline of selected policies

The current policies are each outlined below to provide context for the discussion of policy development in the next part of this paper.

² <http://www.oecd.org/about/membersandpartners/list-oecd-member-countries.htm>

³ <http://www.un.org/en/members/index.shtml>

⁴ People living in Norway at 1 April 2014

⁵ Estimated resident population at 31 March 2014

⁶ www.norway.org - Norway's official website

⁷ www.gg.govt.nz

1.5.1 New Zealand

The policies under consideration in New Zealand are PPL, '20 hours ECE' and the childcare subsidy for ECE.

From 1 April 2016, eligible women in New Zealand will be entitled to 18 weeks PPL, all or part of which may be transferred to their spouse/partner, as long as they are also eligible. Eligibility is based on the amount of hours worked for the same employer over the last 6 or 12 months. The 'same employer' requirement has implications for casual workers and this has been addressed by a Bill⁸ which proposes to remove the requirement for it to be the same employer.

Calls had been made for a '*further expansion of the eligibility criteria and an increase in the length of leave*' (Callister, 2009:1) including the development of a Labour party policy to extend paid leave to 26 weeks (Labour, 2014). Notably the Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG) has argued against any extension instead suggesting other measures that would provide targeted relief for children in poverty (St John, 2014:3). The maximum amount that parents receive as paid parental leave is currently \$516.85 per week before tax. Parents are paid either their gross weekly rate of pay or \$516.85, whichever is lower (New Zealand at Work).

New Zealand provides support for ECE in two ways. The 'flagship' policy is '20 hours ECE' which fully funds early childhood education for three, four and five year olds. Although places are not guaranteed (Ministry of Education), as at March 2014, 93.56% of children starting school had participated in early childhood education (Education Counts). Although 20 hours a week early childhood education is subsidised by the government, depending on the service provider, this may not cover the entire fee. Fees and parent's contributions are not regulated by the government. The 20 hours ECE policy receives the majority (56.63%) of the government's education funding for early childhood education (Vote Education,

⁸ Employment Standards Legislation Bill (2015 No 53-1)

2015:64). The second avenue of government support is the Childcare Assistance package, which includes the childcare and Out of School Care and Recreation (OSCAR) subsidies, both of which are means-tested. The childcare subsidy applies to hours additional to the 20 hours ECE, and is administered by the Ministry of Social Development, rather than the Ministry of Education. It provides a subsidy of between \$1.55 and \$4.00 per hour (Working for Families) for childcare for those under five (Work and Income). OSCAR is designed to subsidise care before and after school, and school-holiday programmes for children aged five to 13 years (Ministry of Social Development) but as this research considers only pre-school age children, the OSCAR subsidy is outside scope.

1.5.2 Norway

The first equivalent policy in Norway is *foreldrepengeperioden* or paid parental leave. Parents can choose whether to take up to 47 weeks at 100% wage replacement, or up to 57 weeks at 80%, with nearly three out of four parents choosing the longer option (Ellingsaeter, 2014:58). Of this leave, fathers and mothers both have an equal quota of 14 weeks, and the rest of the leave can be split between the parents as they choose (Lindsay, 2013). As there is no dedicated quota for fathers leave in New Zealand this aspect of the Norwegian policy represents a potential future area of policy development.

The second Norwegian policy is kindergarten. In Norway, all children are entitled to early childhood education during the period from aged one to aged five, and the great majority of children in this age group - 90% - are enrolled in services (Ellingsaeter, 2014:53). The early childhood education provided is '*holistic*' in nature, that is '*there is no division between care for the under threes and preschool for children aged three and over*' and it is referred to as '*kindergarten*' (Ellingsaeter, 2014:55). Children spend an average of 30-35 hours a week in kindergarten, with 89% of centres open for 9.5-10 hours a day (Ellingsaeter, 2014:56). Kindertartens are funded by a mixture of the state, the municipalities and the parents with the government spending about 3.3bn Euro in 2010 and parent's contributions limited to a

maximum of 300 Euro per month, less for second and subsequent children (Ellingsaeter, 2014:62, 65).

1.6 Methodology

This paper adopts a case study approach, and analyses two policies from two countries, as outlined above. I analysed historic documents, the texts which describe each policy and its intentions, from both countries. I also undertook in-depth interviews with key policy makers, politicians, family policy academics and women's rights advocates in Norway. No interviews were conducted in New Zealand (although they are planned for my PhD research).

In New Zealand, PPL benefits are provided through the Parental Leave & Employment Protection Act 1987 and 20 hours ECE is provided through the ECE Regulations. In Norway, *foreldrepengeperioden* or PPL is provided through a combination of the Work Environment Act 2005 (which allows leave to be taken) and the National Insurance Act 1997 (which provides payment during leave), and access to kindergarten is provided through the Kindergarten Act 2005.

Of particular research interest are the assumptions about gender roles, family units and women's ability to make choices in respect of paid work, which underpin the design of the current welfare systems.

2. Methodology

2.1. Introduction

This research compares the PPL and ECE or kindergarten policies in Norway and New Zealand. The methodology is an international comparison. The analytical framework is Bacchi's 'What's the problem represented to be?' (WPR) framework (Bacchi, 1999) and various feminist theory informed the analysis. A brief examination of the PPL and child care

entitlements in each country using WPR is included in this paper, but detailed analysis has not yet been completed, as it will be undertaken as my PhD progresses.

Data was collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are the historic documents I analysed and the interviews I conducted with people relevant to the analysis of the tax policies in Norway. I also reviewed secondary data sources including commentary and analysis from the time when the relevant policies and legislation were introduced.

2.2. Research design

My research is a comparative study. The comparative method of research is well established (Johnson, 1893) and was used frequently by early sociologists (Hantrais, 2009:26). International comparative research requires the comparison of the same issues in different countries (Hantrais, 2009:2) and the PPL and ECE policies in New Zealand are compared in this paper. It is noted that '*story and culture become two notable and meaningful perspectives for comparative studies in social science*' (Tan and Zhengyi, 2014). Although Norway and New Zealand are broadly similar countries, as noted previously, the PPL and ECE policies in each country are very different and the feminist theory informing this research will assist in discovering the 'story' behind that difference.

This research is qualitative in orientation. Qualitative research '*examines people's words and actions in narrative or descriptive ways*' (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:2) and is aware of '*the role of personal, social and cultural factors*' (Hammersley, 2011:21). As a qualitative researcher, I assume '*the posture of indwelling*' while undertaking this research, which means '*to live within*' (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:25). This is evidenced by the way I attempt to understand how women are affected by the selected tax and welfare policies, and to understand the intentions of the people who designed and implemented those policies.

This is an area of critical theory, founded by Grace Blumberg, which focuses on the tax law and analyses how it can have a *'negative impact on a disempowered group'* (Infanti and Crawford, 2009:1). Women are one group that can be investigated, but other studies consider what happens where a number of factors apply (i.e. gender and race), and this is known as intersectional research (Infanti and Crawford, 2009:2). This research continues the tradition of critical tax theory as it applies to women.

Taxation has been recognised as *'a woman's issue'* and feminist writers raise concerns about the impact of a *'complex system of tax deductions, exemptions, and credits (which) either promote or undercut the economic security of individuals and families'* (Abramovitz and Morgen, 2006:14). The particular importance to women of tax and welfare policies lies in their ability *'to change the financial costs and benefits of differing life choices'* as well as the way in which policy *'exerts a discursive influence which changes the social and moral costs and benefits of those choices'* (Kahu and Morgan, 2007:144).

2.3. Research data – documents

To analyse PPL in New Zealand, I reviewed the parental leave provisions of the Parental Leave & Employment Protection Act 1987. In particular, I examined the assumptions about gender roles, family units and the workplace that underpin the design of the current system in New Zealand. This was then compared to the parental leave entitlements in Norway as provided in the Work Environment Act 2005.

To analyse ECE in New Zealand, I reviewed the 20 hours ECE policy and the Childcare Subsidy. The Education Act 1989 was also reviewed. I then compared this to the equivalent 'kindergarten' policy in Norway, The Kindergarten Act 2005.

2.4. Research data – interviews

It has been noted that the primary research method was the comparison of two tax and welfare policies in New Zealand and Norway and the method of analysis used will be discussed shortly. However, this was complemented by interviews in Norway with key policy and law makers, women's rights advocates, the trade union confederation and academics who research family policies and ECE policies in Norway. No interviews were conducted in New Zealand (although interviews with similar experts are planned for my PhD research).

The interviews were open-ended, semi-structured, and designed to reveal more about the policy-making process than could be determined by reference to the resulting legislation or policy alone. It is acknowledged that *'(i)nterviewing is a particularly valuable research method feminist researchers can use to gain insight into the world of their respondents'* (Hesse-Biber and Leavy, 2007:114). With respect to interviewing people about policies, it is important to be aware of *'the bias these informants may bring to their interpretation of the policy and of its aims and realities'* (Cook and Fonow, 2007:707).

A small pilot study was undertaken prior to the interviews used in this research. The draft interview questions were posed to a number of policy officials at The Treasury, Inland Revenue and Ministry of Education in New Zealand. As a result of the pilot study, the interview questions were refined.

Participants included:

- Current members of Storting, Norway's Parliament
- A senior public servant at Barne-, Likestillings- Og Inkluderingsdepartementet 'BLD' (Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion)
- A senior public servant at Kunnskapsdepartementet (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research)

- Academics who undertake family policy research and ECE research
- The President of the Norwegian Women's Lobby, and representatives of Kvinnefronten Norge (Norwegian's Women's Front) and the International Women's Day committee
- A representative from LO (The Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions)

The participants were invited to be interviewed on the basis of their technical knowledge of the tax and welfare policies under consideration, or due to their research contribution on family and ECE policies.

2.5. Other research issues

I am a feminist researcher and although there is '*no such thing as a feminist method*' (Letherby, 2003:4 and Kitzinger, 2004:119), there is recognition that "*feminist research practice*' is distinguishable from other forms of research, through the questions asked, the position of the researcher within the process and the intended purpose of the work produced (Letherby, 2003:5). It has been suggested that undertaking feminist research is '*to put the social construction of gender at the center of one's inquiry*' (Lather, 1991:71). In her ten-point definition of feminist methodology, Reinharz concluded that feminist research '*aims to create social change*' and '*strives to represent human diversity*' (Reinharz, 1992:240). In feminist research, '*the production of knowledge cannot be understood apart from the personal histories of the researchers and the larger institutional context in which researchers work*' (Peirce, 1995:570). This research considers the institutional context by analysing the problematization of the issues and considering the power imbalance between those designing, and those receiving, the tax and welfare policies.

I have completed this paper, and a large portion of my PhD studies on which it is based, while working in policy at the New Zealand Treasury. Therefore it can be suggested that I

am an insider research, as the focus of my research included my '*own site of work*' (Costley et al, 2010:xviii) and was '*the study of one's own social group or society*' (Naples, 2003:46). A case study approach is particularly suitable for insider-research, as it is a methodology which enables the researcher '*to draw out points that have potential for wider application or to illustrate problems in policy or practice*' (Costley et al, 2010:89).

This paper focuses on gender and families, so it is sympathetic to a view of taxation research as social policy research. It has been suggested that taxation and social policy have a '*complementary nature*' (Sandford, 1980:13). Others have drawn the link between welfare spending and tax preferences (Prasad, 2011:251). Taxation is used by governments to implement social policy, firstly as '*the principal means of raising money to fund social policies*' and secondly through '*wealth redistribution for welfare purposes*' (Boden, 2005:107).

2.6. What's the Problem Represented to be?

Professor Carol Bacchi's WPR or 'What's the problem represented to be?' set of questions were applied to analyse the documents. The questions are designed to '*make the problems implicit in public policies explicit, and to scrutinise them closely*' (Bacchi, 2009:x, emphasis in original). Bacchi's work draws heavily on Michael Foucault, who is '*(w)idely considered the father of poststructuralism*' (Cosentino, 1997:168), and the characteristics of a poststructuralist approach can be found in WPR. These include '*a relentless questioning of ideologies and concepts that appear to be "natural", "stable," and "known"*' (Gormly, 1997:317).

There are two main concepts in WPR which will be outlined here before we consider the questions themselves. The concepts are problematization and governmentality.

2.6.1. Problematization

In particular, Bacchi is concerned with Foucault's concept of problematization. Foucault used this term in two ways. Firstly, as a way of thinking problematically, as a mode of critical analysis, and secondly to describe how objects are constituted in practise (Foucault, 1984). Foucault offered an explanation of critical analysis in a later work which succinctly explains the aim of a problematization approach to analysis:

'A critique does not consist in saying that things aren't good the way they are. It consists in seeing on what type of assumptions, of familiar notions, of established, unexamined ways of thinking the accepted practises are based'
(Foucault, 1994:456).

Bacchi considers WPR to be Foucault-influenced in the second sense, relating to how objects are constituted and poststructuralist (Bacchi, 2009:vi). She considers those using a poststructuralist approach as seeking to '*critically scrutinize problematizations*' to determine the way in which problems are produced and represented (Bacchi, 2015:1). Other researchers have applied their own problematization approaches based on Foucault, including a recent study of the way in which '*women's working bodies are problematized and constituted as deviant in relation to masculine forms for working bodies*' in the Australian wine industry (Bryant and Garnham, 2014:411). However, it is Bacchi's approach that has been used in this research, as it is a methodology specifically designed for policy analysis.

Other researchers have acknowledged that policies are not created in isolation but instead reflect assumptions held in society. In the New Zealand context, it was noted that, '*(p)olicies related to the family are based upon ideas about why families exist and how they should be structured*' (Jacobsen et al, 2004:1). Meanwhile the welfare state has been described as '*a web of policies unique to each national context designed to address social problems*' (Garlington, 2014:287).

2.6.2. Governmentality

The second important concept is governmentality, which is another term taken from Foucault, and again he uses the term in two ways. Firstly, *'to identify different rationalities or mentalities of rule (govern-mentalities)'* and secondly, *'to refer to the form of rule that emerged in the late eighteenth century, which focused on population'* (Bacchi, 2009:26 emphasis in original). Foucault's concern with power is evident in his consideration of this *'population-focused form of governmentality'* and the way he compares it to sovereign and disciplinary power (Bacchi, 2009:26). Where sovereign power is concerned with ruling subjects through *'law, violence and pageantry'*, disciplinary power uses *'surveillance and normalization'*, and these both compare to governmentality which uses social and economic policy to govern (Bacchi, 2009:27). Bacchi considers the WPR approach to capture both *'the ways in which concepts are embedded in governmental practices'* and issues of *'power relations'* (Bacchi, 2009:65).

Other researchers have also considered the concept of governmentality, and reflecting Foucault's first use of the term, suggest that it *'refers to the act of governing to produce the citizen best suited to fulfil its policies and to the organized practices through which subjects are governed'* (Mukhopadhyay, 2015:617).

2.6.3. WPR questions

Bacchi initially presented a set of five questions (Bacchi, 1999:12) as a methodology for critical analysis but continued to develop them to become the six listed below (Bacchi, 2009:xii) which are used in this research.

The six questions are as follows:

- 1 – What is the 'problem' represented to be in a specific policy?
- 2 – What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?
- 3 – How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?

4 – What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the ‘problem’ be thought about differently?

5 – What effects are produced by this representation of the ‘problem’?

6 – How / where has this representation of the ‘problem’ been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced?

These questions were specifically developed to analyse policy, so they are entirely relevant for use in this research. Since their introduction in 1999, they have been used in a wide range of policy studies. These include the impact of domestic violence on children (Murray and Powell, 2007), Community Parent Education (Widding, 2011), prostitution and sex trafficking (Carson and Edwards, 2011) and promoting physical activity to children (Alexander and Coveney, 2013).

We can see that the WPR approach delivers a new way of analysing policy. Traditional understanding of policy is based on an assumption that *‘there is a pre-existing problem in the world that we can identify and solve’* whereas Bacchi’s approach of policy-as-discourse recognises that *‘policies represent problems in particular ways that have effects on people and social relations’* (Gill, 2012:79). Challenging the dominant discourse, acknowledged as part of a poststructuralist approach, is also reflected in postmodernism and postmodernist feminism, where we see that

‘language moves from representational to constitutive; binary logic implodes, and debates about “the real” shift from a radical constructivism to a discursively reflexive position which recognizes how our knowledge is mediated by the concepts and categories of our understanding’ (Lather, 1991:39).

The concept of reflexivity is the final element of the WPR approach. Bacchi asks researchers to apply the set of questions in the approach to their own problematisations and the problem representations they contain (Bacchi, 2009:45).

3 Paid parental leave

3.1 Outline of PPL policy development in New Zealand

Maternity leave was first provided to New Zealand women through the Maternity Leave and Employment Protection Act 1980 (Shirley et al, 1997:241, Koopman-Boyden and Scott, 1984:40). This was superseded by the Parental Leave and Employment Protection Act 1987 which enabled men to take parental leave, as well as women. The new Act also provided job protection for the first time (South, 2009:20), removing the threat of *'dismissal by reason of pregnancy or state of health during pregnancy, or because an employee chooses to take parental leave'* (Shirley et al, 1997:241). This move, whilst not offering any payment during the period of leave, did ensure that women could return to the job they left. This *'is important as it usually preserves pay and conditions at a time when mothers may otherwise move to a job with poorer pay and conditions in order to access flexibility'* (Families Commission, 2010:9).

In 2002, the Labour government introduced 12 weeks paid parental leave for employed parents, although beneficiary parents were ineligible (Baker). 12 weeks leave was increased to 14 weeks by 2005 and self-employed parents became eligible in 2006 (South, 2009:235). The period of leave remained under consideration, and the Labour government had been considering increasing it, until the global financial crisis of 2008 (South, 2009:21).

In 2014, the National government increased the paid parental leave period from 14 weeks to 18 weeks, with a phased introduction over 2 years (MBIE). At the same time, there were calls from Labour to extend paid parental leave to 26 weeks, to which end MP Sue Moroney introduced a Members' Bill, called the Parental Leave and Employment Protection (Six

Months' Paid Leave) Amendment Bill (Labour Party). She also established a coalition called '26 for Babies' to support the cause, although the legislation was ultimately unsuccessful, as it was vetoed by the National government (Radio New Zealand). However, her efforts did result in the government increasing the period of paid parental leave available to parents of premature babies (Young, 2015).

A number of commenters have previously called for 12 months paid parental leave, including Stephens and Callister (2008:135). The New Zealand Families Commission had been supportive of this proposed period but changed its position in 2012 due to affordability concerns (Laxon, 2012). The new 18 week leave period will bring New Zealand in line with the OECD average paid maternity leave period (OECD, 2014:2). This represents an improvement of its previous position, when compared to European Union countries, it was *'in the least generous (those with less than four months of earnings-related leave) of three possible categories'* (Families Commission, 2010:7).

The budgeted amount of PPL in the 2015/16 financial year was NZD \$233 million (Vote Revenue, 2015:166). For those who are not eligible for paid parental leave, there is an alternative called the Parental Tax Credit or 'PTC'. This short term payment is part of the Working for Families tax package and could be described as a baby bonus as there is no work requirement (however other criteria must be satisfied to be eligible). Overseas the term baby bonus generally describes payments on the birth of a child that have little or no eligibility criteria.

3.2 Outline of PPL policy development in Norway

Norway has a long history of providing mothers with payment and entitlement to leave from employment. The first entitlement to leave was introduced in 1892, and provided up six weeks after birth, for mothers working in industrial jobs (Valdimarsdóttir, 2006:26). From 1909, a small payment was also provided to these mothers, and from 1915 they could also

take four weeks leave before the birth (Valdimarsdóttir, 2006:27; see also Sainsbury, 2001:122). Similar rights were extended to women in all types of employment in the 1930s, under the Worker Protection Act. It gave mothers the right to six weeks' leave before and six weeks after giving birth and also provided job protection whilst they were on leave (Korsvik, 2014:13). This development was notable in its timing as this period initiated the '*housewife contract*' (Sainsbury, 2001:135) which resulted in Norway becoming known as '*the country of housewives*' (Borchorst, 2008:34).

A more typical form of maternity leave benefit became available to women in Norway in 1956, by way of sickness insurance, which provided 12 weeks of unpaid leave (Carneiro et al, 2011:8). Norway in the 1950s and 1960s represented a '*thriving environment for interdisciplinary social research*' through the Institute for Social Research 'ISF' and there was a focus on the family and gender relations (Bjørnholt, 2012:56). This was reflected in the government's decision to establish a commission to consider the women's role, which found that revised social legislation, and tax reforms were required to move Norway towards gender equality (Bjørnholt, 2012:58).

The focus on gender policy continued in to the early 1970s (Vollset, 2011:283) evidenced by the Work-Sharing Couples Project and the establishment of a Law Committee to consider '*reforms that would facilitate the general implementation of the work-sharing model*' (Bjørnholt, 2012:59). Policy reform then followed. Paid maternity leave of 18 weeks was introduced in 1977 through the National Insurance Act or 'Folketrygdloven'. Notably, whilst it maintained the mothers' six weeks period after birth, it allowed the remaining 12 weeks to be shared between the parents. At the same time the period of unpaid leave available was increased to one year (Brandth and Kvande, 2009:195). The National Insurance Act also provided guaranteed job protection (Carneiro et al, 2011:8).

During the 1980s and 1990s the period of PPL available was extended regularly and reached 52 weeks at 80% of pay in 1993 (Brandth and Kvande, 2009:197). Arguably the single most important change to the PPL policy also occurred in 1993, when the *fedrevbøte* or father's quota was introduced, providing an exclusive period of 4 weeks for the father which cannot generally be transferred to the mother (Valdimarsdóttir, 2006:27; see also Borchorst, 2008:34). This change was successful in getting fathers to take PPL (Lister, 2008:217) and is an example of what Fraser calls *the 'universal caregiver model'* whereby women's life pattern is taken as the norm and men are encouraged to take on more of the caring (Lister et al, 2007:113).

The father's quota has its roots in the Committee on Men's Role which took place in the late 1980s and which worked on equal opportunities '*by focussing on men and their possible contribution*' (Brandth and Kvande, 2009:199). Thirty years after this first committee, a second Men's Panel was convened, and it recommended a fixed allocation approach to PPL – equal portions for the mother, father and shareable or a double length of shareable leave if the total leave period was extended (Brandth and Kvande, 2009:201). This proposed design change did not occur.

No further amendment to the leave period occurred until 2005, when both the overall period of leave, and the father's quota, started to be increased every few years. The father's quota had risen to 14 weeks by 2012. The most recent changes in 2014 reduced the father's quota back to 10 weeks but held the total period of leave constant at 49 weeks at 100% or 59 weeks at 80% of wages (Konglevoll, 2015).

3.3 WPR application to PPL

As indicated previously, this paper provides only a brief, and very preliminary WPR analysis of the selected policies. My PhD research will provide a more comprehensive analysis.

I have applied WPR to the development of PPL in both countries and the initial analysis is presented in the table below.

Table 1 - Preliminary WPR analysis of PPL

WPR Question	New Zealand	Norway
What is the 'problem' represented to be in a specific policy?	Women need to take a break from work on the birth of a child. Employers are not expected to pay for this.	Dual earner / dual carer model requires leave for both parents after birth of a child. Traditional male breadwinner role being actively challenged.
What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?	Women are responsible for caring for children.	Men unwilling carers so receive dedicated leave period. Women need to return to work as soon as possible to maintain earnings (for pension) and history (for progression).
How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?	See section 3.1 of this paper	See section 3.2 of this paper
What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?	Potential for employer to fund PPL (PPL as similar to annual or sick leave). Father's care role. Potential for fathers to have an independent entitlement (not tied to mother's work history).	No acknowledgement of class or culture based desire to have mother at home with children. Gender equality as a family issue rather than a labour market issue. Care role devalued.
What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?	Fathers do not take PPL (some substitution occurs, small period of annual / other leave used).	Both genders have care responsibilities. (Paying for) care of children is a welfare state obligation.

	Parents adjust lifestyle (spending and timing between children) to reflect one income.	Improved relationship stability where fathers take parental leave.
How / where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced?	Longer period of leave for health of baby (Labour and WHO breastfeeding guide). Discussion of dual earner / dual care role of both parents. Role of employer.	Need equality at home (dual care) to have equality at work. Father's quota reduces a family's ability to choose how to care for their children so all leave should be transferable.

4 Early childhood education

4.1 Outline of ECE policy development in New Zealand

In New Zealand, governments have only become involved in childcare relatively recently, reflecting a traditional patriarchal view that the family (usually the mother) is primarily responsible for the care of children. This type of approach, which seeks to make care 'costless' to the carer, is referred to by Fraser as the '*care parity model*' (Lister et al, 2007:113). It serves as a contrast to the '*universal caregiver model*' which will be outlined in the discussion of PPL in Norway.

The first government involvement was the 1960 Childcare Regulations (Goodger, 1998). Initially, the state did not want to provide childcare if it would '*encourage mothers of young children to go out to work... the state did not support 'working mothers'*' (Nolan, 2000:272). State support for the use of childcare first appeared in 1973, when the Child Care Subsidy was introduced to help low and middle income families have access to child care services for children under the age of five, providing up to 50 hours subsidy if the parents were employed (South, 2009:235). It was described at the time as '*(t)he first venture of a New Zealand Government into daycare*' (May, 2003:99).

In 1974, a survey indicated that 70% of people thought '*preschool children ought to be cared for by their mothers all day rather than by someone else while their mothers went out to work*' (Nolan, 2000:271). The 1975 Select Committee on Women's Rights the following year cautioned that government support for childcare '*is not intended to encourage mothers to go out to work merely to augment an already adequate income*' (Goodger, 1998).

In spite of these views, some potentially empowering policies also received consideration. During the 1970's, which were generous years for welfare, the Social Development Council considered introducing a '*motherhood allowance*' to remedy the situation whereby '*domestic purpose beneficiaries and child-care workers received payment for parenting, while other mothers did not*' (McClure, 1998:199). This policy setting arguably reflected an underlying assumption that it was the responsibility of the mother to care for her children. The suggestion that, if a woman worked outside the home, she could '*allocate her allowance to a friend, relative or neighbour*' (McClure, 1998:199) to provide childcare would have introduced an element of both recognition and choice for mothers. However, the discussion paper went unpublished and the idea did not enter '*the realm of public debate*' (McClure, 1998:199).

In 1975, the Select Committee on Women's Rights reiterated that '*the family remained the primary source of childcare*' and also recommended the '*transfer of responsibility for childcare from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education, a policy aimed at reducing the inferior status of childcare services relative to preschool education services*' (Goodger, 1998). The proposed move could also be seen as a reflection of the feeling about women in employment '*(i)t was becoming clear that increased government support for childcare would only be successful if it was couched primarily in educational context, with children not women as the central focus*' (May, 2003:151). The sentiment was echoed by others who noted on reviewing the development of early childcare that '*(w)hile the child was at the centre of these disparate developments, the needs of women in paid*

employment were either systematically opposed or conveniently ignored' (Shirley et al, 1997:271). By contrast, in recent years there have been calls to move some childcare schemes away from the Ministry of Education and into a new agency which would be focused on employment and support (Welfare Working Group, 2011:139).

The number of children in early childhood education had risen through the late 1970's and 1980's and two-thirds of children were enrolled by 1987 (Shirley et al, 1997:271). By the 1980's childcare was being provided by a number of organisations, mostly private, but also by various community organisations (Koopman-Boyd and Scott, 1984:52). A 1980 government report, the State Services Commission Working Group on Early Childhood Care and Education, called for increased financial support to be provided so that parents bore no more than half the costs of childcare (Koopman-Boyd and Scott, 1984:53). The 1980's represented a period of policy change in New Zealand, as the *'social liberal traditions were being challenged... by the increased policy influence of... economic rationalists'* (Sawer, 1996:2). Evidence of this new influence could be seen in the next changes. In 1990, the National government reduced the level of public childcare support, particularly for children under two (Baker, 2008:74). It also introduced the Parents as First Teachers Initiative, which gave *'additional responsibilities for mothers and further disincentives for them to seek employment'* (Baker, 2008:74). However, mothers continued to enter the workforce and as a result, the number of commercial childcare centres increased. The government regulated the centres and provided fee subsidies for low-income children to attend (Baker).

Childcare subsidies increased from 2006 as part of the Working for Families programme, which provided up to 50 hours a week of subsidised care for preschool children and continued up to 20 hours a week of OSCAR subsidy (Baker). ECE without parental fees was introduced in 2007 by the Labour government, providing up to 20 hours a week ECE for children aged three and four (Bushouse, 2009). This package has become the cornerstone of the ECE support for parents and is now known as '20 Hours ECE' (Ministry of Education).

20 Hours ECE provides a full subsidy for 3, 4 and 5 year old children to a maximum of 6 hours a day and 20 hours a week (Education.govt.nz). However, ECE providers can have a minimum number of hours or days of enrolment as part of their policy, which means parents may still incur costs associated with the first 20 hours of ECE.

The childcare subsidy and the OSCAR subsidy form part of the Childcare Assistance package administered by the Ministry of Social Development. The other elements are the Guaranteed Childcare Assistance Payment or 'GCAP', the Early Learning Payment and ECE. The current provisions of the other parts of the Childcare Assistance package are outlined in Appendix Three (Work and Income).

The budgeted amount of ECE in the 2015/16 financial year was NZD \$1.663 billion (Vote Education, 2015:5). Of that figure, 56.63% was dedicated to the 20 hours ECE initiative (Vote Education, 2015:64).

4.2 Outline of kindergarten policy development in Norway

The earliest non-parental care arrangements in Norway were for needy children. Asylums were established through philanthropy for poor children as early as 1837 followed by crèches for the children of unmarried mothers who had to go to work (Haug and Storo, 2013: Part One). Kindergarten in the European tradition started to appear shortly afterwards with state involvement commencing after the end of the Second World War although this was restricted to regulations on procedures and development plans not legislation (Haug and Storo, 2013: Part One).

We have noted previously that Norway was traditionally '*the country of housewives*' (Borchorst, 2008:34) so it is unsurprising that non-familial care of children was not an early policy issue. Childcare started to attract the formal attention of the welfare state in the 1970s a decade later than occurred in New Zealand. At the start of the decade, only 3% of children

attended daycare (Korsvik, 2014:19) but due to the '*tremendous expansion*' of mothers working outside the home in the 1970's, formal childcare for pre-school children started to become generally more broadly available (Black et al, 2014:825). However, at this time, childcare was mainly for older children, with only 1-2% of children aged 2 or younger in formal day care (Carneiro et al, 2011:11).

Norway's first White Paper on children and the family in 1974 acknowledged '*the public responsibility to provide care facilities for children*' to achieve the dual breadwinner model aim of family policies (Bjørnholt, 2012:58). This was followed in 1975 by Norway's first Kindergarten Act (Regjeringen) and whilst it gave responsibility for daycare institutions to the municipalities there was no obligation for them to establish them (Korsvik, 2014:19). This has been referred to as '*ambivalence*' and meant that little expansion in kindergarten places occurred even though women's participation in the labour market was increasing significantly (Borchorst, 2008:36). Discussion regarding full kindergarten coverage commenced but by the end of the 1980's it was clear that it would not occur before the turn of the century (Vollset, 2011:285).

Kindergarten provision occurs in three ways in Norway, as ordinary kindergartens 'barnehager' which can be public or private, family kindergartens 'familiebarnehager' and part-time drop in centres for parents and children called open kindergartens 'åpne barnehager' (Engel et al, 2015). Ordinary kindergartens are the most used and are the form generally being referred to in this research. As demand for kindergarten places increased in the 2000's, an entitlement to a place was introduced, which connected kindergarten to the education system (Haug and Storo, 2013: Part One) and resulted in supply increasing significantly between 2003 and 2009 (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2015:9). Since 2009, children in Norway have had a legislated right to a place in kindergarten 'rett til barnehageplass' if they turn one by the end of August, if they are born after that date, they may have to wait for a place to arise (Norwegian Ministry of Education

and Research, Kindergarten Act, section 12a). The right entitles the child to a full-time place, meaning at least 41 hours of care (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2015:16), which arguably reflects the expectation by the state that both of the child's parents will be working full time whilst the child attends kindergarten.

In 2006, responsibility for kindergarten services was moved from the Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion / Barne-, likestillings- og Inkluderingsdepartementet or 'BLD' to the Ministry of Education and Research / Kunnskapsdepartementet or 'KD' (Vollset, 2015). This reflected the previously observed view of kindergarten as the start of the educational journey (Haug and Storo, 2013: Part One; Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2015:9) but the pedagogical benefits to children are only aspect of current discourse. The facilitation of labour market participation of (both) parents remains prevalent and this includes recent pressure to extend the opening hours and days of kindergarten to provide services for parents undertaking evening and weekend work.

According to a recent OECD report Norway spent NOK 36 billion, or 1.4% of GDP, on early childhood education and care in 2012 (Engel et al, 2015).

4.3 WPR application to ECE

Similarly to PPL, the WPR analysis of ECE in both countries presented in the table below is preliminary, and comprehensive analysis will be provided through my PhD research.

Table 2 - Preliminary WPR analysis of ECE

WPR Question	New Zealand	Norway
What is the 'problem' represented to be in a specific policy?	Design (20 hours no charge and childcare subsidy) suggests parents need	Parents need the state to provide childcare to facilitate their (joint) participation in

	financial support to send children to ECE.	the labour market. Kindergarten is a child's right (legal entitlement).
What presuppositions or assumptions underlie this representation of the 'problem'?	ECE is beneficial to children.	Dual earner / dual carer family welfare model.
How has this representation of the 'problem' come about?	See section 4.1 of this paper	See section 4.2 of this paper
What is left unproblematic in this problem representation? Where are the silences? Can the 'problem' be thought about differently?	Entitlement and availability (no right to a place). ECE as a prerequisite to labour market participation (by women).	The voice of the children - who speaks for them?
What effects are produced by this representation of the 'problem'?	Higher than OECD average rates of part-time employment for women.	Parents time the births of their children to be before 1 September, to ensure they are eligible for kindergarten when they are one year old, otherwise they may have to wait for a place. Proposed extended opening hours for changing work patterns (evenings and weekends)
How / where has this representation of the 'problem' been produced, disseminated and defended? How could it be questioned, disrupted and replaced?	Role of ECE in increasing school-readiness and improving social outcomes for the disadvantaged.	Transfer of responsibility from social Ministry to education Ministry. Role of kindergarten - care / play / pedagogical benefits

5 Conclusion

This paper has considered two policies, PPL and ECE, and reviewed their development in both New Zealand and Norway. We have seen that the PPL policy in both countries is arguably incomplete and could look different in the future. Potential future changes include:

- Recognition of the changing nature of work. People now have a more varied employment history, including working for an increased number of different employers, periods of self-employment and non-standard working hours.
- Recognition of the changing nature of care responsibilities. Children are less likely to be born into a family which has a father in paid work and a mother who stays home to care. Fathers are expected to participate in the care of their children, both around the time of birth, and as they grow up. Mothers are likely to return to the paid workforce after the birth of their child. Additionally, children may now have a number of potential carers, including biological and non-biological parents, step-parents and extended family.

In contrast, the ECE or kindergarten policies in both New Zealand and Norway appear relatively stable. However, if we look backwards, we see a number of interesting issues in their development:

- In New Zealand, an initial refusal to provide state support for childcare, if it meant mothers would then enter the paid workforce.
- Later, specifically designed policies were introduced to help parents with the care of their children whilst they are at work, such as support for before and after-school and holiday care.
- In Norway, a focus on the needs and rights of children rather than their parents, in designing kindergarten policies.
- However, it is widely acknowledged that the kindergarten policies, particularly the right to a place from aged one, provided parents with the solution to the problem they encountered in trying to find care for their children while they went out to work.

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