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Title : What is childhood?: The social construction of childhood

This study explores the social construction of childhood. Society holds a number of different views on children and childhood which are constantly changing as childhood is socially constructed and influenced by various social factors. It is important to explore how childhood is socially constructed to understand today's children and their experiences of childhood. Importantly, there are no right or wrong views on childhood. Every person, community or society has their own unique viewpoint on what a childhood should be which reflects their particular place, culture and the time they live in. Our perspectives of childhood and the way we view our current society in general greatly influence the types of experiences children are having. It is therefore vital to examine how the varying perspectives on childhood have changed as society itself has changed. For example, with the introduction of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989, people’s perspectives as well as those of individual governments’ have changed as they became more heavily influenced by the said document. New laws and policies concerning children were introduced which helped shape the lives and experiences of today’s children. As the conference theme addresses, by becoming more aware of the social construction of childhood, we understand today’s children and their childhood better. This study will also explore the views of Friedrich Froebel about children and childhood. I hope this study will provide a decent reflection on how our perspectives of childhood have changed throughout society and history.