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Title of doctoral dissertation
Childcare, class and social mix – The role of networks for school choice (working title)

Abstract
In the year 2008, school catchment areas were abolished in North-Rhine Westphalia (NRW). Although free choice of primary schools was advertised as a tool for working class and other underprivileged families to access better schools than those in their immediate living environment, privileged parents strategically use this freedom more often than disadvantaged families (Groos, 2014 für Mülheim an der Ruhr; Weishaupt et al., 2012 for Wuppertal). As a consequence, educational segregation might increase. Parental school choice is highly influenced by social networks and informal information mainly exchanged in the neighbourhood, in particular in certain foci such as toddler groups or childcare centre. Therefore, the research project will analyse the effects of encounter and networks in (mixed) childcare centres on parental educational strategies. By focusing on ethnically and socially mixed childcare centres, it will be examined how these parental strategies are formed and shaped by the organisation and its internal practices, routines and structures. The result will give deeper insights into parental school choice strategies after the abolishment of school catchment areas in NRW and might thus be of interest for local school development planning.

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