

A Decolonial Approach to the Promotion of Children's Rights in Teaching

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This abstract highlights the MPhil in Childhood Studies' (NTNU) efforts to diminish Eurocentric echo chambers, decolonise children's rights, and foster an inclusive, global academic environment. Our MA program, rooted in interdisciplinary Childhood Studies, integrates children's rights through dedicated courses on rights-based methods and global perspectives. Established in 2007, the program has evolved based on our 2022 evaluation. We have implemented changes to decolonise teaching by incorporating global viewpoints, evident in courses like BARN3300 Children, Youth and Development, examining the effects of politics on youth in the Global South, and BARN3102 Children's Rights, exploring varied sociocultural understandings of rights.

The program traditionally attracts many students from outside Europe, preparing graduates for work in international contexts and diverse societies. A 2022 evaluation highlighted the need for more inclusion of literature and lecturers from the Global South. In response, NTNU has incorporated more non-Western literature and knowledge, enriching the curriculum. For example, human rights are explored through Ubuntu, a pan-African philosophy emphasising interdependence over individualism.

NTNU has launched a four-year project with digital lectures in partnership with master's programs in South Africa and Brazil. It welcomes students from Uganda, Ethiopia, South Africa, and Brazil. To challenge Eurocentric views and decolonise children's rights, NTNU provides scholarships for studies and fieldwork in South Africa or Brazil, offering students unique opportunities to learn about diverse cultures and perspectives.

In addition, we have strategic partnerships with key actors in the practice field in Norway, Brazil and South Africa to bridge the gap between academia and policymaking. These partnerships enhance localised, cross-cultural and child-focused collaborative knowledge production that strengthens developments in the translation and implementation of children's rights. The partnership will contribute to identifying research gaps, facilitate MA students' access to fieldwork and internships, increase knowledge on children's (potential lack of) rights through MA projects and cross-institutional collaboration, and improve policy uptake of research results.

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Ursin is a Professor of Childhood Studies and teaches children's rights from the BA to PhD level. She has conducted a longitudinal study on the streets in Brazil, following a group of boys on the verge of adulthood. In recent years, Ursin has explored children's rights in the social welfare system, young people's political rights, and Sami children's rights to climate justice in Norway.