

Introduction

Decline of traditional role models

The societal practice of women staying at home and taking care of children while men act as the main breadwinner is a steadily decreasing phenomenon (Marold, 2009). Today a wide array of forms in which families live together can be found. These include double income families in which both parents have a full-time job, as well as single parents, patchwork families and other types. All these families have children that need to be taken care of in the best way possible. In families formed on the premise of the traditional role model, this primary objective was taken care of by women acting as stay-at-home wives and taking care of the household and children. As this is no longer the norm, the demand for childcare services drastically increased in the last few years, in Germany even more due to the legal claim for childcare put into effect (Presse- und Informationsamt der Bundesregierung, 2019). Furthermore, these childcare services need to be as flexible and unique as the families requesting them. On top of that, many people working in childcare services do so as a part-time job or to provide a small side income. Therefore, the workforce is diverse, from professional caregivers to students who occasionally babysit. Both these aspects make for a rather complicated market in which supply and demand need to be carefully matched with each other. Furthermore, the state has a strong interest in women being part of the workforce to generate tax income among other advantages and therefore has an equally strong interest in a system of childcare services enabling both parents to work full-time.