The OECD's Historical Rise in Education

The Formation of a Global Governing Complex

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PREFACE

This edited volume emerged from the research project called The Global History of the OECD's Role in Education, funded by the Rector's Research Talent Development Programme of Aalborg University, Denmark. The project, running from 2017 to 2020, sets out to understand the workings, mechanisms, range, and impact of the OECD's educational recommendations and programs from a historical and comparative perspective, across both member and non-member states. The project thus draws on interviews with key agents, as well as archival sources at the OECD Archives in Paris and the national archives of a number of selected case countries.

One of the project's ambitions has been to establish and facilitate an international network of researchers working on the role of the OECD in education. To this end, the project has brought together researchers from five continents, and this book is largely the result of this network.

As part of the process, the symposium 'The OECD's Defining Role in Education: Its Historical Rise, Global Impact and Comparative Perspectives' was held on 22–23 November 2018 in Aalborg, Denmark, the 70th anniversary of the founding of the OECD's predecessor, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) in 1948. The event brought together this book's contributors, who had the opportunity to present their work-in-progress papers and engage in academic discussions and social activities with peers and friends. In this respect, I thank research assistant Anna Bomholt and student helper Camilla Dam Karlsen for taking charge of the tasks and challenges behind the scenes to ensure the symposium's success.

The project has also organized panels at the annual Comparative and International Education Society Meeting in 2018 (Mexico City) and in 2019 (San Francisco), where authors of this volume presented their draft chapters. In this regard, I thank associate professor Radhika Gorur of Deakin University, Australia, and Barry McGaw, professor emeritus of Murdoch University, Perth, Western Australia, and former director for education at the OECD in Paris, for serving as discussants.

As an editor, I am obviously indebted to the contributors, who not only produced their chapters within the required limits of time, length, and efficiency, but also supported this project in many important ways, reading, reviewing, and providing valuable comments on earlier drafts of one another's works. Special thanks go to Jessica Holloway and Steven Lewis, both from Deakin University, Australia, for their highly qualified comments on the chapters in terms of language and content.

Finally, I thank my research group colleagues at the Centre for Education Policy Research, Aalborg University, and my family for their enduring support.

Aalborg, Denmark   Christian Ydesen
August 2019

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Vera G. Centeno is a senior researcher at the Tampere University, Finland. She holds a degree in educational sciences (University of Lisbon, 2004), a master's in humanities and social sciences (University of Paris 10, 2006), and a PhD in comparative education (Humboldt-University Berlin, 2014). Her dissertation focused on the complexities of the early OECD's educational agendas, and investigated agenda setting and knowledge production within the organization (*The OECD's Educational Agendas—Framed from Above, Fed from Below, Determined in Interaction*, 2017). Centeno's latest research examined quality in education and performance measurement policies (e.g. *Comparative Education*, 2018).

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Introduction: What Can We Learn About Global Education from Historical and Global Policy Studies of the OECD?

Christian Ydesen

THE OECD AND THE CONTOURS OF A GLOBAL GOVERNING COMPLEX IN EDUCATION

One of the key speakers at the first conference on education held by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in Washington, D.C., in 1961 made a remarkable statement (OECD 1961: 35):

> [T]he fight for education is too important to be left solely to the educators.

More than anything, this statement signals that education was becoming increasingly politicized in the context of the Cold War, and it became a battlefield between multiple stakeholders' and professionals' values and knowledge forms, as well as political visions and priorities. Today, the global order of education is characterized by various types of international organizations, edu-businesses, and powerful nation-states continuously

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shaping education systems across the globe, via networks, programs, and initiatives in general, and comparisons, benchmarking, and standards in particular.

Historically, the contemporary governing complex in education has emerged from both the collaboration and struggles between various agents and stakeholders. Bürgi's (2017: 304) recent chapter on the historical role of the OECD in education calls for more research on precisely the structural and existential interdependencies between 'national and international bureaucracies and on the interplay between them'. Picking up the baton, this book considers the OECD a highly relevant object for an analysis of such an interplay. As an intergovernmental organization made up of its member states and with no economic 'big stick' to enforce adherence to its policy recommendations, the OECD exercises its power and influence as the central cog of a global governing complex (Schmelzer 2012). The OECD has been key in the development of the way global governance in education works, and today, the OECD is widely recognized as a global authority in education because of its unique role in governance by comparison and the production of educational norms and paradigms, such as educational measurement indicators (Martens and Jakobi 2010). In an era of overproduction of data and evidence, the OECD has managed to establish itself as a key supplier and interpreter of the type of evidence appreciated by politicians and decision-makers who can ascribe their narratives to numbers; the watchwords here are simplification, comparability, and decontextualization.

However, while most research recognizes the enormous importance of the OECD as a global education policy shaper, little effort has been made in gaining a better understanding of the developments and events that made it possible for the OECD to assume this dominant role. More than 70 years have passed since the foundation of its predecessor, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC). Back then, the organization counted 18 members; today, the OECD has 36 members and numerous partnerships around the globe; for instance, 80 countries and economies participated in the 2018 round of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). It is high time to revisit the historical events and developments that have put education on the economic agenda and which have shaped and informed the very way education is construed and enacted across the globe today.

The Global Governing Complex and International Organizations

As demonstrated in much of the contemporary research, a key feature of the global order of education is that the selected variables, underlying assumptions, concepts, categories, logarithms, and modes of counting constituting the backbone of seemingly objective education data form a powerful governing complex (Brøgger 2019; Gorur 2017; Grek 2009; Hultqvist et al. 2018; Iriye 2002; Williamson and Piattoeva 2018). The role of international organizations in this governing complex is often characterized by soft governance, meaning that international organizations shape the policies of nation-states via the production of policy ideas, policy evaluations, and data generation (Leimgruber and Schmelzer 2017a). Drawing on the work of Hawkins et al. (2006), Niemann and Martens (2018; 269) argue that

> *IO soft governance implies that although international organizations are set up by states and consist of state delegates, they are able to develop their own positions, ideas, or dynamics because of intra-organizational networks and interactions that cannot be fully controlled by any principals.*

Although soft governance is a common denominator, the international organizations each have very different dispositions and instruments at their disposal. Therefore, the interactions between international organizations and nation-states remain complex, ambiguous, and even elusive (Christensen and Ydesen 2015). As pointed out by Moisio (2014), higher education policymaking in Finland has resorted to a 'policy spin', where national goals are fed back into the Finnish system via the European Union after having been 'planted' by Finnish policymakers. Moisio's example points to the multilayered character of global education governance. Nevertheless, it also suggests that international organizations constitute vital hubs of education governance, because they disseminate, coordinate, and evaluate policy programs, performance, and data production but, at the same time, also obscure the various processes and actors behind the scenes (e.g. via feed-in/feedback mechanisms, open methods of coordination and/or multilateral surveillance; see Brøgger 2019; Krejsler, this volume).

In other words, the contemporary governing complex in education leaves a big role for international organizations—in collaboration with

funders, partners, and stakeholders—to set the standards of what is considered good education worldwide. The implication is that the governing complex revolving around international organizations has a significant impact on the legitimation of knowledge, education curricula, and even our understanding of the very purpose of education.

History, Education, and the OECD

Beginning as the OEEC in 1948, the OECD gradually took over the leading role from other international organizations in setting new agendas for education globally, culminating thus far with the launch of PISA in 2000 (Morgan 2009). A recurrent and forceful characteristic of the OECD's paradigm in education has been a global vision of education as a source of human capital, which is needed to address social challenges and improve the economies of nation-states (Bray and Varghese 2011; Elfert, this volume; Elvin 1961; Spring 2015; Tröhler 2011). In other words, education is viewed as an economic production factor in general, and as a tool for maximizing the outcomes of a nation's available human resources in particular.

Although this line of thinking has a long history predating the formation of the OEEC/OECD—for instance, the liberal political philosopher John Locke (1632–1704) sees education as an investment that would increase a person's economic value (Locke 1695/2000)—the organization's version of it amounts to a very utilitarian paradigm of education that is deeply concerned with evaluation, accountability, and the facilitation of cross-national governance in order to achieve 'best practice'. Historically, the pillars underpinning this economic paradigm in education have been human capital theory and concerns about educational investment optimization, effectiveness, manpower planning, and the question of how education can sustain economic success (Ydesen and Bomholt 2019). In other words, and in trying to achieve a deeper understanding of the contemporary governing complex in education, it is reasonable to speak of historical sequences containing the seeds of a merger between education, governance, and economics—in terms of quantifiable methods (indicators, metrics, numbers, and data), accountability systems (the visibility and comparability of education stakeholders' performance), and the very purposes of education (human resource management and economic growth).

Starting from these observations, it is the purpose of this book to understand the workings, mechanisms, range, and impact of the OECD's

work in education from a historical, international, and global perspective across member and non-member states. The book thus aims to bridge the research fields of policy studies and the history of education, seeing the current scholarship on the history of international organizations in the field of education as a logical addition to the present-day perspective of policy studies. From this vantage point, it is this book's ambition to contribute to our understanding of the contemporary global governing complex in education.

Historically Informed Policy Research on the OECD's Role in Global Education Governance

Introducing a book about the OECD's role in global education governance from historical perspectives calls for reflections on its approach and framework. In the social sciences, Charles Tilly (2006: 433) argues that 'every significant political phenomenon lives in history and requires historically grounded analysis for its explanation', and Pierre Bourdieu emphasizes that every social object must be understood as a historical one and that it is imperative to historicize the research object in question to achieve understanding (Steinmetz 2011). Much contemporary historical research on the OECD subscribes to the same arguments, insofar as it insists on considering the present and the past under a single analytical lens. For instance, Leimgruber and Schmelzer (2017b: 6) argue that 'analyzing the OECD as a Cold War institution… helps in understanding the OECD more generally, also at present, in its geopolitical dimension and its search for a new, post-Cold-War role'. In this sense, Leimgruber and Schmelzer (2017a: 5) argue that 'highlighting the OECD soft power functions may shed light on its distinctive modes of governance, but this perspective impedes a more thorough understanding of the OECD's role among postwar multilateral organizations'. Bürgi (2017: 286) agrees and argues that we cannot interpret the processes surrounding PISA 'merely from a post-Cold War perspective'. Thus, it seems that historical perspectives have something valuable to contribute to policy research.

Although these arguments appear sound from both a common-sense and a scholarly perspective, they refrain from addressing the philosophical problem pointed out by some philosophers of history, such as Leopold von Ranke (1795–1896). Since the nineteenth century, much historical research—most prominently influenced by the launch of historism—has been based on the premise that the past is irreversibly gone and can never

again be invoked. In historiography, this premise is nurtured by a shift from the recognition of exemplarity to the understanding of earlier epochs on their own terms. For Ranke and, more recently, Ulrich Muhlack, learning from history is highly problematic (Assis 2014).

It is therefore necessary to consider how and to what extent the past can be used to shed light on the present. According to philosopher David Favrholdt (2004), it is possible to speak of structural similarities between historical and contemporary events and developments. Such an analysis comparing constructed time periods, however, quickly becomes problematic because of idiosyncrasies and unique contextual factors. However, according to Haydu (1998: 341), 'we can remedy the deficiencies of conventional comparative methods by rethinking the connections between events in different time periods as reiterated problem solving'. In that sense, Haydu argues that combining a focus on historical and contemporary problem-solving processes, the narratives surrounding these processes, and a meticulous empirical analysis of path dependencies can help specify how contingencies shape historical change and impose both temporal and explanatory order upon events 'without foregoing causal explanation' (Haydu 1998: 349).

In other words, some themes that run through history do not sustain causality but, nonetheless, lend explanatory power to historical developments. Following this line of thinking, our addition to Haydu's argument is that, if we consider time and experience to be something that extends across the past, present, and future, then history becomes a reservoir of communalities, for instance, organizations populated by human beings with lived experiences of timeless themes such as love, power, competition, recognition, work life ambitions, and the transmission of legacies.

Returning to the historiography of the OECD, we can see these arguments make sense when considering the three core claims of Leimgruber and Schmelzer's (2017a: 5–6) historical perspective, which all seem to reflect significant elements of problem solving:

> *Firstly, the history of the OECD is better understood if one analyzes it as the organization's continuous endeavour to reinvent itself after it had lost its original purpose at the end of the Marshall Plan.*
>
> *Secondly, during much of its history, the OECD was not (or not primarily) a think tank but served other important functions (e.g. an 'economic NATO').*
>
> *And finally, the OECD is characterized by its survival strategies in competition with other international organizations, by its fundamental (geo)political*

and identity-defining role, by formal and informal hierarchies, by restricted spaces within the organization, and by internal rivalries, both between countries and between its different directorates.

Looking specifically at education, we find a historical research perspective offers several things to our contemporary understanding of global education governance.

First, such a focus increases awareness of the precursors of contemporary programs and developments. From this perspective, a triadic train of contingencies emerges where the OEEC European Productivity Agency and its productivity imperative form the background of the OECD's educational programs in the 1960s (Bürgi, this volume). The International Education Indicators (INES) project, launched in 1988, serves as a precursor to PISA (Grek and Ydesen 2021), while PISA contemporarily serves as a breeding ground for other related OECD policy products, including PISA for Schools, PISA4U, AHELO, PIAAC, and PISA for Development (Lewis, this volume).

Second, a historical perspective facilitates knowledge about trajectories and path dependencies, which often define new spaces of opportunities. In making this point about opportunities, we draw on the German historian Reinhart Koselleck's (1923–2006) conceptual pair of 'horizon of experience' and 'space of expectation', which together create new spaces of opportunities beyond the limit of what has already been attained (Pickering 2004). One example, emphasizing path dependency, is that education officially appeared on the OEEC/OECD agenda right after the Sputnik shock in 1957, but the distinct approach to education adopted by the organization had much earlier roots, in ideas about education as an economic production factor, an object of optimization, and the source of a nation's human capital. Another example, highlighting the aspect of new opportunities, is the reform of the education section between 1967 and 1970, with the institutionalization of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), leading to the education section officially starting to work more qualitatively on education policy issues instead of merely conducting descriptive, quantitative, and comparative studies, as had been the main focus of the Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel (Centeno 2017, this volume).

Third, a historical research perspective also enables a focus on continuities and ruptures as an analytical lens. For instance, the OECD has been consistent in linking education with economic concerns, but it was not

until the United States threatened to withdraw financial support for CERI in the early 1980s that intense work on the development of standardized indicators—the INES program—was launched (Addey 2018). In this sense, the INES program exemplifies a rupture with one perspective; from another perspective, however, it linked up with the 1960s effort to develop quantitative indicators as emphasized by the then OEEC director Alexander King (OEEC 1960; see also Chap. 14, this volume).

Through increased knowledge about historical contingencies, a historical approach can create awareness of the historical constructs of today's education policies that otherwise seem to operate in a naturalized way according to an inherent logic. In that sense, historical perspectives can also feed into a human emancipation project (Foucault 1977).

Work from such a perspective requires in-depth case-study analysis, as well as access to and often even cross-checking within and across different archives. At the same time, it often requires that the researcher draw on other disciplines, such as comparative education, sociology, and political science, in an eclectic manner. However, this also enables us to move beyond methodological nationalism and into the fields of global and transnational history. As argued by Matasci and Droux (2019: 234), 'the transnational paradigm, with its focus on the study of exchanges, interconnections, and circulatory regimes, has undoubtedly given new life to the history of international organizations'. Doing so, we can open up the black box of the OECD and see how it has been working, the struggles and crises it has gone through, and how it has been able to achieve such power in global education today.

The combination of a historical perspective—drawing on primary archival sources from the OECD Archives in Paris and national archives around the globe, as well as interviews with key agents—with an education policy perspective provides a comprehensive view of the work of the OECD in education. By tackling the OECD from diverse points of view and in various historical and geographical contexts, this book offers a broad understanding of the continuities and ruptures in the historical journey taken by the OECD as it became the most influential International Organisation (IO) in education, and contributes to a better understanding of the interdependencies between international organizations and (member and non-member) countries. One of the book's main contributions is to show how the technologies of organization become intertwined with different cultural worlds of meaning, becoming visible not only on a policy level but also on a structural level that contains the very governance architecture of the respective countries.

From a historiographical perspective, the book offers a contribution to both global and world histories, as well as Eckhardt Fuchs' notion of transnational history as a historiographical field, which studies the relations, entanglements, and dependencies at the transnational level and contextualizes events at the national level (Fuchs 2014; Fuchs and Vera 2019).

Organization and Structure

The first part of the book zooms in on the background of the OECD's rise to its role as a global authority in education. Chronologically, the focus is on the OEEC era, between 1948 and 1961, and then up until the early 1970s, when education became firmly integrated into the OECD organization. In this sense, this part of the book establishes a solid and common frame of reference for the analyses in the following two parts of the book.

Chapter 2, by Regula Bürgi, looks at the European Productivity Agency (EPA), established in May 1953 as a semi-autonomous operational arm under the OEEC, intended to 'stimulate' the productivity of Europe's economy as an educational enterprise. The chapter demonstrates the branched-out cultural and political change effects of the EPA's work and initiatives, in terms of both Western societies and the OEEC/OECD organization itself.

Chapter 3, by Maren Elfert, traces the historical origins of the OECD's role in actively shaping and diffusing the economics of education. From this platform, the chapter argues that PISA is largely a continuation of the economics of education approach.

In Chap. 4, Vera G. Centeno provides a historical account of the OECD's official involvement in education policy and offers an analysis of the OECD's rapid emergence as a policy actor in the field. Drawing on a systematic analysis of unpublished internal documents, the chapter traces what happened within the organization before and after the creation of CERI.

The second part of the book addresses the difficult issue of discerning the impact of OECD educational initiatives and programs, and raises the question of how the OECD's educational recommendations and programs have impacted member and non-member states. Dealing with this question, the authors each relate in different ways to the triangular role of IGOs—as instrument, arena, and actor—noted in international relations research (e.g. Archer 2001; Centeno 2021), as well as how we can understand its impact (e.g. Christensen and Ydesen 2015). This perspective

involves an ambition to understand the power relations in the historical processes that gave rise to the OECD's dominating role in global education.

Chapter 5 is written by Frederik Forrai Ørskov and looks at the interactions between the OECD and Australian policymakers in the field of education in the 1970s. The chapter highlights the importance of looking at the movements between the different spatial levels of analysis when tracing the ability of international organizations to obtain their ideas and visions 'out of house'. It concludes that Australia's membership in the OECD greatly strengthened the national government vis-à-vis the federal states that had constitutionally controlled education.

Chapter 6, by Gabriela Toledo Silva, focuses on Brazil's National Institute of Educational Research as a vehicle for facilitating and mediating cooperation between the OECD and the Brazilian public education sector between 1996 and 2006. The chapter concludes that education was transformed in a variety of ways and that there is a marked difference between what was planned and how the changes were later described.

Using Denmark as a case, Chap. 7, by Karen Egedal Andreasen, raises the question of democracy in education in relation to the ways OECD policies and programs affect national education policy and practice. The chapter argues the presence of a political dimension in PISA and problematizes the democratic deficit in contemporary education policymaking.

In Chap. 8, Yihuan Zou reviews the collaborations between the OECD and China, how OECD ideas have been used in the Chinese context, and how the OECD's impacts on Chinese education can be understood in the global context. The chapter finds that OECD's ideas have mainly been used for new approaches to accountability and mechanisms for legitimating policies in the Chinese educational field.

In Chap. 9, Felicitas Acosta compares the Southern Cone countries of Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile and how these three countries of the Southern Hemisphere have established relations with the OECD at the level of the educational system through the implementation of PISA tests. The chapter finds both convergences and divergences in the rationales for participating in standardized assessments. It argues the presence of a new kind of educationalization advanced by systematic assessments of education systems by an independent organization such as the OECD.

The third part of the book is dedicated to exploring the OECD's education initiatives and programs from a global perspective. Highlighting the precursors and enactments of salient transnational policy trends

launched and sustained by the OECD, this part of the book provides observations and analytical tools to enable a better understanding of the workings of the contemporary governing complex in education.

Chapter 10, written by Jessica Holloway, analyzes the OECD's campaign for distributed leadership and points out the risks of pushing greater accountability and teacher responsibility. The chapter problematizes the global campaign for distributed leadership as situated within prevailing accountability discourses that value data-driven orientations of schooling over democratic ones.

Chapter 11, written by Antoni Verger, Clara Fontdevila, and Lluís Parcerisa, analyzes the OECD's governance mechanisms through the construction of school autonomy with accountability as a global policy model. Specifically, the chapter analyzes the governance mechanisms through which these reforms are being promoted by the OECD, namely, data gathering, education policy evaluation, and the generation of policy ideas through different knowledge products and policy spaces.

In Chap. 12, John Benedicto Krejsler argues that we can learn much by exploring how dominant Northern nations, in their fears of falling behind among 'global knowledge economies', produce imaginaries that affect how global standards are construed. The chapter adds to research on the traveling of policy between dominant and less dominant regions in the world, questioning how and by what parameters they become comparable.

Chapter 13 is written by Steven Lewis and takes a close look at two key OECD programs: the school-focused PISA for schools and the teacher-focused PISA4U. Both instruments enable international benchmarking and policy learning for decidedly more local schooling spaces and actors. The chapter shows how the OECD has enabled a whole series of new relations with a diverse array of local schooling spaces and actors.

Chapter 14, written by the editor, is a concluding chapter that reviews the 13 preceding chapters and draws conclusions about how we can understand the formation and workings of the global governing complex in education.

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Background of the OECD's Rise to the Role as a Global Authority in Education

Learning Productivity: The European Productivity Agency—An Educational Enterprise

Regula Bürgi

INTRODUCTION

David E. Nye (1996) considers that technology has generally been welcomed as something sublime in the USA; however, technological change was not initially embraced in Europe in the same way. The early-twentieth-century European resistance to technology had a twofold character. On the one hand, it was marked by a "fear of the machines" (Etzemüller 2005: 216), since it was assumed that technological progress would make workers redundant. On the other hand, people did not feel comfortable with the associated notions of rationalization that—as in dystopias such as Fritz Lang's *Metropolis* (1927) and Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932)—were predicted to exploit and commodify human beings. In the 1950s, when the idea of 'productivity' had become the ultimate catchword among economists, it elicited a similarly hostile response, due to the

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Fig. 2.1 European Productivity Agency (EPA)—Consultative Council (15/06/1954) (copyright: ©OEEC)

fear "that productivity increases would mainly raise profits and unemployment" (Schmelzer 2016: 137; Tanner 1999: 216).

Established in 1948 as a product of the Marshall Plan, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) positioned itself as a key organ to change European attitudes toward productivity (Boel 2003; Schmelzer 2016). Looking back on this period, a publication by the OEEC's successor, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), pointedly noted that, "[g]iven in particular a climate of psychological resistance to technical change and the traditional

fear of productivity growth as a cause of unemployment, the OEEC decided to entrust the task of promoting productivity to an operational body" (OECD 1996: 82). The OEEC thus gave rise to the European Productivity Agency (EPA). The agency was established in May 1953 as a semi-autonomous operational arm intended to "stimulate" the productivity of Europe's economy (EPA/OEEC 1959: 4). Its wide-ranging activities included, among others, fiscal policies, questions of standardization (whether with regard to fish or to fruit), and the human factors of production. The fact that the EPA accounted for 40 percent of the OEEC's budget underlines its importance for the organization's mission as a whole (Boel 2003: 97).

Against the backdrop of Europe's 'psychological resistance', the following questions arise: 1) What were the conditions of possibility for the institutionalization of this agency within an intergovernmental organization consisting only of European member states? 2) What were the central methods used to reduce Europeans' initial fears and overcome their resistance? I will argue that the establishment of the EPA was primarily a US endeavor in which the notion of productivity served as a means of maintaining Europe within the ideology and epistemology of the capitalist West. Within this process, education constituted a key means of 'enculturation'.

While scholarly interest in the OECD's history has increased in the past decade,[1] the development and activities of the OEEC—particularly between 1952, when Marshall Plan aid dried up, and 1961, when the OECD came into being—often continue to be neglected.[2] This period corresponds to the lifetime of the EPA, as the agency was dissolved after eight years when the OEEC was transformed into the OECD.

The sole monograph on the EPA's establishment and activities was produced by the Danish historian Bent Boel (2003),[3] and my own argumentation draws on his analysis. Boel addresses the agency as a Cold War tool by shedding light both on the actors[4] who triggered the productivity drive within the OEEC (and later within the EPA itself) and on the projects and activities carried out during the EPA's short lifetime. Nevertheless, since Boel is engaged in writing a political history, he only highlights certain elements of the EPA's program, while marginalizing or even ignoring others. He fails to stress the overall scope of the agency, for instance, and its role as a broad-based educational enterprise. This latter dimension will be central in what follows.

I shall link the EPA's activities to a phenomenon that began in the early industrial era and that has been characterized by Herman and Plein (2017) as "industrial enculturation". This concept refers to the various processes involved in systematically acquiring "the necessary mental representations […], patterns of behaviour, and skills required to function optimally as a member of an industrial culture" (Herman and Plein 2017: 4). In the EPA's case, this means an industrial culture rooted in and revolving around productivity. Governance mechanisms that have been identified as characteristic tools of the OECD, such as 'peers', 'numbers', and 'ideas', played a central role in this process (Leimgruber and Schmelzer 2017).[5] Nevertheless, education and the education and training of 'change agents' also served as fundamental dissemination mechanisms that were intended to penetrate and influence not only the economic sphere but also the social and cultural spheres.

This chapter seeks to bring back into focus the educational dimensions of the EPA that Boel tended to overlook. In doing so, it aims to supplement his meticulous work by examining the EPA's overall activities and closely considering a few of its programs. In what follows, I shall address education as a subtle yet neglected dissemination mechanism and thereby highlight the largely ignored roots of the OECD's operations, ideas, and educational agenda.

My analysis draws on secondary literature on the OEEC and the EPA, along with program descriptions produced by the EPA and the agency's correspondence with Swiss officials.[6] As will be shown in the following section, Switzerland played a significant role during the EPA's lifetime by continually challenging its *raison d'être*. The chapter is divided into four sections. It first examines the USA as a key driver of the agency's institutionalization, while at the same time shedding light on the resistance to its establishment. Secondly, it analyzes the concept of productivity as a form of 'epistemological conveyer'. Thirdly, it shows that the EPA's educational aspirations amount to a process of 'enculturation'. Finally, the chapter concludes by exploring how the EPA, with its productivity drive involving and creating a web of change agents, may be seen as a precursor of the OECD's educational programs and its educational planning agenda in particular.

An American Idea Contested from Cradle to Grave

As Boel writes, "The EPA was created as a result of American ideas, actions and money" (Boel 2003: 115). Although Boel emphasizes this point throughout his book on the creation of EPA, he refrains from simply

labeling its institutionalization as a one-way process of Americanization (Boel 2003: 16). Likewise, I do not assume that the EPA's ideas were either purely of American origin or that they met with a European *tabula rasa*. Indeed, as Vera Centeno has stated with regard to the OECD's agenda on recurrent education, the relation or process should be considered as "determined in interaction", that is, through an ongoing negotiation between the member countries, the secretariat, and individual experts (Centeno 2018). Nevertheless, US measures were put in place to establish the institutional framework for the educational enterprise, along with institutional mechanisms characteristic of international organizations (Bürgi 2016a, 2017a).

By the beginning of the 1950s, Marshall Plan aid had come to an end, which led to a severe identity crisis within the OEEC. The OEEC had developed from a "standing political conference" to an "established international bureaucracy," and its staff were eager to find a new *raison d'être* for the organization (Schmelzer 2016: 42). The US government promised to invest more in the organization if it increased its productivity drive (see Elfert, this volume) and established a European Productivity Agency as a center or clearing house for information and discussion (Boel 2003: 45; OECD 1996: 83).[7]

This idea met with resistance from other international agencies such as the UN's Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) (Stinski 2017: 79) and with pronounced opposition from European countries, particularly Great Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland. Nevertheless, US financial investment served to silence the opposing voices, at least for the time being. The EPA was initiated as an experiment for a period of three years, and as such was burdened from the outset by the problem of "how to sell itself to the council" (Boel 2003: 101). "[The] EPA, as Karl Harten, its first Director, pointed out, was not planned as a permanent feature of the European scene. Rather, EPA was intended to act as a catalytic agent to stimulate and widen the productivity drive which in itself would render the Agency superfluous" (as cited in ETH Shuman 1970: 60). Harten was the director of the German Iron and Steel Institute, and was therefore a key player in the country's and the OEEC's productivity drive. His appointment as the EPA director was primarily politically motivated, since at that point West Germany did not have an important role within the OEEC, and the general secretary argued that the appointment would help to tie West Germany more closely to the organization. During the Second World War, Harten was chairman of the German *Luftwaffe*

committee for production and rationalization, and although never a member of the NSDAP (Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei), he was mistrusted by various delegates. Furthermore, he was under constant pressure, since the EPA's own efficiency was (ironically enough) regularly called into question. In time, he came to be replaced by the duo of Alexander King and Roger Grégoire (Boel 2003: 62–63, 108). The latter was appointed director in 1955, having previously worked at the Institute of Administrative Sciences, which, in the early 1950s, carried out a UNESCO-commissioned study analyzing the administrative problems encountered by newly independent countries when cooperating with international agencies (Grégoire 1953). Alexander King, meanwhile, accompanied and supported the EPA from its very beginnings and acted as a key European transmitter and catalyst of the productivity paradigm (King 2006: 185). His appointment as deputy director of the EPA in 1957 launched his career as *spiritus rector* of the OEEC and, later, of the OECD (as director of the department of scientific affairs). King, who was initially trained as a chemist, was a social engineer par excellence and very much engaged in transferring war planning techniques (such as operations research) to the social sciences (Bürgi 2016b, 2017b).

The arguments against the establishment and continued existence of the EPA were repeated many times in the course of its lifetime, and are best summarized through a consideration of its main antagonist—Switzerland. The country repeatedly used the same arguments in support of the dissolution of the agency. In 1954, one of the main Swiss business associations warned that American subsidies would come to an end at a certain point. It further argued that "The EPA, with its broad scope, was never a spontaneous need of the participating European countries and their economies […]" (BAR 10. November 1954; freely translated, RB). Various items of correspondence claimed that the activities carried out by the EPA intervened too much in the field of science and, as was heavily stressed and agreed by other countries, in the private sector, and particularly in vocational education and training.[8] Alongside these more structural concerns, business associations and the civil service expressed their doubts at a more conceptual/epistemological and methodological level, stressing that the EPA's conception of productivity "only marginally includes what Swiss people comprehend as 'questions of productivity' (= in particular rationalization)" (BAR 13. January 1954: 1; freely translated, RB). Furthermore, it was stressed that the dispute "could not be interpreted in terms of a lack of solidarity from the Swiss side but as a disagreement over the *best means* of achieving rationalization" (BAR 26. December 1956: 1; freely translated, emphasis in the original, RB).

Nevertheless, in light of the fact that the EPA had an operational staff of 200 by 1955 (representing some 45 percent of the OEEC's total operational staff [Asbeek and Griffiths 1997: 27]),[9] and against the backdrop of US financial pressure and the emergence of the European Economic Community, the opposing parties gradually became more favorable toward the agency.[10] They committed themselves to financing the agency's main budget out of their own pockets. The governing board now included all member countries, thereby setting in motion the EPA's Europeanization (Boel 2003: 68; OECD 1996: 84).

Ironically, it was at the very moment when European attitudes toward the EPA were more positive than ever that the USA's attitude changed. By the end of the 1950s, the buzzword was no longer productivity but growth. This shifted the focus toward questions of scientific policy and, against the backdrop of the rising Global South (Hongler 2017), of development (Boel 2003: 73–91). The failure of the OEEC to create a free European trade area did not help the situation, and in response to pressure from the USA, which formed an alliance with the secretariat (and Alexander King in particular), the EPA was dissolved (Boel 2003: 73–91; Schmelzer 2016). This dissolution was nonetheless not as definitive as it may have seemed, since many programs were taken over by the OECD. They were distributed between various units such as the Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel (CSTP), the Manpower and Social Affairs Committee, and the Development Assistance Committee, and thus assumed a permanent and even stronger place within the OECD (ETH Shuman 1970: 84; Boel 2003: 179, 224). Like the transition from the OEEC to the OECD as a whole, the end of the EPA thus signified a "key turning point" rather "than a break" (Schmelzer 2016: 46).

The Notion of Productivity as an Epistemological Conveyer

The opening lines of the EPA's first program read as follows:

> 'Productivity' means getting the best results out of any of the numerous factors of production—capital, raw materials, plant and machinery, land, labour, etc. The emphasis on one or the other of these depends on which of them in a given sector and at a given time is the limiting factor. Productivity is a means to an end. The final purpose of the campaign is to secure a higher European standard of living by achieving a higher flow of goods and services with a correspondingly higher real purchasing power in the hands of the consumer. (BAR s.d.: 5)

It depicts the notion of productivity as a simple circle or 'means to an end' that secures 'higher living standards'. What is presented here as a logical and almost natural chain of sequences and consequences is, if we scratch the surface, loaded and layered with a multifaceted set of ideas, meanings, and arguments. Productivity served and was sold as a slogan or catch-all concept to solve various economic and social problems (Schmelzer 2016: 133). On closer analysis, we can extract a number of arguments and motives underpinning the productivity drive, at both the functional and the ideological levels.

A functional reading of the productivity narrative would highlight the Korean War as a key driving force: the USA was interested, in other words, in increasing productivity in order to maintain living standards of its people while keeping up with military spending (Stinski 2017: 79).

The concept of productivity mainly served as a means of introducing a specific epistemological matrix. Commentators on the USA's productivity policy during the 1950s variously refer to a "productivity Crusade" (Boel 2003: 10), a "gospel of productivity" (Tiratsoo and Tomlinson 1997), or the introduction of "a cast of mind" (Schmelzer 2016: 124), thus highlighting the ideological dimensions of the concept. As Bent Boel pointedly concludes: "The politics of productivity thus also served the strategical purpose of fortifying a 'free world' united by common ideals—those embodied by the American way of life—and weakening its enemies" (Boel 2003: 22). Since the liberal democratic form of capitalism was "thoroughly discredited in Europe" following the Second World War, productivity's promise of a higher living standard for all helped to lessen the disappointment with this state of affairs (Schmelzer 2016: 118). The paradox of an intergovernmental organization intervening in questions of productivity was noted even at the time, and criticized by liberal scholars as "standard of life-ism". Similarly, the Marshall Plan was considered ludicrous insofar as "the supposed beacon of free enterprise, the United States, was itself calling for nations to make multiyear plans to consistently disperse Marshall Plan funds" (Slobodian 2018: 185 and 159). The EPA faced the same problem, as highlighted by the resistance of some European countries, which accused the quasi-intergovernmental agency of intervening too heavily in the private sector.

The agency nonetheless became a disseminator of free market principles, as the first EPA program makes clear. The program emphasized that managers should be encouraged "to leave the safe waters of protected markets" and fueled competition with alarming rhetoric about 'falling-

behind' (see Krejsler, this volume). The program mentions, for instance, that it is better to suffer short-term unemployment than to be unable to keep up with other states and therefore become dependent on imports (BAR s.d.: 5). The USA even urged the OEEC member states to change the first draft of the EPA's mission statement to stress that "the agency shall be guided by the principle that competition should be encouraged" (Boel 2003: 57). Despite the agency's attempts to downplay such a function, the EPA's political role is manifest in its obvious attempts to bolster only non-Communist trade unions (Boel 2003: 91) and its endeavors to make them less ideological and more focussed on "bread and butter" questions (Schmelzer 2016: 137).

The narrative or ideology of the 'free world' was closely tied to that of an integrated Europe, and the 'productivity-rising-standard-of-living' circle was also intended to downplay the disagreements between European countries (Schmelzer 2016: 121–136). As the very first European governmental organization, the OEEC was considered from the outset the "embryonic hope" of a Western European government, and the EPA was to make its contribution to this vision (Schmelzer 2016: 40).

Last but not least, as Maier (1977) convincingly argues, the politics of productivity served as a means of overcoming class conflicts. As he points out, this strategy had worked in the USA and was expected to have the same pacifying effect in Europe. Maier characterizes the US rationale as follows: "The true dialectic was not one of class against class, but waste versus abundance" (Maier 1977: 615).

All of the aforementioned motives further flesh out the multilayered meaning of the concept of productivity, and are chiefly marked by two important epistemological premises: the primacy of the economy and the belief in techno-scientific solutions to political problems. The first epistemological premise is represented by the 'living standard logic', since it blends an economic and social rationale and approaches social life through an economic lens. In the 1960s in particular, this tendency resulted in the quasi-inseparable combination of the 'socio-economic' (Bürgi 2017a). Secondly, the argument that productivity equals abundance is based on the belief that any transformation into a wealthy society is "a problem of engineering, not of politics" (Maier 1977: 615). This belief in turn paved the way for a form of governance based on "output" and "efficiency" (Maier 1977: 628).

In line with this view, US officials considered the productivity campaign as a "weapon of psychological warfare", and one that functioned as an

"inexpensive vehicle" (Boel 2003: 123). Accordingly, the EPA's success depended on its ability to erase prior concepts from European thought and action: "To achieve a dynamic atmosphere of expansion it is vital that the concept of some 'normal' and static level of production, which is prevalent in the minds of many, shall be discarded" (BAR s.d.: 6). How the agency aimed to change the European mind-set is set out in the next section.

The Enculturation of the Concept of Productivity

The EPA itself saw its mission as "both technical and psychological" (BAR s.d.: 5). It was intended to help the broader public "discover and make known the means by which productivity can be increased, and to persuade those concerned to adopt these means" (BAR s.d.: 5). The latter task was considered "the more difficult and the more important side of the problem" (BAR s.d.: 5). Productivity was perceived as a cultural phenomenon, and as such it had to be integrated into European culture (Schmelzer 2016: 136) through a process of "enculturation" (Herman and Plein 2017). Indeed, much debate was devoted to where the notion of productivity could best be "inserted" or "grafted in" (as cited in Schmelzer 2016: 136). On reading the EPA's mission statement, it is clear that the agency attempted to find as many entry points as possible:

> Its [the EPA's] task is to stimulate productivity, and thereby raise European standards of living, by influencing not only Governments but also industrial, agricultural and research organisations, private and collective enterprises and public services. One of its primary aims is to convince management and workers alike of the benefits of productivity and to enlist their co-operation. (EPA/OEEC 1959: 4)

The EPA's strategy was thus all-encompassing, since it tried to reach out both horizontally to very different economic branches and spheres and vertically to diverse groups from the grass roots to management levels in order to leverage the full social spectrum needed to achieve cultural change or build a 'new' culture. The EPA explicitly justified its wide-ranging remit on the basis that "[t]he inter-relations of all groups in economic life—public administration, management, Unions, consumers, etc.—are so close that the effects of a change of attitude in one group could be frustrated by the resistance of others not yet convinced of the validity of these changes" (BAR s.d.: 8).

Against this backdrop, the EPA elaborated a program that comprised the following six pillars: economic and legal issues, technical and administrative aspects of industry and commerce, human factors in management and labor, applied technology, food and agriculture, and information and general services (BAR 25. June 1954). The agency therefore dealt with technical issues (such as long-distance gas transportation, new cooking processes, and the measurement of productivity), political issues (such as the influence of tax legislation on productivity), psychological phenomena (such as attitudinal changes, adaptation to new environments, selection processes using psychometric techniques), and educational questions (whether vocational education and training or managerial education) (OECD 1996: 83–108; ETH Shuman 1970: 77). Though human factors were noted under a distinct heading in the program, they were in fact central to almost all areas of it, and received 30 percent of the EPA's budget, compared to 5 percent for technology and applied research in the technological field (BAR 25. June 1954).[11]

The EPA's means of ensuring the European enculturation of the concept of productivity might initially be classified under the headings 'peers', 'numbers', and 'ideas' (Leimgruber and Schmelzer 2017: 23–28). Indeed, the EPA wrote reports on productivity within its member countries, collected data for statistical analysis and productivity measurement, and organized numerous conferences to disseminate its ideas.[12]

This governance trio of peers, numbers, and ideas was complemented and enforced via a central educational component in which educational policies were both formulated and implemented. In other words, education served as a key means of establishing an emerging global governance complex. At its very outset, the EPA's program states how crucial education and training is for the agency's mission: "[The] attitudes of future managers and labour will depend to a considerable extent on what they have learnt at school or university" (BAR s.d.: 13). Since the EPA was not able to directly control the educational institutions of its member states and was thus incapable of reaching the broader public, it adopted a strategy of educating change agents: "Efforts should be concentrated on those persons or groups who are best placed to influence [the] attitudes of others in large numbers, so that the maximum 'multiplier effect' is obtained for a given expenditure of effort" (BAR s.d.: 8). In giving an "initial impetus" to powerful groups, it was hoped that the appropriate ideas would spread and gain momentum by themselves: "Once started, it may be hoped that these contacts would develop automatically, as has happened in the past" (BAR s.d.: 8).

In line with this focus on educating change agents, the EPA organized missions in the USA for all of its target groups, including managers, union leaders, officials, and workers. According to the OECD's webpage, "over 3000 specialists and hundreds of farmers, organised into more than 500 teams from 15 different countries, visited American factories and farms" through EPA programs (OECD 2018). These visits lasted for up to two months and often resulted in published reports, as in the key project on 'human engineering' or 'fitting the job to the worker' (AEP/OEEC 1957).[13] It is important to note that these visits were not only for adults but also for young people, who were given support, for instance, to visit farms in the USA (BAR 1956).

Alongside such missions, the EPA also developed dedicated programs for the aforementioned groups. In conjunction with the Council of Europe, for example, it curated an exhibition on productivity (Dodis 22 January 1953) and set up operational projects for what were then termed 'developing' areas, such as Sardinia, and non-member countries such as Yugoslavia. On the one hand, the latter's association with the OEEC was based on trade interests; nonetheless, as Markovic and Obadic (2017, 93) have emphasized, the EPA more importantly "provided an opportunity for the education of Yugoslav experts".

Furthermore, the EPA was heavily involved in the programs on management education (chiefly sponsored by the Ford Foundation) that became very popular during the 1960s as management schools came to be established all over the continent (ETH Shuman 1970: 84; OECD 1996: 90). It also taught union leaders in their thousands, particularly the 'free' trade union leaders, about "attitudes towards productivity," vocational education and training, applied research, and human relations strategies (Boel 2003: 12; BAR s.d.: 13; BAR 1961/63).[14]

"Men working with machines" were acknowledged by the EPA as a very important element of the drive to secure productivity (BAR s.d.: 12). The EPA believed in the capacity of the labor sciences to define and guarantee optimal productivity and therefore commissioned research on different dimensions of workers' lives, including their physiology and psychology, hygiene and safety measures, and the aforementioned programs on ergonomics or 'fitting the job to the worker' (and vice versa), which researched selection procedures involving psychometric techniques (BAR s.d.: 14). It also promoted the institutionalization of employment services, educated its personnel in vocational guidance, and fostered policies to promote non-agricultural vocations in rural schools (EPA/OECD 1962: 70).

Vocational education and training remained at the forefront, as is evident from the EPA's many publications.[15] In addition, the EPA trained occupational teachers (BAR 1957–1961), particularly in using audiovisual aids. To this end, it established its own cinematheque containing an extensive collection of visual teaching aids (ETH AEP 1958). The short films were used to teach newly arising techniques or how to "rationalize" traditional craftwork. Furthermore, the films advertised new technologies and newly established institutions. They explained, for instance, how "machinery creates employment"; presented purchasing associations such as Germany's EDEKA[16]; and instructed future sales agents by showing them telephone techniques such as those evident in the following film description: "[The film] presents two different sales girls in like situations, one agreeable and accommodating; the other brusque, blunt, and poorly informed. [It] emphasizes the importance of not keeping the customer waiting while additional information is gleaned" (ETH AEP 1958). In addition, the films had an integrative character, as they showed, for example, how maimed soldiers could be reintegrated into the production process as "men like [any] others" (ETH AEP 1958). The movies originated in different member countries and were produced by both private and state institutions. They were able to reach the broader public in the form of a "visual pedagogy" and a "lingua franca" for enculturation (Herman and Plein 2017: 5).[17]

Concluding Discussion: An Octopus Weaving a Network of Change Agents

This chapter has shown how the US-sponsored EPA, whose activities were marked by a specific ideological and epistemological matrix, might be characterized via the metaphor of an octopus extending its tentacles into various social spheres and groups by educating change agents. In this way, the EPA penetrated not only the economic sphere but also the social and cultural spheres, and in doing so, it set in motion an all-encompassing process of enculturation. Even though we can assume that the actors were transferring, translating, and transforming (Cowen 2011) the EPA's technologies into different cultural idioms, the impulses coming from the agency, and particularly its interweaving of various networks, should neither be underestimated nor ignored. This created interdependencies that kept the institutions concerned alive (whether on an international,

national, or individual scale) insofar as they gave one another a *raison d'être* (Strange 1998). As such, it acted as a key driver of the emergence of a global governing complex.

In order to elucidate the ideas, discourses, and forms of reasoning nurtured by the EPA, further research that 'brings the actors back in' is required. By following the relevant change agents and uncovering the actor-networks that enabled them as actors (Latour 2010), we may gain a better insight into the following areas of a global governing complex. First, this approach could shed light on how the EPA's activities continued the 'old' reasoning based on conceptions of and beliefs in 'rationalization' (Schmelzer 2016: 134). Such research would show how the "efficiency craze" (Tanner 1999: 216) that had been rejected by the end of the 1920s was revitalized at an international level. Furthermore, such a research focus could provide even greater insight into how the agency adopted the practices of learning and visualization, both of which can be considered typical of social engineering programs (Etzemüller 2017). By following these links to the rationalization movement, it would be possible to analyze the continuation or reframing of the narratives used to legitimize such processes. This might tell us whether, for example, the core social engineering vision of creating a "harmonious world" (Herman 2014; Berner 2016) was reformulated and thus preserved in conjunction with a 'higher standard of living' rationale.

Such an approach would also bring to the fore the continuity of personnel, sponsors, mechanisms, ideas, and topics within the OECD. Many committees, such as the Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel (CSTP) and the Manpower and Social Affairs Committee took over the EPA's studies, concerns, and staff. The educational activities of the latter committee have remained unexplored, and a glance at its publications list shows that education was on the agenda of the manpower committee (OECD 1968a, b). Nevertheless, it was the CSTP's efforts that culminated in the creation of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). The latter's task was explicitly to produce "the right kind of people" for *the* modern society, and was sponsored by none other than the Ford Foundation, which also acted as the EPA's sponsor (Bürgi and Tröhler 2018). Indeed, the pattern of 'new' bodies being sponsored by US money (whether private or governmental), then being contested by European actors, and ultimately supported by most European member countries while the USA lost interest was a recurring phenomenon (Bürgi 2017a).

Last but not least, following the actors could help shed light on the entanglement, cooperation, and/or competition between various international organizations. This in turn would emphasize the EPA's global outreach, which has thus far been underestimated and under-researched. These relations are manifest—albeit in a different context—in the following quotation:

> In the spring of 1964, we [the IIEP] organized the first conference of Latin American Educational Planners and brought a large group of Latin Americans to Paris. That conference ended with a vibrant party. Latin Americans know how to have great parties whereas the French lack the spontaneous ability to let go and enjoy the moment. But this can be contagious. This is why Roger Grégoire, a distinguished French civil servant who headed the Marshall Plan productivity effort […] danced on top of office desks with our shy, lanky and so-English colleague, Raymond Lyons. (Benveniste 2010: 301)

This quotation from Guy Benveniste, who worked for the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), underscores the fact that the actors of different international organizations were tightly connected. There are many indications that those relationships between the EPA's former director, Roger Grégoire, UNESCO's IIEP planning institute, and Raymond Lyons, who gave OECD courses in educational planning (Tröhler 2013), cannot be reduced to one single evening on the dance floor.

NOTES

1. See, for example: Leimgruber and Schmelzer (2017); Bürgi (2017a); Centeno (2018); Schmelzer (2016); Woodward (2009).
2. In his monograph on the OECD, for instance, Woodward (2009) only dedicates a few pages to the OEEC, whereas Matthias Schmelzer (2016) provides a detailed pictured of the OEEC.
3. His convincing piece serves as reference point for other scholars confronted with, though not focusing on, the history of the EPA (see, e.g., Schmelzer 2016; Stinski 2017).
4. Boel mainly considers the level of the nation-state, while largely ignoring the individual and organizational levels.
5. Similar, though differently named, mechanisms were highlighted by Anja Jakobi (2009).
6. The documents analyzed here can be accessed at the Swiss federal archive in Bern (BAR), the online service 'Diplomatische Dokumente der Schweiz'

(Dodis; https://www.dodis.ch), and the archive of the ETH Zurich (ETH). This set of sources is further supplemented by a sample of EPA publications (on the human factor of production), along with documents associated with the agency (such as those from organizations established as a result of EPA activities) and texts written by prominent actors.

7. In order to fund its establishment, the EPA was awarded 2.5 million US dollars. The productivity mission as a whole cost around 100 million US dollars (Boel 2003: 34–49; Papadopoulos 1996). To give just one example, Markovic and Obadic (2017: 93) note that Yugoslavia received 2 million US dollars from the EPA between 1958 and 1961.

8. To this day, VET in Switzerland has been organized and shaped by professional and business associations, with the state playing a rather small role. We may assume that the business sector was afraid of losing its privileges and being bypassed by the federal state, which would serve as a hinge for ever-increasing cooperation at an intergovernmental level.

9. OEEC staff numbers rose during the same period (Schmelzer 2016: 42). By 1956 the organization had a permanent staff of 100 (Tiratsoo and Tomlinson 1997: 49).

10. For countries such as Great Britain and Switzerland, which were excluded from the newly established European Economic Community, the OEEC became an important international platform (BAR 1959; Boel 2003: 70).

11. A consideration of the EPA bibliography on productivity published in 1956 paints a similar picture; human factors, along with the computing of industrial productivity, have the largest share of entries in the bibliography in comparison with technical factors (EPA/OEEC 1956).

12. The best overview is provided by a bibliography compiled by the OECD (1996).

13. The term 'human engineering' was used in the USA, whereas in Europe such practices were labelled 'ergonomics'. The EPA, meanwhile, chose to call its program 'fitting the job to the worker' (IEA 2006).

14. Between 1959 and 1960, Boel counted around 4000 experts and trade union leaders participating in the EPA's program (Boel 2003: 180).

15. Publications included titles such as 'education and training for distribution' (EPA/OEEC 1959), 'training in chemical engineering' (AEP/OEEC 1955), 'training in shoe industries' (AEP/OEEC 1960b), fast-track 'training for qualified or non-qualified persons' (AEP/OEEC 1960a), and 'training under the condition of technological development' (EPA/OEEC 1960c). A particular concern of the EPA was the transformation of rural workers into industrial workers. On the basis of the argument that instability caused by social maladjustment decreases productivity rates, numerous descriptive reports examined the dimensions that have to be considered within this mobility process and ultimately prescribe how to

act in order to guarantee a smooth transition process (AEP/OEEC 1961; EPA/OECD 1962). As part of its program for 'developing' countries, the EPA also organized internships for people from Africa, Asia, and central and Latin America in OEEC countries (BAR 1961/63: 16).

16. The EPA dedicated an entire project to consumer nutritional education (BAR 1955) and commissioned an analysis on consumers' food purchasing habits (OECD 1996: 86).

17. The visual or visualization was an important social engineering tool (Etzemüller 2017: 8), and Quinn Slobodian emphasizes its role in the diffusion of neoliberal thought (Slobodian 2018: 163).

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The OECD, American Power and the Rise of the "Economics of Education" in the 1960s

Maren Elfert

INTRODUCTION

Since the results of the first Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study were released in 2000, scholarly interest in what is sometimes referred to as the hegemonic influence of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on the global education agenda has increased significantly. More than any other organization, the OECD has gained a rationalizing, calculating and economistic grip on education, which in turn has led to increasing "disenchantment" with the educational project. This chapter will look back at the post–World War II period, in particular the 1960s, when a rationalistic approach to social engineering and planning gained momentum in government circles, universities and international organizations. My primary interest lies in tracking the historical role of the OECD in shaping and diffusing what

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Fig. 3.1 OECD Conference on Economic Growth and Investment in Education, Brookings Institution, Washington, October 1961 (copyright: ©OECD)

John Vaizey (1962) has called "the economics of education" and in building a new world order dominated by the US. By understanding the historical and geopolitical context and particular social and intellectual climate of the postwar period in which the "economics of education" approach emerged, and the controversy which surrounded it, we can learn some lessons about educational agendas today. The chapter draws on a review of primary and secondary literature and interviews with three pioneers of the economics of education, Klaus Hüfner, Ron Gass and Louis Emmerij.[1]

The chapter is divided into three sections. The first will examine how the OECD and its precursor, the OEEC, served as platforms to spread the influence of the US government as well as the American scientific community and philanthropic foundations to European countries. Around the time that the OEEC had fulfilled its mandate, the worsening Cold War, the Sputnik shock and new—mostly American—studies about the economic returns of education in a climate of economic growth triggered a veritable frenzy of educational research and planning activities that opened up a new field for the OECD. The purpose of the second section is to show that while there was a wide-ranging consensus on the social relevance of the economization and scientification of education, it was also controversial, especially among educators, many of whom were suspicious

of economists' intentions in relation to education. The concluding section will discuss what became of the economics of education approach at the OECD and reflect on its relevance within the contemporary landscape.

The American Influence on the OECD and the Economics of Education

The Marshall Plan and the "Productivity Saga"

The OECD emerged in 1961 from the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), which was established in 1948 to administer the European Recovery Program (the Marshall Plan) for the reconstruction of war-devastated Europe (Papadopoulos 1994: 21). According to Alexander King (2006: 220), a pioneer of both organizations, the OEEC was guided by "a movement…, namely spreading the productivity concept throughout Europe". This "productivity saga", as King called it in his memoirs, was very much related to the influence which the US exerted in Europe after World War II through the Marshall Plan (see also Chap. 2 in this book).

The Marshall Plan was accompanied by "the largest international propaganda operation ever seen in peacetime" (Ellwood 1997: 101). Between 1948 and 1952, the Marshall Plan funded many "productivity missions" that brought European—5000 from France alone—managers, trade unionists and technicians to the US "to study the American way of business" (Judt 2005: 93). For many proponents of the Marshall Plan in the US, it was "an opportunity to reconstruct Europe in the American image, emphasizing modernization, infrastructural investment, industrial productivity, economic growth and labour-capital cooperation" (Judt 2005: 93). In 1953, with considerable US funding, the European Productivity Agency (EPA) was founded within the OEEC, as a way of transferring American technical know-how to Europe and boosting European productivity (Bürgi 2017a: 60). Ultimately, the EPA represented around 40% of the OEEC's budget (Bürgi 2017b: 288; see also Chap. 2 in this book). The productivity push involved maximizing the relationship between technological development and economic growth (Gemelli 1996). One of the key objectives of the EPA, which collaborated with the National Productivity Centres that had been set up in some OECD member states, was the promotion of modern business management methods and "spawning business schools all over Europe" (King 2006: 233). The introduction

of American management systems in Europe was "thought to be of crucial importance in reinforcing American political leadership of the West" (Gemelli 1996: 40).

The Ford Foundation and the Social Sciences

The EPA also collaborated closely with the Ford Foundation, "which had an important European programme of business education" (King 2006: 227; Gemelli 1996). After World War II, the Ford Foundation represented the largest philanthropic organization in the world. With its close ties to the government and military-industrial think tank the RAND Corporation, the foundation played a major role in the promotion of a range of socially relevant issues, including democracy, peace, the economy, behavioral sciences and education (Bürgi 2017a: 42; Buss 1980). Between 1951 and 1960, the Ford Foundation spent $74.8 million on economics and business studies in the US, before expanding its support of business studies to Europe (Berghahn 2001: 143). The strong connection between the disciplines of economics and business was a trend in the US in those years. The Ford Foundation "threw [its] support and vast resources behind the discipline" (Fourcade 2010: 67) and "embraced the…promise of efficiency, accuracy and mastery of the social and economic world" (Fourcade 2010: 89). The Ford Foundation was also very active in surveying, expanding and funding the work of universities, and funded business management and comparative and international education programs at leading American universities such as Harvard, Columbia and the University of Chicago (Sanders 1965). Ford Foundation officer Kermit Gordon visited the leading economist of education Theodore Schultz at the University of Chicago to discuss with him the foundation's interest in "surveying the area of international and foreign economic studies" and "the contribution of economists to multidisciplinary studies such as area and international relations programs" (Gordon 1956a). The scientific underpinning of the social sciences was a key preoccupation of the Ford Foundation, as well as the other American philanthropic foundations, as the basis of a "social-engineering approach to controlled change" (Arnove 1980: 14). According to Howe (1980; cited by Bürgi 2017a: 41), the claim to rationality and objectivity based on science was also a means of compensating for the foundation's lack of democratic legitimacy.

The launch of the Sputnik satellite in 1957 sharpened East-West confrontation and triggered a veritable technological and educational race

between the Soviet Union and the US (Tröhler 2010). The US was fixated on economic growth during those years. This preoccupation was understandable given that before World War II the country had experienced a devastating economic crisis, which was also a key factor in the ideological obsession with communism (Biddle and Holden 2014). Moreover, the push for productivity in the US has been interpreted as a way of finding consensus in a deeply divided society. High growth rates made it possible to "transform political issues into problems of output, to adjourn class conflict for a consensus on growth" (Maier 1977: 608). Bürgi (2016: 409) has shown that the epistemological foundation of output governance for education systems, promoted by the OEEC and the OECD, is to be found in military research and was "forged primarily in and catalyzed by the United States". She referred to the application of systems analysis to the field of education by the RAND Corporation in the late 1950s, which was sponsored by the Ford Foundation and led by Philip H. Coombs,[2] who later became involved with the OECD and wrote a book on applying systems analysis to education (Coombs 1968).[3]

Sputnik and Human Capital Theory

In 1958, the Office for Scientific and Technical Personnel (OSTP) was established in the OEEC (King 2006: 195), with the aim of increasing the supply of a scientifically and technically trained labor force. As in the case of the EPA, the initiative to create the OSTP came from the US, as a reaction to Sputnik (King 2006: 232; Papadopoulos 1994: 23). Within the OSTP was the Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel (CSTP), which was further institutionalized when the OEEC became the OECD in 1961 (Bürgi 2017a: 98–99). Half of the CSTP's budget came from the US Department of Defense, in support of the "new curriculum" movement for mathematical and scientific subjects (Bürgi 2016: 413–414; Papadopoulos 1994: 23). These activities were in line with initiatives undertaken in the US, with the 1958 National Defense Education Act promoting scientific and mathematical education (Spring 2015: 33). The US contributed $500,000 to the OSTP, which was to be matched by European countries. Furthermore, the US announced full cooperation, "inaugurating a new era of transatlantic co-operation" (Papadopoulos 1994: 24). When, in 1961, the OECD was founded, some programs of the EPA and OSTP were continued in the new Directorate of Scientific Affairs (King 2006: 235; Papadopoulos 1994: 17).

In 1960 a Study Group on the Economics of Education was set up in order to examine "the theoretical problems concerning the relationships between education and the economy" (Lyons 1964/1965: 13). The Study Group consisted of mostly European members, Seymour Harris, a Keynesian economist from Harvard University being the only American. The economic approach to education reflected by the Study Group was underpinned by human capital theory, which, with the OECD acting as a catalyst, came to Europe from the US, where economists such as Theodore Schultz (1963) and Gary Becker (1964) presented preliminary findings with regard to the rates of return of investment in education (Vaizey 1962: 40–41). In a seminal OECD study, Denison (1962; OECD 1964) postulated that the national income consisted of capital, labor and a "residual factor", which was attributed to investments in human beings, such as in education and health. European economists of education such as Friedrich Edding from Germany and John Vaizey from England, who worked as consultants for the OECD, developed similar approaches. John Vaizey liked to say he invented the discipline of "economics of education" (Murray 2012: 67). The Study Group had strong professional connections to the Ford Foundation; for example, John Vaizey had received Ford Foundation funding for an Economic Research Institute in Ireland and "continued to be a source of information and comment for the Ford Foundation on how the new institute was taking shape" (Murray 2009: 10; see also Murray 2012). The human capital approach paved the way for an economization of education and other spheres of life promoted by the OECD. This expansion of the economic sphere is strongly tied to the development of economics as a discipline. Fourcade (2010: 92) considered the "imperialist expansion of modern economics" as "largely an American development". Apart from the Ford Foundation and other philanthropic foundations, support from the US government increased rapidly "through the National Science Foundation's social sciences program and the systematic contractual use of economic research by military and civilian agencies" (Fourcade 2010: 67). Both of these forms of support reached their peak in the 1960s and 1970s, in the wake of the Sputnik shock.

The Mediterranean Regional Project

It speaks to the American influence that the OECD Conference on "Economic Growth and Investment in Education" was held in Washington in October 1961, chaired by Philip Coombs. The first OECD conference

to be held in the US, the Washington conference "stands out as a landmark in the OECD educational story" (Papadopoulos 1994: 39). In his opening address, Dean Rusk, US Secretary of State, expressed "great expectations about the possibilities of OECD" and promised support for the organization (Schmelzer 2016: 39–40). Ingvar Svennilson, Friedrich Edding and Lionel Elvin, three European economists involved with the Study Group on the Economics of Education, presented a report that provided the rationale for the expansion of the relationship between education and the economy (author's interview with Ron Gass; Papadopoulos 1994: 38). The report established the idea of education as an investment. However, it also reflected the European perspective, emphasizing education as part of government policy and addressing the concern about an elitist European higher education system as an obstacle to equality of opportunity (Spring 2015: 35–36). The Washington conference built on previous discussions held at the conference on "Economic Aspects of Educational Development in Europe", held in July 1960 at the Rockefeller Foundation conference center in Bellagio, Italy. The conference adopted the "Bellagio doctrine", calling on governments "to adopt a human capital approach and expand their educational systems to boost growth" (Schmelzer 2016: 205). The Washington conference "spread [the] worldview of the 'Bellagio doctrine'" (Schmelzer 2016: 205–206) and advanced some projects that had been discussed at the Bellagio conference and within the OEEC, in particular the Mediterranean Regional Project (MRP), an operational educational planning project carried out by the OECD in its poorer European member states, and the Educational Investment and Planning Programme (EIP), which was concerned with educational planning and growth studies in more advanced OECD member countries (Bürgi 2017a: 116–117; Lyons 1964/1965: 13). The bulk of the work of the Study Group of Economics was carried out following the Washington conference, which "ushered in a…revolution in policymaking" (Schmelzer 2016: 204).

Implemented in Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and Yugoslavia between 1962 and 1965, the Mediterranean Regional Project (MRP) was guided by the belief that investment in education is relevant to economic development and "investments in 'human resources' are no less important than the formation of physical capital" (OECD 1961a: 1–2). Williams (1987: 335) described the MRP as the "quintessence of educational planning in the 1960s" and "a straightforward manpower planning model based upon an input-output view of the economy". The aim of the project

was to assess national needs for education, in particular for technical and scientific personnel, in the OECD's "under-developed" (Williams 1987: 3) member states. Future needs for enrollment and manpower requirements for certain qualifications were calculated in light of estimated population growth and projections of the gross national product (Lyons 1964/1965: 15). On the basis of these calculations and projections, planning frameworks for social and economic development were drawn up until the year 1975 "in the light of the major imperative of economic growth" (Lyons 1964/1965: 12), giving an overview of numbers of students, graduates, teachers and investments in buildings and infrastructure. National teams were put in place, composed of "economists, statisticians and educational experts" (Lyons 1964/1965: 13). The project was jointly financed by the country governments and the OECD. It was strongly supported by "US specialists in human resource development, seconded by their universities" (Papadopoulos 1994: 45), such as Frederick H. Harbison of Princeton University, who was involved in the development of the project as a consultant (OECD 1961a: 2). Apart from being an experiment in manpower planning, the MRP also "provided a training ground for about 100 young economists and social scientists" (Williams 1987: 336), given that "the number of Western economists competent to undertake assessments of human resources needs and priorities for educational investment is pathetically small" (OECD 1961a: 4). In 1961 the OECD put in place a fellowship and training program to train experts from member countries in "education planning from the economic standpoint" (Lyons 1964/1965: 14). Twenty fellowships were awarded; the fellows worked with the national teams and underwent an intense four-week training program. As Tröhler (2013: 70) pointed out, the speakers at this program were predominantly British and American, one of them being Herbert Parnes from the University of Ohio, who had researched on the labor market and the effect of economic change on occupational structures (Parnes 2001: 111). Parnes was also contracted by the OECD to develop the methodology for the MRP. Interest was high, and in the second phase of the project, with funding from the Ford Foundation, the OECD subsequently carried out studies transferring this methodology to Argentina and Peru and held seminars on different continents (Williams 1987: 336). The support for the expansion of the MRP to Latin America was in line with the Foundation's active investment in the social sciences in Latin America; 25% of all funding in the region between 1960 and 1965 was devoted to the social sciences (Parmar 2012: 187).

The OECD's early ideas and initiatives in education reflected a belief in social engineering, which was strongly influenced, supported and funded by the American scientific community, foundations, and the US government. As Ellwood (1997: 100) explained, "America was at the height of its power in the twentieth century, economically, politically and ideologically", and the Marshall Plan was like a "psychological blood transfusion" in an exhausted and demoralized Europe. Numerous ideas and approaches came to Europe in the wake of the Marshall Plan, and many were included in the ambit of the OECD. This development was not universally welcomed, but also spawned some resistance, as I will show in the next section.

THE ECONOMICS OF EDUCATION: CONSENSUS AND CONTROVERSY

"The New Alliance Between Education and Economics"

The economics of education approach was welcomed by educationists across disciplines and, to some extent, across the political spectrum. Both progressive and conservative forces believed that the connection between the economy and education would lead to societal improvements. As Louis Emmerij said, "there were people from the left, the centre and the right who could agree on the economics of education or some aspect of it… The difference is less…political, than it is substantive. People believe in a certain methodology, in a certain approach" (author's interview with Louis Emmerij). However, there were two "streams" within the economics of education approach. One was a more sociological orientation, represented by OECD pioneer Ron Gass and A. H. Halsey, the British sociologist of education. The other was the more technocratic manpower approach of the Mediterranean Regional Project. Halsey is a good example of a "leftist" who embraced the economics of education. Coming from a working-class background, Halsey was interested in "the modern interrelationship of economy, society and education…under conditions of advanced industrialism" (Floud and Halsey 1961: 1), in particular in expanding educational opportunity across social classes, an issue that was discussed at the OEEC's 1961 "Ability and Educational Opportunity" conference, at which Halsey served as rapporteur (Smith and Smith 2006). Halsey framed the new collaboration between the educators and the economists in a positive light: "The new alliance between education and

economics holds out the promise of a richer life for millions…The challenge to governments and their economic and educational advisers to pursue this promise is a noble one" (OECD 1961, cited in Rubenson 2015: 148). Similarly, Lionel Elvin, in his report on the 1961 Washington conference, stated that "an alliance between economists and educationists in [developing countries] (instead of something like a traditional opposition) can be of the greatest utility to them" (Elvin 1961: 485).

In the early years of human capital theory, the concept was put at the service of the push to expand public education in order to achieve greater equality of opportunity, a principle that made sense from a human rights as well as from an economic perspective (OECD 1961b: 9). Given booming industries and the expansion of middle-class jobs, there was a need to tap the intellectual potential of parts of the population that had traditionally been excluded from educational opportunities. In the early years of educational planning, many commentators argued that the human capital perspective adopted by economists and the humanistic perspective of educators were compatible. Rubenson (2015: 183) has written that

> [the colonization of the educational agenda by economic issues] was all but absent at the launch of the OECD's human capital program in the early 1960s. At that time, few social science scholars perceived any conflicts between economic efficiency, and social and economic equality.

As Ron Gass put it, "the economic analysis said: 'It is okay, we can expand our educational systems to meet social goals because economically it is an investment'". Gass saw it as a "sort of a policy trick to get a discussion going between the educators…and the economists" (author's interview with Ron Gass). Klaus Hüfner, who was instrumental in making human capital theory known in Germany (Hüfner 1970), mentioned how politicians initially embraced human capital as a welcome side effect to the rights-based argument for the expansion of education: "Great, not only can we realize the right of people to education, but on top of that it also brings an economic return". These two arguments complemented each other, like "two sides of the same coin" (cited in Elfert 2018: 92).

Ideological Struggles

However, the delegates of the "Ability and Educational Opportunity" conference convened by the OEEC in 1961 were well aware of the risk that the economic perspective might get the upper hand: "Ultimately we

must be prepared to recognize that an educational system which was closely and completely geared to supplying manpower for the productive organization of society would, at the same time, be an agency of dehumanization" (OECD 1961b: 20). One of the participants of the conference, the German sociologist Ralf Dahrendorf, insisted that "the arrangements of society for the production of skill and wealth must, in the last analysis, take their place as means to the end of an enriched life for the individual citizen" (OECD 1961b: 20). Philip Coombs addresses the "potential conflict between education's obligation to promote the growth and freedom of the individual for its own sake and the necessity to serve the growth and security of society as a whole" (cited in Hamre et al. 2018: 254). Herbert Parnes wrote that

> some persons have such a profound feeling that the 'true' purpose of education is to contribute to an individual's personal development that they regard as almost immoral an approach to educational planning that is essentially economic in its orientation and which seems to use society's needs for a 'human capital' as basic criterion. (Parnes 1962: 73–74, cited in Tröhler 2013: 68)

Different ideological orientations also played out between the OECD and other international organizations active in the field of education, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Education (UNESCO). Traditionally, UNESCO attracted more philosophers and educators, while the OECD had many economists among its staff. Clarence Beeby, Assistant-Director General of UNESCO from 1948 to 1949, who later worked closely with Philip Coombs (1992), devoted one chapter of his book *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries* to the topic of "Economist and Educator", two professions which, in his view, have "shared neither basic assumptions nor immediate aims, neither their vocabularies, nor…their techniques" (Beeby 1966: 18). Educators did not voluntarily surrender the field of education to the economists. Emmerij remembered that "the UNESCO people disagreed….with economics" (author's interview with Louis Emmerij). On the one hand, to convince governments to invest in education, UNESCO officials also used the economic argument "that education is a basic component of economic development" (Sewell 1975: 230, citing UNESCO's Director-General René Maheu in 1960). On the other hand, they frequently launched stinging critiques of the economists. In 1970, at a session of UNESCO's Executive Board, René Maheu, a philosopher by training, complained:

> So, how can we accept that the programs established by the economists, which don't go beyond a general horizon of four to five years, are considered *a priori* imperatives, which need to be followed by Ministers of Education, educators, parents, children, students, as if they were given by divine providence. (UNESCO 1970a, cited in Elfert 2018: 100)

According to Sewell (1975: 232), it was the development aspect of education that UNESCO prioritized: "Lionization *à la* UNESCO awaited any scholars producing theories and findings that showed how education yields development". However, UNESCO staff, inspired by a more humanistic approach to education, disliked the economists' disregard for the "human factor"; "Economists were conservative, in the view of certain UNESCO staff members, and to such observers their habitual writings suggested that man was an afterthought" (Sewell 1975: 231).

Many of those who were involved in economics of education in the 1960s refer to the conflict between the economists and the educationists. These include Ron Gass (1967: 141), who wrote about "the vital controversy" on "the vital question…whether [educational] requirements should be formulated on the basis of the manpower requirements of the economy, or on the basis of the demand of individuals for education (so-called 'social demand')". Also, Parnes (1967: 153) referred to the "numerous discussions of the merits of the so-called 'manpower approach' versus the 'social objectives' or 'cultural' approach to educational planning". He emphasized that the planning approach must not overlook "the other social ends to which education is a means…: the creation of equality of opportunity, the development of an enlightened citizenry, the contribution to individual self-fulfillment, the creation of the potential for 'the good life'" (Parnes 1967: 153).

Economists, for their part, could be quite condescending toward the educators. John Vaizey is an example of an economist involved with the OECD who was interested in measuring returns on investment in education, driven by a strong belief in productivity (Vaizey 1962). Vaizey was a member of the Study Group on the Economics of Education and wrote policy reports on behalf of the OECD for the 1961 Washington conference. Vaizey (1966: 534), referring to Clarence Beeby, who had trained in psychology, stated that "[t]he Educator, laden in these volumes with spiritual wisdom, good counsel, etc. is a phoney. He is a Nobody bringing Nothing: an ex-psychologist who got out when the going was good". Vaizey was quite angry about "the kind of dialogue that Mr. Beeby

tediously perpetrates between the Economist (ogre) and the Educator (Florence Nightingale on the make)" (Vaizey 1966: 533). He emphasized that economists were not a homogenous group: "I was reared at Cambridge (England) in a veritable bloodbath. I cannot think of a single proposition in economic thought or policy that is not in dispute" (Vaizey 1966: 533).

French-American Tensions

The controversy surrounding the economics of education was, to some extent, also based on a European-American tension. Fourcade (2010: 92) argued that "the European mainstream has been less eager to apply economic methodology to such a large variety of objects". In France, which has always been susceptible to a "widespread economophobia" ("économophobie généralisée") (Ruyer 1969, cited in Lepage 1978: 9), economics of education had a much harder time gaining acceptance. According to Rosa and Aftalion (1977: 1), "the image of the economist, especially in France, has become at best that of a narrow technician who does not understand the real problems of society, and at worst that of a Molière charlatan without scruples" (my translation). As Tony Judt (1986: 182) pointed out, "French intellectuals in general had little interest in the study of economics—as an independent discipline it had no recognised existence before the early 1950s". In a memo about a proposed grant to the Maison des Sciences Sociales in Paris, Ford Foundation officer Kermit Gordon called for "the strengthening of [French economics'] position as an autonomous discipline in the French educational system…, the lowering of the barriers which are responsible for the parochialism of French economics, and the encouragement of an empirical orientation in research" (Gordon 1956b). However, the American influence was seen with suspicion in France. Fourcade (2010: 234) wrote about the "fears that an Anglo-Saxon Trojan Horse filled with US-trained or US-influenced personalities is seeking to smuggle neoliberalism into France". This is in line with the waves of French public protest against American economic and cultural imperialism following the Blum-Byrnes Accords of May 1946 that granted reduction of French debt and American reconstruction loans on condition that France open her markets to US cultural products, in particular American movies (Kuisel 1993: 19). The French-American relationship was strained throughout the 1960s under the presidency of General Charles de Gaulle. This strain was exemplified by de Gaulle's attacks on the international monetary system, the dollar, and NATO, and culminated in France's with-

drawal from NATO in 1966, just as the Vietnam war escalated (Martin 2013: 102). Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber's book *Le défi américain* ("The American Challenge"), which was published in 1967 and became one of the best-selling books of the 1960s in France, voiced the anxiety of the French people over American economic hegemony (Kuisel 1993: 154). French-American tensions were so high that in 1970 the Ford Foundation sponsored a meeting on French-American relations, which was organized by Columbia University and held at the Rockefeller Foundation's Villa Serbelloni in Italy. Eighteen French and American journalists "discussed views of the other's country, domestic issues with implications for relations between the two countries, French and American policy in Vietnam and the Middle East, and French and American policy vis-à-vis Western Europe and the Communist world" (Jacqz 1970). Interesting in this regard is the comment by James Webb Young, who worked as an advertising expert in the early years of the Ford Foundation, who argued "that European capitalism was different from our 'revolutionary capitalism' and that we must make a frontal attack on Communism and show the advantages of the American system" (cited in Sutton 1987: 89). However, as Ford Foundation officer Frank Bowles posited, "direct support for fact finding, training, and innovation can be channeled into European education via existing agencies and organizations without introducing problems of American interference or intellectual imperialism" (Bowles 1967).

The Ford Foundation was concerned about "the problem of anti-Americanism" among Western Europe's intellectuals (Berghahn 2001: 151), which was one of the factors explaining the expansion of the Foundation's programs to Europe. On the other hand, there were many European, including French, intellectuals who embraced the American liberal worldview. France was a major beneficiary of American philanthropy in the late 1950s and the Ford Foundation funded initiatives such as the Institute of European Sociology launched by Raymond Aron, who "embodied the transatlantic cultural connection that [the Foundation] hoped to promote both against the Soviet bloc and against the Sartrians in France" (Berghahn 2001: 207–208). Given that France has a history of educational planning (Malan 1974), there were several French economists and educational planners in France who were available to join the activities of the OECD, such as Michel Debeauvais and Raymond Poignant.

Concluding Discussion: What Can We Learn from the Rise of the "Economics of Education"?

How did the story of the economics of education continue at the OECD? The late 1960s, with its climate of social unrest and civil society movements, brought more skepticism, and the OECD became less optimistic. The future seemed less malleable, and at the end of the 1960s, a period of self-doubt set in at the OECD, which had to deal with signals of an oversupply of graduates which called into question the ability to "link manpower forecasts and the output of educational graduates" (Rubenson 2015: 84–85). Educationists also came to realize that not much had been achieved in terms of reducing educational inequalities (Rubenson 2006). Schmelzer (2012) called this the "crisis before the crisis", referring to the oil and economic crisis that struck in the 1970s. Between 1968 and 1972, the OECD was engaged in a debate on "problems of modern society" (Schmelzer 2012: 1000) about the feasibility of the economic growth paradigm. Shifting its focus to innovation, the OECD set up its Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) in 1967, with Ron Gass as its director and A. H. Halsey as the first chair of the Governing Board. After the economists, sociologists represented the second-largest group at the conference which preceded the foundation of CERI (Bürgi 2017b: 297–298). In the 1970s, CERI, influenced by Sweden, engaged with the concept of recurrent education, which derived from the concern about equality of opportunity. Recurrent education was driven by the need to tap into the unused potential of the older generations and align higher education programs with the demands of the labor market (Rubenson 1994: 249). Louis Emmerij considered recurrent education one of the greatest ideas of his time, in contrast to the manpower approach: "So, for me, the lesson has been 'no' to continuing the manpower approach, 'no' to continuing this rate of return approach. Change the system, change the education system and make it more flexible. And that is recurrent education" (author's interview with Louis Emmerij). However, recurrent education "died a quiet death in the OECD", as it required "changing the system" (author's interview with Louis Emmerij). With the rise of neoliberalism, the OECD became more focused on "statistics on 'output'" (Eide 1990: 34) and results-oriented policies. The OECD's 1989 influential report *Education and the Economy in a Changing Society* marked a renewed and reinforced focus on the economy, in that "education was no longer promoted as a common good but as an instrument in global competition" (Rubenson 2008: 253).

In this context, the OECD became very active in developing education indicators, which have been applied in PISA and the other large-scale assessment surveys that have cemented the OECD's position as a major global policy-shaper. Once again, this project was driven by American interests and funding (Lundgren 2011: 25). As Ron Gass put it, "in the debate about education today, in the OECD context, with PISA having become the dominant piece of education…it was really in a sense a consequence of the American neo-conservatism movement: 'what works?'" (author's interview with Ron Gass; see also Auld and Morris 2016). Lundgren (2011: 28) argues that "PISA got its political meaning" in the context of the "zeitgeist [of] control and surveillance".

The early economists and sociologists of education rallied around the OECD because it offered them a forum in which they could collaborate with like-minded people in an international atmosphere. The OECD opened up a space for scientists, sociologists and economists to collaborate on innovative policy ideas (author's interview with Ron Gass). Emmerij emphasized that many young people worked at the OECD: "We had half the Education Division with young people…it was glorious, we still believed in something" (author's interview with Louis Emmerij). Bürgi (2017b: 299) quotes Halsey who wrote about the "buccaneering atmosphere" in the OECD. However, these young social scientists were more interested in the OECD as "a place to deal with the internal contradictions of liberal capitalism" (Leimgruber and Schmelzer 2017: 43) than in the role the OECD played in the promotion of American hegemony and the diffusion of neoliberal ideas across the world. The OEEC and later the OECD served as useful forums for the construction of the postwar Western economy under the control of the US. The push for expanding the productivity approach to Europe through the Marshall Plan was to "keep the countries of Europe willing and effective partners in the free world" (Boel 2003: 9; see also Bürgi 2017a: 60). According to Charles Maier (1977: 629), "the whole thrust of Washington's effort in the…members of the OEEC—later the OECD—was to ensure the primacy of economics over politics, to de-ideologize issues of political economy into questions of output and efficiency".

From today's vantage point, we cannot but wonder why these progressive young people allowed themselves to be complicit, albeit inadvertently, in the economistic grip that took hold of education, and why they failed to recognize that the hegemony of the economic and the human capital approach would lead to dehumanization. Michel Foucault (2004: 224), in

his lectures at the Collège de France, explained how the human capital perspective turns workers into an integral element of the production process; he argued that human capital reduced the human being to a "machine". Some were undoubtedly concerned, as demonstrated by the remark about the educational system becoming "an agency of dehumanization" at the "Ability and Educational Opportunity" Conference (OECD 1961b: 20), but they believed that the economic perspective would lead to greater participation and educational equality, higher wages and ultimately a fairer society. As Field stated in his memorial address for John Vaizey, "his political goal was to maximize human happiness" (in Vaizey 1986: 160). Later in his life, Vaizey reflected on how the meaning of economic growth had changed: "To say that you are in favour of growth is to sound terrible, as though you want the planet to wallow in a tide of plastic throw-away objects. But economic growth as we conceived it was once rather a noble ideal" (Vaizey 1986: 136). Situated in the postwar period of the social-democratic Keynesian welfare state, society was much more optimistic about its ability to contain the "revolutionary capitalism" that James Webb Young talked about. The historical analysis undertaken by myself and others (such as Bürgi 2016, 2017a, b; Lundgren 2011; Resnik 2006) shows that the economics of education approach became so powerful, because it was legitimized not only by the financial and symbolic power of American institutions, but also by universities, where it was endowed with the legitimacy of a scientific discipline, and by international organizations such as the OECD. Resnik (2006) has emphasized the role of international organizations after World War II in producing and diffusing what she called the "'education-economic growth' black box" as the new "world education culture". This new culture led to an "extension of economic analysis into a previously unexplored domain…giving a strictly economic interpretation of a whole domain previously thought to be non-economic" (Foucault 2004: 219).

One of the larger lessons of the history of the rise of the economics of education in the OECD pertains to our capacity to learn from history. While one of the consultants involved in the OECD's Mediterranean Regional Project (MRP), Frederick Harbison, characterized the program as "of the most critical importance to the nations of the modern world" (OECD 1961a: 9), Emmerij, looking back at his long career in international development, including his years with the MRP, characterized the manpower approach employed in the program as "close to irresponsible" (author's interview with Louis Emmerij). Elsewhere, he wondered about

the "optimism beyond the bounds of empirical responsibility" (Emmerij 2000: 129–130) at the time. PISA is, to some extent, a continuation of the economics of education approach, building on the remnants of the Cold War and rooted in the age of American power. As Tröhler (2010: 10) argued, "what looks normal through the lenses of PISA only appears to us to be normal because the Cold War educational policy is the very ground and origin of PISA". Fifty years from now, how will historians of education look back at the OECD's PISA study and its relevance for the advancement of societies?[4] The history of the early years of the OECD and the "economics of education" approach teaches us to be mindful that ideas are situated in a particular historical context and that what is presented to us as "of the most critical importance" may not stand the test of time.

NOTES

1. Klaus Hüfner, Professor Emeritus, Freie Universität Berlin, worked at the OECD/CERI in the early 1970s, has served on many UNESCO committees and boards and has written several books about UNESCO and the United Nations system. Ron Gass joined the OEEC in 1958 and worked for the OECD until his retirement in 1989. He was the first director of the OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI). Louis Emmerij was hired by Ron Gass to work on the Mediterranean Regional Project in the early 1960s. In 1986, he was appointed president of the OECD's Development Centre. Between 1971 and 1976, he headed the World Employment Programme at the ILO.

2. Philip H. Coombs held the position of Director of Research of the Fund for the Advancement of Education and Program Director of the Education Division at the Ford Foundation from 1952 to 1961, when he was appointed to the newly created position of Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs in the administration of President John F. Kennedy, from which he resigned in 1962. In 1963, he became the first director of the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) in Paris.

3. Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara used an output-oriented management tool designed by the RAND Corporation in the Vietnam War. Later, McNamara brought the RAND-based approach to decision-making based on quantification and output to the World Bank, where it still remains in place to this day (Natsios 2010: 15–16).

4. For a discussion of the challenge that PISA constitutes to democracy, see Chap. 7 in this volume.

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The Birth of the OECD's Education Policy Area

Vera G. Centeno

Education at the Château de la Muette: From a Peripheral to a Policy Issue

In 1961 the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) replaced the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC), which had been established to coordinate the European Recovery Plan under the Marshall Plan for the reconstruction of Europe (Bürgi, this volume). In Paris, at the headquarters of the OECD, the Château de la Muette, the organization was envisaged as the economic counterpart of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Education was initially a peripheral issue area within OECD. It was seen as an issue at the interface of scientific, technological, and economic development. Therefore, it was placed under the authority of the Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel (CSTP), which in turn was located within the Directorate for Scientific Affairs. This understanding of education as 'science education' probably explains why activities in education were not fully appreciated at the Château de la Muette (Eide 1990).

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Fig. 4.1 CERI Seminar at the Chateau de la Breviere, "Crisis in Higher Education—The Students' Role in the Academic Community" (09–13/04/1969) (copyright: ©OECD)

Papadopoulos (1994: 12), in his narrative reflections on the OECD and its own work in education, put it very well: 'integrating education into the central objectives and mainstream activities of the Organisation was, in fact, never an easy task'.

In 1964, only three years after the creation of the OECD, these difficulties were already visible when the Council instituted the Review of the Operational Activities of the Organisation. The main goal of the review was to reduce the growing costs of operational activities that were formerly financed by the United States (US), but which had become a burden on the day-to-day budget of the OECD (Papadopoulos 1994). The Council imposed drastic changes on the work of the CSTP, within which the few educational activities were being developed (Elfert this volume).

Despite these adversities, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) began its operations in 1968. This sui generis body, which challenged the existing organizational architecture, was created only a few years after the aforementioned drastic cuts were made. CERI's work focused on exploring new educational issues. Its Governing Board (GB-CERI) reported to the Secretary-General, rather than to the CSTP

or any other policy committee on which member countries were represented. In the aftermath of CERI's creation, an education policy committee (EDC) was instituted. It was the birth of the OECD's education policy area.

In the years that followed these changes, the OECD became the 'central forum for educational policy co-ordination among advanced capitalist countries' and 'the main multilateral provider of cross-national educational statistics and research in the North' (Mundy 1998: 448). Notwithstanding the lack of an official mandate for education, the OECD became the most central factor in the worldwide diffusion of educational norms (Jakobi 2009), and a key global player, whose role in educational global governance deserves close attention (e.g. Henry et al. 2001; Kallo 2006; Mundy 2007; Mahon and McBride 2008; Martens and Jakobi 2010; Sellar and Lingard 2013; Addey 2017).

How did education move from a peripheral position in the OECD to become the focus of a specialized autonomous center and a policy committee? How did the OECD emerge so quickly as a policy actor in education? In answering these questions, first, this chapter posits that the OECD was envisaged from the onset as a global organization—to use today's vernacular—and thus as a policy actor. As Ougaard (2010: 36) asserts: 'a global perspective has been inherent in the organization's mandate right from its creation'. Thus, the dimension of actor has been constitutive of the OECD since the onset. In other words, the OECD could soon and quickly emerge as a global policy actor in education because the organization's institutional nature enabled it to do so.

Second, the chapter argues that the creation of CERI triggered a major dynamic process within the OECD, through which a fundamental policy change occurred within the organization: the OECD *officially* started to work on issues of education policy. The study draws inspiration from Peter Hall's (1993) theory of policy changes, to explain how the change triggered by CERI's creation was different from other changes that subsequently occurred within the OECD's education sector. While the latter were undoubtedly important, they followed the OECD's internal pattern of policy in matters of education. Yet, the initial change triggered by the creation of CERI completely changed OECD's internal policy in matters of education, meaning that the OECD became endowed with authority in education; organizational agency in the field of education was established.

This chapter proceeds by introducing the conceptual and empirical framework of the study. It then provides a brief historical excursion into

what differentiates the OECD from its predecessor, the OEEC (1948–1961). This excursion is helpful to understand how the OECD was envisioned from its inception as a global intergovernmental organization (IGO), and so as a policy actor. It continues by describing the official establishment of education as a policy area within the OECD. It analyzes the tensions against which that change took shape, the main actors behind it, their concerns and strategies, and shifts in the locus of organizational authority. It closes by summing up the main ideas and exploring the implications of this contribution to present understandings about the OECD's historical development and role in education.

Exploring Policy Changes Within the OECD Through the Lenses of Internal Documents

As Jakobi (2009) has convincingly showed, the study of global politics might be effectively conceptualized with tools applied in domestic politics. This study draws inspiration from Hall's work on policy changes (1993) to demonstrate that the creation of CERI triggered fundamental changes within the OECD, which resulted in its official involvement in education policy. According to Hall, three orders of change can be distinguished analytically. First-order or incremental changes are the most common and represent small adjustments, which preserve the instruments and goals of the policy. Second-order changes are those that change the instruments but the goals behind the policy remain the same. These two types of change preserve continuity in the policy pattern, whereas third-order changes represent discontinuity and are to be understood as radical or fundamental changes.

In systematizing the elements characteristic of processes that culminate into third-order changes, as presented by Hall (1993), four features appear as fundamental for this study. First, a change in paradigm might either induce or be provoked by organizational changes, as ideas and organizations are more often than not designed to reflect each other. Second, there is a disjunctive process that is triggered by events that deviate from the normal or expected routine. Third, the process progressively involves more or other actors and mechanisms of influence, implying a shift in the locus of authority. Fourth, therefore, the process is channeled by tensions and contestation; policy changes as a result of actors' interactions, rather than of any single-minded action. These four features are clearly discernible

in the process triggered by the creation of CERI, which culminated in the establishment of education as an official policy area within the OECD, as seen by the setting of the EDC.

Besides this book, only a few analytical efforts (e.g. Morgan 2009; Bürgi 2017; Centeno 2017; Ydesen and Grek 2019) have been made to understand the emergence and development of educational activities within the OECD itself by analyzing and making a systematic use of primary sources, such as internal documents. This chapter adds to this effort by zooming into the organizational, conceptual, and policy changes behind the birth of the OECD's education policy area, and by exploring a particular set of sources that have been little studied thus far.

The main corpus for analysis comprises unpublished internal OECD documents, which were written or considered within the working scope of the CSTP, the EDC, and the GB-CERI from ca. 1961 to 1971. The population of documents is divided into four groups (Centeno 2017; the original OECD codes are kept for the sake of accuracy; full references are provided at the end of the chapter): meeting minutes, programmatic and synthesis documents, working documents, and associated documents (i.e. documents that were produced by other OECD bodies but yet had influence on the educational activities). Given their richness and representation, the first two subpopulations were the empirical anchors of this study. The design of the qualitative content analysis of the documents (Krippendorff 2013) was inspired by research and debates on education policy sociology (Ball 1990), as carefully detailed elsewhere (Centeno 2017).

The OECD: A Global Intergovernmental Organization

In 1961, the OECD was created to advance its members' economic and social structures, upholding the tasks of its predecessor, the OEEC. However, its scope of action was radically different. The OECD was envisaged to 'contribute to the development of *world* economy' and 'to the expansion of *world* trade'; therefore, its activities aimed to 'contribute to sound economic expansion in Member *as well as non-member countries*' (OECD Convention, Article 1, emphasis added). This new scope reflected two important modifications.

First, the new scope reflected its enlarged membership, which started to include the United States and Canada and, soon, other non-European countries. In 2019, the OECD had 36 member countries that 'span the

globe' (OECD n.d.-a). If the OEEC could be described as a rather homogeneous organization, the same cannot be said about the OECD. The heterogeneity of its membership has been striking since the beginning. In 1961, the organization's membership comprised, for example, authoritarian (e.g. Portugal), socialist (Yugoslavia), and democratic countries. In 2019, the OECD included countries of disparate sizes and administrative organizations and different public policies, socioeconomic situations, and cultural views and values. Inevitably, members' positions are far from uniform, and clear consensuses are difficult to reach. For example, contested economic visions (Mundy 1998; Woodward 2009) and diverging perceptions of the organization's role in education (Martens and Wolf 2009; Centeno 2017) still prevail today as they did in the past.

Second, the new scope reflected a new international outlook. In contrast with the OEEC, the OECD's convention no longer defined the organization's activities according to either its geographical location or its membership; rather, the convention stressed the OECD's commitment to an encompassing global aim. Implicitly, the organization broadened its policy remit. As Ougaard (2010: 36) notes, together with an engagement in core fields, such as economic policy and financial issues, the OECD began 'early and thoroughly' to deal with issues with an 'inescapable global scope', such as environmental sustainability. The convention extended the scope of the OECD's activities and, consequently, of its networks. The OECD gradually started to cooperate with non-member countries and to work with other IGOs and civil society organizations (Woodward 2009; Ougaard 2010). Moreover, it promptly established the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), through which the OECD started to engage in world peacebuilding (Ydesen and Verschaeve 2019). Currently, the OECD's DAC is a 'critical player in the world economy' (Ydesen and Verschaeve 2019: 485). The OECD cooperates with five 'key partners' and has 'global relations' with countries in all regions of the world (OECD n.d.-b); in addition, it has centers in Berlin, Mexico, Tokyo, and Washington DC (OECD n.d.-c). The OECD has relations with several IGOs, including partnerships with the G7/8 and G20, and it interacts with diverse representatives of civil society (Woodward 2009; Ougaard 2010). Whereas the OEEC was a regional IGO, the OECD was designed to act globally from the onset.

The OECD's enlarged membership and new international outlook brought a higher degree of inner complexity to the organization. This entailed a major change. While the OEEC was equipped with strong legal

instruments, the OECD was not meant to issue binding decisions (Marcussen in Martens and Jakobi 2010: 21). Rather, the OECD had a 'direction-setting nature' (Ougaard 2010: 32). The organization still works mostly through agenda-setting and surveillance mechanisms (Weymann and Martens 2005; Mahon and McBride 2008; Krejsler, this volume): it generates peer pressure by coordinating events and meetings; it forms opinions by conducting and publishing studies and reports; and it exerts soft regulation by directing projects and programs. In the 1960s, the OECD already housed almost 100 committees and expert groups (Gottsleben 1968); in 2009, the OECD expanded its facilities to the outskirts of Paris (OECD 2010), since its headquarters and neighborhood facilities were already inadequate for the more than 250 working groups assisted by the 2500 staff members (OECD n.d.-d); in 2019, the numbers increased to more than 300 working groups and 3300 staff members (OECD n.d.-c). By the 1960s the OECD's rate of publication was already remarkable (Gottsleben 1968), at the turn of the century its 'prolific research output' was well known (Henry et al. 2001: 3), and currently the organization is 'one of the world's largest publishers' (Martens and Jakobi 2010: 5).

The OECD's broadened scope and new policy mechanisms show that the organization was envisioned as a global IGO from the onset. The organization was designed to be a global policy actor. That is why it was able to redefine itself after the end of the Cold War and progressively increase its reach and impact. A parallel could easily be drawn between the transformations of the early 1960s and those of the early 1990s. As much as the enhancement of the OECD's governance capacity was due to its response to the challenges of the end of the Cold War and concomitant global economic developments (Sellar and Lingard 2014), the OEEC's transformation into a global organization seems to have resulted from its response to the challenges of the expansion and escalation of the Cold War (Mundy 1998) and economic cooperation (Wolfe 2008). Furthermore, in the early 1990s, the OECD progressively broadened its scope of action by enlarging its membership and renewing its international outlook (redefining its policy remit, partnerships, and networks; Woodward 2009) as it improved its policy mechanisms (e.g. its comparative international data; Martens and Jakobi 2010). In the early 1960s, as explained before, the same took place when the OEEC became the OECD, that is, the latter had a broadened scope—enlarged membership and new international outlook—and soft instead of binding policy mechanisms.

The OECD's agency is the result of how the organization was forged as a global organization in 1961. The OECD has been a policy actor since its inception. Undeniably, this dimension became preponderant at the turn of the century; however, as the next section will show, from the inside, it has been important from the onset.

The Official Establishment of Education as a Policy Area Within the OECD

CERI: Organizational Changes Reflect a New Approach to Education Work

The first step in the process of policy change was the creation of CERI. A new body, with a different organizational profile, was designed to reflect new ideas about the OECD's educational activities. The OECD Council established CERI in 1967 (C(67)63). Michael Harris, who was responsible for the Review of the Operational Activities of the Organisation in 1964, was behind its creation. According to Papadopoulos (1994), Harris admired the work of the CSTP, through which member countries officially advised the OECD Secretariat studies on technological developments and their effects on manpower and educational planning. However, for budgetary reasons, its own review imposed a limited framework on the CSTP, which was restricted to a quantitative approach to education planning. Nonetheless, Harris encouraged the Secretariat to complement that approach with a qualitative view and to outline a new program of work. CERI emerged from this perceived need for qualitative accounts and, which was equally important, was set up on the basis of a two-year grant, which Harris obtained from the Ford Foundation.

The impression conveyed in both the Papadopoulos (1994) account and the internal documents is that this endeavor was the opportunity for which the Secretariat was waiting to secure the continuation of the OECD's educational activities and to put forward a concrete educational program. In fact, the future of the CSTP and consequently of education within the OECD remained rather uncertain. In the 1960s, the Council decisions on the CSTP mandate had been discouraging in terms of both formal and financial support. The Secretary-General unsuccessfully tried to adapt the CSTP mandate to its actual activities, which had progressively ceased to focus exclusively on the shortage of scientists and engineers and

had started to focus on more qualitative school-related subjects (e.g. curriculum development). Yet, member countries preferred to allow the work to evolve within the existing mandate (C(69)77). As a result, the CSTP's educational activities became more quantitative and descriptive. In terms of financial support, the Council steadily reduced the budget, which declined from 4,491,000 French francs in 1964 to 1,485,480 in 1969 (C(69)77).

The profile of CERI clearly marks an attempt to establish autonomy not only vis-à-vis the CSTP's fate, but also with respect to the member countries. Given the different stances of the member countries, it was difficult to agree upon educational policies. In addition, the CSTP did not yet see the OECD as place for the formulation of education policies, which were considered to be a domestic issue. Conversely, the Secretariat clearly sought to develop educational activities that could have a normative impact on policy. CERI embodied the possibility of designing an autonomous body with broader room for action.

After intense and difficult negotiations between the Ford Foundation and the OECD Council (Centeno 2017), CERI was accorded a special status. Two aspects that differentiate it from the existing bodies were particularly relevant: the program and the composition of the GB-CERI. The CERI program would be prepared by the Secretariat, considered by the GB-CERI, and only if feasible discussed with the CSTP, the official policy committee working on educational issues (C(67)63). The CERI and the CSTP programs were, therefore, totally separate from each other, and cooperation remained optional. Besides, the GB-CERI would be constituted of distinguished personalities in the field of education. These two aspects intended to safeguard the CERI's *raison d'être*—self-directed qualitative research (CERI/GB(68)2).

With CERI the Secretariat changed the instruments used to produce educational knowledge within the OECD: from quantitative to more qualitative studies, from descriptive and comparative to more analytical studies, from general to operational studies. But, the aims of the OECD's educational activities *officially* remained the same: to forecast future needs, to study perceived problems, and to help countries to implement their educational policies.

Thus, the creation of CERI did not in itself mean a radical change of the OECD's internal policy on educational matters, as the goal of the OECD's education work remained to supply technical assistance to member countries.

However, by creating an ad hoc setting, the Secretariat introduced an organizational change that reflected new ideas about what the focus of the OECD's educational program was to be about. The new organizational architecture not only expanded the horizon of the OECD's education work, but also provided the place and the tools to turn new ideas into concrete activities. As the next sections explain, it was the beginning of a process that entailed a fundamental change within the OECD.

CERI and CSTP: New Internal Processes and the Disunion of Organizational Actors

Fundamental policy changes involve the occurrence of events that are seen as deviating from expected processes (Hall 1993). The discussions in the CSTP's meetings show how the creation of CERI was an event that deviated from the normal inner workings of the OECD. When the CSTP was formally informed of the creation of CERI, only a few months before it was set up, the CSTP immediately took the view that CERI's program should be developed in harmony with its own program (STP/M(67)2). Some delegates even noted that the CSTP had to be consulted before an independent body of this kind was set up in the organization, but it became clear that delegates' opinions would not be formally elicited (STP/M(67)2). Consequently, even though reluctant to endorse the creation of CERI, unsuccessfully attempting to influence its program of work at least, the CSTP formally welcomed its constitution (STP/M(67)3).

However, the CSTP realized that a program of research and innovation needed to consider policy aspects too, and education policy was a gray area within the OECD. The CSTP was merely entitled to estimate countries' progresses and needs, and not yet officially to formulate policies. Furthermore, the Council had successively suggested that the CSTP's scope of action should remain the same. Although up until then the CSTP had complied with the Council's demands, vis-à-vis the creation of the CERI, it suddenly expressed its interest in tackling education policy. The assignment of significant responsibilities to the CERI and what was perceived as its meddling in policy issues appear to have been the reasons for the swift repositioning of the CSTP, whose main concern was then the distinction and separation between research activities and policy-oriented activities (CERI/GB(68)3).

The creation of CERI triggered a disunion between the main organizational actors. The official national delegates seated round the CSTP table,

contrary to their counterparts on the Council, started to argue that the CSTP could and should deal with education policy. Contesting how the Secretariat set up the CERI, the CSTP maintained that it was the only body within the OECD with the authority to tackle education policy matters (CERI/GB(68)3 and STP/M(68)3, annex). The lack of communication and the duplication of work in the two years following CERI's creation were evident. Instead of bringing a closer union between organizational actors and a harmonization of programs, CERI triggered an internal disjunctive process.

The CSTP and the Secretariat: New Geometries of Power Reshape Influence Mechanisms

Issues of power and authority are normally central to process of fundamental policy change (Hall 1993). Different actors engage in a contest for power and authority over the changes at hand and activate different mechanisms through which they try to influence the outcome.

The process of change progressively altered the geometries of power within the OECD and in relation to the continuation of CERI and its integration in the organizational architecture. As soon as CERI was created, its continuation became a regular topic in the GB-CERI meetings and a main concern of the Secretariat. Although CERI had received an additional grant from the Shell N.V. Company, its future was still not secure, since the contributions of the Ford Foundation and the Shell Group combined did not cover costs of all activities. Furthermore, CERI also had difficulties liaising with the appropriate authorities in the member countries (CERI/GB/M(69)1). Therefore, the full and rapid implementation of CERI's program was yet to be accomplished, and its continuation beyond its experimental period of operation was uncertain.

The Secretariat's concerns regarding CERI's survival increased with the Council's decision to make a Review of the Work of the Organisation in the Field of Education in 1970, in which the continuation of both the CSTP and CERI was discussed in connection with each other. This unexpected turn of events prompted new internal dynamics that implied shifting the locus of authority from the Secretariat to the CSTP, and the development of mechanisms to influence the Council's decision.

On the one hand, the Secretariat realized that to maintain the education work in the form then being envisaged, it needed to 'secure a strong political support from education authorities in the member countries,

strong enough to have an influence on the OECD Council' (Eide 1990: 23). The Secretariat encouraged the CSTP to follow interpersonal communication channels in order to make their opinion known to their counterparts seated at Council's table (STP/M(70)1), and agreed on the need to strengthen the CSTP and its activities within the OECD (STP/M(70)2).

On the other hand, the CSTP openly used its own authoritative power to exert pressure on the Secretariat and the inner workings. Even though the CSTP approved the continuation of CERI, it was not convinced of the underlying organizational arrangements (STP/M(70)2). The CSTP clearly feared its own demise. Until then, the two options suggested to the Council by the Secretariat referred to a formula involving a twin structure (STP/M(70)2)—about which the CSTP was skeptical, fearing CERI's preponderance—and to the amalgamation of the two bodies (C(69)77). The CSTP strongly expressed its opposition to both options (STP/M(70)2) and advised the Secretariat to formulate another option to the Council, in which the GB-CERI would consist of government experts and would report to the CSTP.

The Council: Tensions and Contestation at the Peak of a Fundamental Policy Change

The process of fundamental policy change is normally not the linear consequence of actors' actions, but rather the outcome of interactions, which are embedded in tensions and contestation. In the OECD, decisions concerning the architecture of the organization needed to be made, or at least approved, by the Council. Although the Council must be understood as the organizational actor on which governing decision-making power lies, it must also be perceived as a locus of tensions and contestation. The countries, as represented by their ambassadors, usually have different interests and views on how the OECD should operate, and these are strongly manifested within the Council. Processes of policy change within the OECD culminate at the Council's table.

At the moment of the 1970 Review of the Work of the Organisation in the Field of Education, CSTP arguments clearly reverberated at the Council level. The Secretariat presented to the Council the option of constituting both a 'policy-making body' and a 'body which will have clearly-defined responsibility to bring the results into the policy committee' (C(70)111, 4). The Council was positive toward the transformation of the CSTP into an Education Committee (EDC) with a wider mandate.

Several member countries also approved the continuation of the CERI, as long as the member countries' influence was felt.

However, the US ambassador was not convinced about the continuation of CERI. Even if the US did not formally oppose it, the country would not contribute to its program (CE/M(70)22(prov.)). The US position generated contestation among the member countries, and the debate surrounding the continuation of CERI continued for several meetings. At the basis of the conflict were different views about the OECD's education work. Some countries, such as the US, emphasized the work of the EDC on education policy and considered the CERI budget unreasonable, while others considered both research and policy important and saw the CERI budget as mirroring it (CE/M(70)22(prov.)). In practical terms, some countries feared that the loss of US funding would jeopardize the work of CERI, and considered changing their position.

Final resolutions were passed only two months later, when the Secretariat argued that the OECD would probably lose independent funding if CERI would cease. The Council authorized the Secretariat to explore the possibilities of support from private institutions, and an agreement in principle to the continuation of CERI was based on the possibility of such financial arrangements, which would bring more resources to the OECD (CES/70.81).

It was against these struggles for organizational power, conflicts of interests, divergent views on organizational and financial priorities, as well as on the OECD's education work, that the Council approved the establishment of the Education Committee and the extension of CERI beyond its experimental phase. It was the making of a fundamental policy change within OECD, since the organization was endowed with new institutional capabilities, which allowed it to become a pivotal actor in education multilateralism and later in global educational governance.

Concluding Discussion: The CERI and the OECD's Official Involvement in Education Policy

The EDC replaced the CSTP in 1971. From 1971 onward, the GB-CERI was 'composed of one national expert in the field of competence of the CERI from each of the countries participating in the programme' (C(71)216, 1). The EDC became an explicit policy committee and the CERI a formal research and development body (STP/M(70)3). Education gained a renewed and secure organizational location and an acknowledged

political framework. Thereby, not only the OECD instruments in education and their settings were changed, but also the goals of the OECD's internal policy in matters of education drastically changed. The OECD's goals in education officially changed from assisting member countries on aspects of educational planning for scientific and economic development, to conduct research on educational issues identified by the organization as politically relevant, and to formulate policy problems and matching solutions, thereby proposing concrete education policies.

The process that led to the integration of CERI in the OECD's organizational architecture and the transformation of the CSTP into the EDC heralded thus a fundamental policy change within the OECD. In line with Hall's framework of policy changes (1993), the process whereby this fundamental change occurred displayed a particular set of features, which differentiate it from latter processes of change.

The process of change was initiated by a particular organizational change within the OECD: the creation of CERI. It was hence structured by organizational changes, which in turn were structured by a particular set of ideas about the new role that the OECD was to play on the educational scene. As Hall (1993) aptly remarked, organizational and ideational changes are normally designed to reflect and reinforce each other.

CERI's creation deviated from the expected inner working of the organization and gave rise to an internal disjunctive process. It provoked strong resistance from the CSTP, which felt threatened by the CERI's activities. In addition, the continuation of the CERI became entangled with the review of the CSTP's mandate, increasing the tension between the CSTP and the Secretariat, which was the organizational actor behind the creation and functioning of CERI.

However, the outcome of policy changes depends on actors' positional advantages within the organizational architecture, more than on actors' views, which in such processes are naturally controversial. CERI's difficulties liaising with domestic authorities and in self-funding its activities threatened its initial organizational integration. This compelled the Secretariat to rely on CSTP's organizational authority. Even if the Secretariat continued to provide both the advice given to the Council and the studies and facts on which that advice was based—acting from a privileged position—the CSTP became more active, and the locus of authority over organizational decision-making began to shift. The process of change altered the geometry of organizational power in relation to CERI's matters. The CSTP contested the eventual control of CERI over educational

policy and engaged in keeping organizational power and authority by activating several mechanisms to influence both the Secretariat and the Council. This shift in the locus of authority was an important component in the process of change. The CSTP's pressure was essential to the outcome, as it assured the establishment of a policy committee in addition to CERI.

The evolving process soon embraced other issues and actors. The Council discussions not only mirrored the existing debate between the CSTP and the Secretariat, but it also revealed the different stances of the member countries regarding the place of education in the OECD. Additionally, the Council introduced a new issue on which the final decision depended: the financial aspect of the OECD's educational activities. The establishment of an education policy area within the OECD was not the result of a single actor or group of actors working together toward a common goal; it was rather the outcome of articulations, divisions, and tensions, as characteristic of fundamental policy changes.

The OECD was officially allowed to look into issues of education *policy*. It was the birth of the OECD's education policy area. This was the main outcome of the process of change triggered by the creation of the CERI. The OECD became a legitimate actor endowed with authorized agency in education governance.

This understanding of the birth of the OECD's education policy area partially breaks from the common view of the OECD as an organization that was initially envisaged as an instrument for maintaining socioeconomic structures (Mundy 1998) and then ended up by strengthening its role in global governance through its soft mechanisms (Martens and Jakobi 2010). Indeed, in the 1980s, the OECD gained a new actor role on the international scene, once it met countries' interests in monitoring and assessment (Henry et al. 2001); in the 1990s, it strengthened that role because it was able to better diffuse its agendas through benchmarking practices (Martens and Jakobi 2010); and in the 2000s, new policy instruments such as PISA and its offspring (Sellar and Lingard 2014; Addey 2017; Lewis 2017) propelled the OECD to the fore of global governance in education.

However, as the aforementioned authors rightly document, these changes were triggered by broader developments, such as a new world order, growing demands for technical expertise and comparative data, and the coming together of plural interests around education. Conversely, new socioeconomic and political developments did not generate the change

triggered by CERI's creation. Furthermore, this early change simultaneously entailed changes in all three components of the OECD's internal policy on educational matters: the instruments settings, the instruments themselves, and the goals of the policy. While latter changes altered the instruments of the OECD's policy on educational matters (e.g. benchmarking), and even the instruments settings (e.g. PISA became a new organizational body), they corresponded to strategic action and (major) adjustments in the OECD's internal policy on educational matters (e.g. the International Educational Indicators). Even if these changes have significantly strengthened the OECD's role in education policy, and even the education sector within the OECD, they have only taken place because the OECD already had an education policy area.

The creation of the CERI has been the most crucial policy change in education matters within the OECD. On the one hand, the CERI set a successful organizational precedent for the setting of sui generis organizational bodies, such as PISA. On the other hand, it was within the CERI that the OECD started to assertively formulate policy proposals, in which both policy problems and solution were offered, and research studies were used to benchmark educational developments. Within the CERI, for the first time, educational views were turned into practical actions and policies, regardless of member countries' political commitment. Historical accounts show that, until the rise of PISA, the most widely disseminated and impactful OECD educational activities have stemmed mainly from the CERI (Centeno 2017).

Against the widespread role of PISA in educational governance, CERI and its activities have received little, if any, scholarly attention. However, this historical account shows how CERI has been crucial to the development of the OECD's preponderant role in education policy. It could be speculated that, as much as CERI's significance to the birth of the OECD's education policy area has until now gone unnoticed, the impact of CERI's activities on the OECD governance in education has probably been overlooked. Research into the work of CERI will surely be instructive to a further understanding of the OECD's educational agendas.

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The Impact of OECD Educational Initiatives and Programs in National Contexts

Australian Education Joins the OECD: Federalism, Regionalization, and the Role of Education in a Time of Transition

Frederik Forrai Ørskov

INTRODUCTION

As Australia—following a decade of reluctance—finally joined the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in 1971, expectations were generally low among officials in the Commonwealth government's Department of Education as to what benefits to expect (Carroll and Kellow 2012; Kellow and Carroll 2017). In the briefing material provided for the final accession talks, the department tentatively suggested that they amounted to little more than readier access to results of OECD projects—even if it also encouraged the negotiators to inquire into the prospects of getting "our own problems looked at" in the OECD and its suborganization, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) (NAA 1969: 4).

A seemingly greater concern during the run-up to the membership negotiations, however, was the autonomy of the Australian federal states in educa-

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Fig. 5.1 Tony Abbott, Australian Prime Minister, officially welcomes Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General, to the G20 Leaders' Summit in Brisbane, November 2014 (copyright: ©OECD)

tional matters. The Australian constitution left almost no room for federal involvement in educational policy; nonetheless, by the early 1970s, the Commonwealth's influence on state education had expanded markedly (White 1987). The 1970s, in turn, would see a significant increase in federal control over Australian education through the maneuvering of successive governments from both sides of the political aisle (Lingard and Lewis 2017). Yet, no formal power was transferred from the states to the Commonwealth administration (White 1987), and officials in the Department of Education did indeed regard the concern for state rights as the largest potential hindrance to Australian commitment to the OECD's educational efforts. The risk of the OECD conducting and publishing country reviews critical of Australian education was one headache in this regard. In the briefing material, the department's officials worried that if "a review of Australian education produced criticism of State policies or support for Commonwealth intervention in areas of present State responsibility, this could cause us difficulties in our relations with State Education Departments" (NAA 1969: 2). Other seeming reservations revolved around commitments, such as collecting educational statistics and information, that would demand support from state departments (NAA 1969: 4).

The accession negotiations, however, also clearly presented the Commonwealth Department of Education with an opportunity to get more involved in matters under state jurisdiction. "For Australian membership to be really effective in the education aspects of O.E.C.D. work," the briefing memorandum maintains, "we will need to have the co-operation of State Education Departments and to establish and maintain continuing liaison with them on these matters" (NAA 1969: 2). Did OECD membership, then, reinforce an already present trend of centralization in Australian educational federalism? It is the ambition of this chapter to engage that question while also, on a more general level, offer insights into the knowledge dynamics underpinning the impact of the OECD on Australian education policies—and the dynamics conditioning the limits of that impact. It seeks to do so through a study of archival sources such as meeting minutes, discussion papers, and correspondences related to the Australian Commonwealth Department of Education's OECD Advisory Committee (OAC) as well as a number of OECD programs with Australian participation in the mid- to late-1970s. Furthermore, the mid- to late-1970s was a time of transition in Australian educational policy-making. In the words of Lingard and Lewis (2017: 268), the Whitlam Labor Party Government (1972–75) had marked a "peak moment of post-war Keynesianism." However, as the decade wore on, the Keynesian consensus gave way for one rooted in neo-classical economics, also in education matters (Marginson 1997; Henry et al. 2001).

How the OECD, itself in a transition period and, as we shall see, yet far from unambiguous in its economistic approach to education, played into this process has not been studied in depth. The same goes for the development of the relationship between the federal states and the national government in the context of Australia's early OECD membership. In what follows, I argue that Australian interactions with the OECD in the field of education in the mid- to late-1970s pointed in two separate but not yet incompatible directions—one equity-oriented and the other more in line with the standardization and accountability regime typically identified with OECD's current policies—both of which favored a somewhat cautious shift of authority toward the national level in educational policy-making. In the process, the chapter highlights the importance of looking at movements between different spatial levels of analysis (Christensen and Ydesen 2015) when tracing the ability of international organizations to get their ideas and visions "out of the house" (Duedahl 2016).

Doing so, I argue, it is important to see the impact of international organizations as multidirectional interactive processes. That, in turn, makes it possible to see the rise of the economistic approach to education on a global scale as a multifaceted process in which the OECD has played a key role—but neither as a neutral facilitator nor as an unopposed hegemon. On the one hand, Julia Resnik (2006: 178) is certainly right in stressing the need to "analyze international organizations as agents, as institutions with structures and resources that have an intrinsic tendency […] to increase their power and resources." Similarly, recent scholarship has shown the large and far from value-free transnational influence of the OECD in contemporary education policies worldwide (e.g. Sellar and Lingard 2013, 2014; Rinne 2008). While having by no means been a lone actor, the OECD is central to recent research narratives on what has been described, among other designations, as "the formation of a global governing complex" (this volume; Sellar and Lingard 2013), the emergence of a "world education culture" (Resnik 2006), and the "harmonization of the educational globe" (Tröhler 2010). On the other hand, transfer processes—whether of policies, institutions, norms, ideologies, or knowledge—are tightly linked to choices made by the actors involved, also on national, regional, and local levels (e.g. Stone 2012). Simon Marginson (1997: 84) takes this perspective further in a book outlining the development of the Australian education system since 1960, stating that while globalization diminished national steering of policy agendas to some degree, in the final analysis, "[t]he two systems of control, national and global, reinforced each other." The local, regional, national, and global levels are thus interconnected—via transfers, translation, transformation, and trading of ideas, knowledge, and practices (Christensen and Ydesen 2015; Cowen 2009; Dolowitz and Marsh 1996)—through new types of interaction but not in ways that are necessarily weakening the nation-state (Caruso 2014). In a federal state like Australia, as will be argued below, internationalization in some ways served to strengthen the nation-state vis-à-vis the federal states, although not always straightforwardly so.

In what follows, the international and domestic context for Australia's early involvement in the OECD is first outlined. Then follows a discussion of the Australian Commonwealth Department of Education's most important advisory committee on OECD matters and some ways in which the interests of state and federal actors were negotiated here. This discussion frames the last three analytical sections of the chapter, which deals with

interactions between the OECD and Australian education authorities at different levels on initiatives negotiating both the location of power between these levels and the role of education at a time when the relationship between its social and economic potential was up for revision.

Australia, the OECD, and the Early Years of the Economic Paradigm in Education

To a large degree, the roots of the OECD's economistic approach to education are to be found in the US Cold War context, where accountability measures with an economistic *raison d'être* paved the way for increased government agency vis-à-vis the federal states (Tröhler 2010, 2014). In turn, the US became a central player in shaping the OECD's efforts in education (Elfert, this volume). However, the integration of the OECD's agenda on national levels proved unsuccessful throughout the 1960s (e.g. Bürgi 2016), and rising graduate unemployment, the oil crisis, and falling rates of economic growth in the 1970s added to a sense of failure in educational planning. Moreover, the international context on which the OECD's authority and influence depended changed drastically with the 1971 collapse of the international monetary system, the 1972/73 enlargement of the European Community, and the 1973 reform of the International Monetary Fund seemingly threatening the OECD's international position. Altogether, these factors shaped the context for a markedly diminished support for continuous educational expansion and instead fueled the rise of neo-classical economic policies, a development that the OECD readily adjusted to during the 1970s after a "round of soul searching" had taken place within the organization (Wolfe 2008: 40). Here, the emphasis changed from input to output governance, as the OECD began looking for ways to measure the efficiency of educational systems (Bürgi 2016).

It was during this time of transition that Australia hesitantly became involved in OECD's educational efforts. The Canberra government's reluctance manifested itself in the fact that the country did not join CERI for more than a year upon accession. While retaining a degree of caution about wide involvement in OECD's education activities, the lack of sincerity in the Australian commitment gradually disappeared. Indeed, the Commonwealth government, Australian officials, and various Australian organizations became major players in the development of the Programme

for International Student Assessment (PISA) and other education initiatives in the OECD from the late 1970s onward and continue to be so in the present (Kellow and Carroll 2017; Henry et al. 2001; Centeno 2017).

Yet, according to Vickers' (1994: 36) pioneering study on the influence of the OECD on Australian education, the Commonwealth's involvement in the OECD was of a rather particular character, participating—from the 1980s onward, at least—"most actively in those projects that connect education to the economy." It should perhaps come as no surprise that the Commonwealth authorities used its gatekeeper's privilege in this way. According to Pusey (1991), the influence of market liberalism was remarkably strong in Australia from the mid-1970s onward. This had a profound effect on educational policies as well. Marginson (1997: 144) has argued that, as the crises of the mid-1970s seemingly crippled Keynesian legitimacy in public policy and as fears of falling standards of literacy and numeracy among students came to dominate public discourse, "educational decline was joined to the narrative of national decline, undermining the egalitarian and progressivist strands which had grown out of the late Keynesian period." These were, in turn, replaced by educational policies grounded in market reform.

The selective approach to participation in OECD education programs in the 1980s noted by Vickers had its roots in the early years of Australian engagement with the organization. This was at least in part a matter of necessity. Both finances and geography provided constraints to Australian activity in the OECD at the time, necessitating limited participation in meetings and programs as well as inter-departmental arrangements at the country's representation in Paris (Kellow and Carroll 2017). Such considerations were clearly present as the Department of Education sought the best ways to engage with the OECD's Education Committee and CERI in the wake of the recently achieved Australian membership in both arenas. In a 1975 letter to Harold Hughes, the Chairman of the OECD Advisory Committee, outlining ways to improve briefings for OECD Education Committee meetings, the Australian Counsellor of Education and Social Affairs at the OECD, P. B. Kearns, advised a two-pronged strategy:

(a) adopting a selective approach and identifying a few priority areas for intensive study; and
(b) devising a mechanism to enable key OECD documents in these selected priority areas to be put to in-depth analysis so as to produce considered Australian responses (NAA 12. February 1975).

As for which areas to prioritize, Kearns maintained that involvement "would clearly be of most value where areas selected for study corresponded with current policy interests of the department or commissions" (ibid.: 2). Kearns, for his part, had a number of forthcoming Education Committee projects in mind. These included programs with titles such as "Student aspirations and private demand for education," "Education and life-chances," "Education and employment," and "New options beyond compulsory schooling," where the latter two were seen as particularly closely related to the subject for the OECD review of Australian education policies—dealing, as we shall see, with the links between education and employment—which was simultaneously underway.

The suggestions were not more ambitious in scope than what Kellow and Carroll (2017: 277) have described as the "quite strategic selection" of six CERI projects that the Commonwealth Department of Education chose to participate in upon joining CERI and after consultation with the states, "reflecting Australia's early caution on involvement in education matters." However, they do reflect a somewhat different and more economistic focus, in line with the selection noted by Vickers, and do indeed indicate Australian interests in education-related work in the OECD in the following years. Yet, this focus did not stand alone. That is, the policy interests of the Commonwealth as well as state departments and school-related committees were still rather equivocal at a time when the Australian Department of Education was searching for a *modus operandi* in its relations with the OECD. For this reason, the constitution of the committees dealing with matters seen as relevant to these relations mattered when OECD reports and research projects were selected and subsequently engaged within the Australian context. The make-up of the OECD Advisory Committee is particularly interesting in this regard. The following section briefly discusses this body.

THE OECD ADVISORY COMMITTEE: BALANCING STATE AND FEDERAL INTERESTS

As suggested by the name, the OAC functioned as a committee of advisors to the Commonwealth Department of Education on matters relating to the OECD, particularly the OECD's Education Committee and CERI. Its members were all appointed in individual capacity by the Minister for Education, thus not formally representing any institutions,

and numbered 11 in the committee's 1976 setup. Of these, the Commonwealth Department of Education provided the chairman as well as the secretary for the committee, while personnel from various sectors of the department also occasionally attended the committee meetings. Moreover, three committee members held positions in academia and four were employed in the education departments of different federal states (New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia) or, in one case, a state-based educational body. Finally, one member came from the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations, while another member was a commissioner in the Australian Schools Commission—a Commonwealth institution charged with implementing equity-oriented, nation-centered programs.

In its make-up, then, the advisory committee spanned a rather wide range of interests and perspectives. Even if the members were formally on the committee in individual capacities, the interests represented on the committee were a concern. At one meeting, for example, it was discussed whether to invite Malcolm Skilbeck—later to become Deputy Director of Education in the OECD's Directorate for Education, Employment, Labour and Social Affairs (DEELSA) in the 1990s but already a prolific consultant with CERI by the mid-1970s (e.g. Kellow and Carroll 2017: 273 ff.)—onto the committee permanently. The idea was dropped, however, as—according to the minutes from the meeting—"the addition of a further Commonwealth officer to the Committee was considered to be undesirable at this stage" (NAA 18. February 1976: 2). Some sort of balance, if not formally acknowledged, was carefully kept between state and federal interests.

Likewise, some states certainly took interest in the work of the committee and of the OECD more generally. In 1976, one member took up a position as Under-Secretary in the Ministry of Education of New South Wales, having formerly been at the Victorian Institute of Colleges. Inquiring about his potential continuous presence in the OAC, his soon-to-be minister, "far from having any objection, […] thought that the maintenance of close liaison between the New South Wales education system and the activities of O.E.C.D. was most important" (NAA 26. March 1976). This aligns well with a dynamic recently discussed by Savage and Lewis (2018) in regards to debates about teaching standards from the 1980s and onward, in which the NSW has fashioned itself as a subnational frontrunner, looking for inspiration abroad in the process. Hence, some state actors seem to have regarded the international level as a suitable

arena for knowledge exchange as well as a means for asserting their own position in ways circumventing the federal level yet informing ideas about the national education system.

The Social and Economic Underpinnings of Decentralized Planning

This desire for liaison on part of the states was also evident in some of the work of the OAC, for example in the committee's discussions ahead of Australian participation in the OECD Education Committee's project on Education in Regional Development Policies (ERDP). The project in many ways reflected contemporary interest in "regionalization" and local autonomy as witnessed not only within the OECD but in much of the Western world. Having been rather uninterested in participating in the project with an Australian case study when the project was first discussed at a June 1975 meeting, the OAC's disinterest was more or less dispelled when an explicit additional emphasis was put in the OECD's framing of the project on issues related to countries with a federal system of governance (e.g. NAA May 1976). Moreover, it doubtlessly helped that the Australian Counsellor of Education and Social Affairs at the OECD, the abovementioned P. B. Kearns, was able to point out a number of intersections between the program and committee reports recently finished in the domestic Australian context (NAA 29. March 1976).

Still, the subject of the Australian contribution, that is, the region to be studied, gave rise to debate among committee members. In the original proposal from the OECD, the Pilbarra region in Western Australia was suggested as a case study showcasing "the place of education in the development of new economic regions in isolated and sparsely populated areas" (NAA 12. April 1976). Upon correspondences with members of the OAC, however, a number of alternative proposals entered the mix. Strikingly, if perhaps unsurprisingly, these proposals reflected the OAC members' state affiliations: the four regions eventually considered at an OAC meeting in July 1976 were all located in South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales (NAA 28. July 1976: 8), likely suggested by the committee members working in the education ministries of those three states.[1]

From early on Kearns, in a note accompanying the OECD proposal, had remarked that "the selection of a region […] would seem to necessitate the involvement of the relevant state education department" (NAA 15. April 1976: 2). This proved unproblematic. The OAC member from

the State Education Department in South Australia reported on officials from various branches of the department being "enthusiastic" about a case study being carried out there, making their involvement in the production of a report likely (NAA 12. May 1976a). The committee members from the other two states also offered their help, naming personnel from the respective departments—and, in the case of Victoria, praising the expertise of the assistant director in question (NAA 20. May 1976).

In the end, a sort of compromise ensued. The OAC selected the only suggested region spanning two states, namely, the Albury/Wodonga region located on both sides of the Victoria-New South Wales state border. Moreover, the committee nominated the assistant director from the Victorian Education Department as the expert in charge of writing the report, but he was to "work closely with the research officer nominated from New South Wales" (NAA 28. July 1976: 8–9). Beyond the acquiescence of the state ministries, the Commonwealth Department for Education was to be informed throughout the work process. Only as a seeming afterthought did an OAC member suggest the involvement of an officer from the chosen region.

While the Western Australian Pilbarra region lacked supporters in the OAC—on which no representative from Western Australia was present—as a potential case study for the Education Committee's ERDP program, the state was the main Australian representative at a thematically somewhat related, parallel-running program under CERI auspices. This program, the "Basic Education in Sparsely Populated Areas" (SPA) project concluded in 1978, took among its starting points that

> in recent years, teacher qualifications, the use of standardised tests, and school finance mechanisms have all become points of contention in the continuing debates about centralisation v. decentralisation and standardisation v. local relevance. (OECD 1978: 4)

This contention, the report held, was linked, among other things, to an increased appreciation of the qualities of rural schools and the differentiated needs they served, as well as "the recent preoccupation with equity, generally, and the aid to disadvantaged populations, in particular" (ibid.: 4–7). Moreover, among the project's conclusions was an emphasis on the importance of schools for rural communities and a resistance toward "urbanizing" rural schools, as well as a statement on the inadequate state of secondary-level education in sparsely populated areas. Finally, one con-

clusion argued that the higher costs of education per student should be accepted "as one of the economic facts of rural life" and another asserted that "little lasting and significant improvement in rural education will occur in the absence of explicit and appropriate governmental policies and assistance" (ibid.: 44–50). While federal dimensions were not touched upon in the report, it is understandable that Western Australia—a large and sparsely populated state—found the project interesting.

As Rasmussen and Ydesen (forthcoming) have argued, the SPA project, along with some of OECD's similarly more socially oriented programs of the 1980s, represented a widening of the notion of the talented child, so that hitherto unharnessed human resources could be put to use for the sake of the economy. Yet, at the same time the program's report was in many ways in line with the equity-oriented approach to especially so-called disadvantaged areas that had become increasingly predominant in Australian educational politics up until the early 1970s. This had particularly been the case in the work of the Schools Commission, which, in its original shape, was a main representative of the "peak Keynesian" equity-based approach to education noted by Lingard and Lewis (2017). A key element to this approach had been the provision of grants by the federal government directly to school systems and sectors (Campbell 2019).

This same duality—of increased national control and decentralization on state level with respect to the local—was clearly present in both of the projects discussed in this section. Thus, just as the SPA project held that "the primacy of local circumstances and the value of local initiative must, of course, be remembered" when prefacing the conclusion that centralized government initiatives and funding were continuously needed (OECD 1978: 49–50), one of the aims stated in the outline for the ERDP was

> to propose a comprehensive analysis of the contribution of education and training to regional development policies and practices (including employment) in the different groups of Member countries, in the context of local populations and overall national objectives. (OECD-A 25. June 1976)

Yet, the programs differed as well. As we have seen, federal/state dynamics were prominently on the agenda for the ERDP project. Perhaps this goes some way to explain the federal states' interest in the project. Thus, while professing being "lukewarm" about what he feared would be "a fairly academic exercise with little that would be of practical use […] for] determining policy on regionalisation in Australia," in a May 1976 reaction to

the proposal, one of the OAC members from the New South Wales Ministry of Education still admitted to finding it "difficult to argue against the importance of regional development in education and […] the peculiar problems of Australia in terms of Federal/State relationships and uneven distribution of population" (NAA 12. May 1976b). Moreover, state involvement should presumably be seen in the context of pressures from below to decentralize—or regionalize—at least some functions of the education system which had "a tradition of strong centralized control, with policies formulated by Departments of Education in each of the capital cities, implemented uniformly throughout each state" as put by the OAC member from the Victorian Education Department in a 1974 report to the OECD (OECD-A 14. May 1974: 3).

Differentiation of education services within the federal states and at a regional level was clearly on the agenda. Indeed, the background note for the ERDP project referenced "an anti-centralist, pro-regional-initiative backlash" as "part of a general movement towards increased individual or group participation in educational decision-making," where "the region is often seen to be a highly appropriate mechanism for devolving power from the central and allegedly distant authorities" (OECD-A 25. March 1976: 1). As such, the OECD-focus on regionalization could be embraced on part of the states as a source for policy-making legitimacy vis-à-vis the federal government. This, at least, was certainly part of the OECD Secretariat's framing.

Yet, the focus on regional disparities also opened up for an impulse to even out such disparity through efforts of homogenization arising from the center. Here, it is important to note that the overall framework for the project was one of educational planning. In an early outline for the project, to cite but one example, one line of inquiry asked how "planning mechanisms involving education work in relation to regions" (OECD-A 1976: 2). Likewise, the approaches to education and regional development put forth by the Education Committee in the ERDP project were "based upon two assumptions, one social and the other economic." The economic aspect explicitly echoed the human capital approach to education: "education determines the composition of intellectual capital and the qualifications of available manpower [… and can therefore] help to reduce regional inequalities in unemployment levels," while the social aspect emphasized "regional cultural and economic development" although primarily as a context for education's contribution "to the development and self-realisation of the individual" (OECD-A 25. March 1976: 4–5).

What is evident here is the recession context as well as pressures to decentralize, the result being a rather curious construction of educational planning tempered by an emphasis on regional autonomy and the individual; or, as stated elsewhere in the same document, the OECD had "in recent years" come to see a "need to combine a high level of efficiency in the formulation and execution of public policy with acceptance of the value of devolution of authority and maximum involvement of affected groups and individuals in the decision-making process" (ibid.: 7). Hence, while the "soul searching" OECD of the 1970s strove to incorporate social concerns as well as a focus on regional authority in its educational programs, these elements were always entangled with an economistic and human capital-inspired planning approach even in the organization's most socially oriented programs. While at least rhetorically emphasizing decentralization and providing legitimacy for state policy-makers, this in fact also entailed a shift of authority away from the state level toward both the local and the federal levels and simultaneously toward the individual in ways pointing toward a more marketized educational ideal.

Coming up with a National Approach: An OECD Country Review

The recession context also clearly informed the OECD review of Australian education policies, concluded in late-1976 with a confrontation session in Paris and published in early-1977, which was entitled "Transition from school to work or further study" (OECD 1977).

It was the Australian Education Council, an entity consisting of the state and Commonwealth ministers of education, which chose the main theme of the review: the transition from education to employment, a subject seen as relevant to OECD member states in general due to the massively increased attendance in secondary schooling (NAA s.d.: 1). During the review process, youth unemployment became an increasingly pressing issue in the Australian context—it would remain so for the following decade, also constituting the subject for the next OECD review of Australian education policies in the mid-1980s (OECD 1986).

While an in-depth study of the dynamics surrounding the creation, circulation, and reception of the review is beyond the scope of this chapter, it should be noted that the exercise—from what can be gleaned from the archival material—gave little occasion for obvious tensions between state

departments and the Commonwealth Department of Education. Throughout the process, moreover, the Commonwealth Department of Education invited stakeholders to be involved at various stages of the review process. Here, the Commonwealth's education officials held a role as a gatekeeper, filtering who were to engage with the reviewers as well as comment upon their conclusions. Generally, it can be said that the federal authorities has had a privileged position for controlling which of the initiatives and findings commissioned at the OECD's headquarters in Paris made their way to domestic policy-makers and interest groups—even if the presence at the OECD of experts coming out of local or regional contexts could potentially undermine this control.

As a matter of fact, the Commonwealth Department of Education circulated a draft version of the country review to a range of interest groups as well as various Commonwealth and state departments as the Australian delegation for the confrontation session—led by K. N. Jones, Head of the Department—prepared for the occasion. The OAC dealt with the review as well, its members meeting with the reviewers during their visit to Australia as well as commenting on their draft report at a meeting held in November 1976 closely preceding the concluding confrontation session in Paris. Interestingly, one of the academic members of the OAC was the most skeptical voice. This professorial fellow did not attend the meeting but sent a memorandum in which he expressed having found the report "disappointing," lacking "penetration and incisiveness," and furthermore with "value judgements implicit throughout the report but with no attempt to justify them." The greatest issue, however, was that the "OECD clearly underestimated the problem of getting evidence from a country so large and diverse" (NAA 14. November 1976).

Such critical voices were rare, however. At the OAC meeting, the consensus seemed to be that the review "accurately reflected much of what is happening in Australia," as the member from the Victorian Education Department expressed it (NAA 16. November 1976: 3). This was certainly also the overall attitude expressed at the confrontation session. Here, Jones was accompanied by an official from the Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations and a representative of the state departments, thus formally recognizing the responsibilities of the states in educational matters. Preparing for the session, the delegation was asked to give state and national perspectives on the social role of education. At the OAC meeting, Jones expressed hopes that it would be possible "to come up with a national approach" through discussions with

and comments from various interest groups (ibid.: 2). Yet, the member from the Victorian Education Department found that this "would be very difficult," and held that "the views of the States would need to be incorporated" (ibid.: 4). These were minor tensions, however, although Jones did indeed stress, when answering that same question at the confrontation session, that "our task is to share with the State administrators in developing national attitudes and approaches and to have a special concern for balanced development" (NAA s.d., unpaginated part). The state representative at the confrontation session, the Director-General of Education in Western Australia, described the role of the Commonwealth in education in positive terms, noting that the increased funding through the special programs of the Schools Commission "have added valuable dimensions to the social contributions of the Australian school system" (ibid.).

Indeed, as K. N. Jones reported on the review session afterwards, relations between federal and state levels were not among the issues that had been problematized, even though they were subject to inquiries from other countries with federal systems. However, he did note that attending the problems identified by the reviewers "will need to include employment and education authorities at both Commonwealth and State level" (ibid.: 4). The country review exercise as a whole, then, functioned as an exercise of and argument for closer coordination between the two levels of government. The authorities on the federal level acknowledged the authority of the states in regards to education, while the state representatives in turn paid tribute to and legitimized the federal state's interventions, all in the name of a stronger link between education and employment. For the federal government, however, the OECD report, by pointing to problems needing to be solved, also clearly presented an opportunity for streamlining approaches across the different state education departments in communication with the central government. Simultaneously, however, assessment programs seem to have offered an additional path toward standardization.

ASSESSMENT AND STANDARDIZATION: FROM ABOVE AND FROM BELOW

The 1976 OECD country review directly engaged debates about the role of education in Australian society. Already during the November meeting with the OAC, Jones relayed that "important matters arising from the Report were the extent to which education should be seen as a servant of

the work force and the employability of young people" (NAA 16. November 1976: 2). Similar concerns were central in the discussions of the Williams Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training, reporting directly to the prime minister and following immediately in the wake of and explicitly referencing the OECD review (Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training 1979). According to a contemporary newspaper report,

> the main split [among committee members] has been over the question of what the education system should be doing. The industrialists on the Committee have argued that it should be producing more people with technical skills needed by industry, and fewer people with amorphous university degrees that have no bearing on the labour market … the educationists have argued that the system's role is to equip people with more general qualifications to give them greater flexibility. (cited from Clarke and Edwards 1980: 497)

Judging from the main recommendations of the Williams Committee's final report, the "industrialists" seemingly won that battle. As Lingard (1998) has noted, a notable shift in focus from input to outcomes occurred in Australian education between the mid-1970s and mid-1980s. This greater focus on outputs was already visible in the Williams committee:

> Our main recommendations relate to greater emphasis in teacher education on ways of teaching reading and number work, further research by ACER [Australian Council of Educational Research] to specify the range of performance levels to be expected of pupils of varying abilities at particular ages, and the accountability of schools for achieving specific objectives. (Committee of Inquiry into Education and Training 1979, foreword: III)

As discussed in a recent article by Ydesen and Bomholt (2019), ACER had by then already hosted a prominent study group on the possible introduction in Australia of a National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) scheme inspired by an American model. Initiated on the behest of the liberal Minister of Education of the coalition government that came into office in 1975, the study group ran from 1976 to 1978. ACER, in turn, would become a main player in the development of the PISA. In the late 1970s, however, that was still a thing of the future. For now, the study group eventually rejected the desirability of a national assessment scheme on the American model as "not appropriate for the Australian situation" (quoted from ibid.). It is worth noting, however, that in Ydesen and Bomholt's interpretation, the proceedings of the study group only came to regard the

NAEP program as unsatisfactorily capable of assessing educational improvement in a broader sense when Malcolm Skilbeck—a dominant figure, generally in favor of the program—had to abstain from study group meetings due to ill health. As already noted, Skilbeck too would eventually become central to the OECD's efforts in education.

Moreover, at the same time as the study group more or less rejected standardized national testing—at least in the American-inspired version—Jones took a radically different approach at a meeting of the OECD Education Committee at ministerial level. Here he argued that while schools should primarily work to turn students into citizens, an "adaption of educational processes" was required given the "relatively dismal picture" caused by social and economic trends. "In this situation," he told his ministerial colleagues, "I see a role for international co-operation in efforts to identify the skills which might be regarded as the basic competences which young people ought to acquire." The proposal Jones drew from this clearly foreshadows subsequent Australian involvement in the push for and development of standardized output assessment under the auspices of the OECD, yet with a peculiar focus on national and local agency:

> I would hope that the conference would agree to invite the Secretariat to undertake some work towards the definition of the range of basic competences, not the one precise list, but something from which people within one country, and indeed within one community, could extract something of importance to them.

Clearly, this was a call for standardization—yet, at least on a rhetorical level, it was a call for a standardization implemented by local—and, as Jones related elsewhere in the speech, state—actors through selective adaptation (OECD-A 19. October 1978: 1–4). The concern for state rights in education was still present if not explicitly articulated in relation to the standardization of basic competences; however, the consequences of such standardization were—whether sincerely or not—believed adaptable to local circumstances at the agency of local actors, at state level and below.

Conclusion

Coming off the back of the oil shock and economic recession that hit the Western world in the early 1970s, the period covered in this chapter was one of transition, also in political attitudes toward education as the

Keynesian consensus was challenged by a more economistic approach. It was, moreover, a period of increasing globalization and transnational governance, a process in which the OECD was an important actor. In the above, I have outlined how the convergence of those two related developments influenced the direction that Australian education policy took at a time when a more economistic approach to education was still in ascendancy. It has been shown that Australian involvement in OECD programs on educational matters was rather heterogeneous, as equity-oriented as well as economistic (that is, standardization and accountability-based) programs were engaged with. Certainly, the OECD's more equity-oriented programs also held economic underpinnings and largely regarded education in terms of human capital development, yet they were at the very least economistic in a qualitatively different way.

On a general level, however, the above analysis does hint at an increased focus on the links between education and economy as well as an emerging interest in assessment and standardization, especially in the context of the substantial Australian youth unemployment at the end of the 1970s. This focus would come to dominate Australian involvement in the OECD's educational endeavors over the next decades. Yet, still in 1980, as the Australian government was offering its priorities for future OECD educational activities, it held that "the social/economic context within which educational issues are examined is OECD's distinctive strength and is becoming even more relevant." Likewise, out of the three program areas prioritized, one was summed up as "Equal Opportunities," another as "Quality in Education" (which included key words such as "Assessment," "Standards," "Selection," "Core Curriculum," and "Accountability," among others) (OECD-A 7. May 1980: 8). This persistent duality complicates the role of the OECD—although it does by no means imply that it should be downplayed. Rather, it serves as a reminder that the impact mechanisms bringing the economistic approach to education have been complex, far from unilateral, and tied to historical contingency.

This is particularly the case when it comes to the ways in which the OECD has reconstituted policy-making authority at different spatial levels. Hence, the analysis of this chapter is in line with Henry et al.'s (2001: 4) statement that while "the OECD has been a key articulator of a predominantly neo-liberal reading of globalization […] it is [also] a complex organisation, and its work and influence in the field of education reflect more ambiguous stances which may contribute to both strengthening and

to undermining national policy making." Through a close reading of the Commonwealth Department of Education's OECD Advisory Committee's work in general and in relation to the OECD review of Australian educational policies as well as Australian attitudes toward assessment as put forth at the OECD, this chapter has shown how federal, state, and—to a certain degree—regional and local interests were constantly negotiated as part of their multidirectional interactions with each other and the OECD.

In this process, the OECD seemingly provided an arena conducive for a transfer of policy-making authority from the state level toward the federal level, although the development was far from unilateral; neither was it a top-down process only. That is, the federal states rather willingly engaged with OECD projects, for example, through their representatives in the OAC. Concomitantly, at least some of the states saw liaison with the OECD and participation in its programs as beneficial for the development of their own education systems while also showing appreciation for a legacy of the Keynesian education paradigm, namely, the federal state's increased financial support for state education. However, in the final analysis, this support as well as the initiatives that constituted Australian engagement with the OECD during the first decade of its membership in the organization, both the more social, human capital-oriented programs and the increasing focus on standardization and assessment, pointed toward increased federal control with Australian education. In the process of asserting its own influence in the field of education, then, the OECD also became a major actor in the reinforcement of the nation-state.

Note

1. In New South Wales, at least, the OAC member who had been with the NSW Education Ministry all along proposed a study of the Newcastle region (NAA 28. July 1976).

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International Cooperation from the Perspective of INEP Agents: The OECD and Brazilian Public Education, 1996–2006

Gabriela Toledo Silva

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to trace the recent history of Brazilian connections with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) related to public education. Based on interviews with key agents and the collection of archival sources generated by the early OECD-Brazil connections, the chapter seeks to contribute to our understanding of the significance and *modus operandi* of this interaction. The chapter takes its analytical focus on the National Institute of Educational Research (INEP) which served as the key hub for OECD-Brazil relations in education.

While the OECD has a long history of promoting educational guidelines, assessments, and standards around the globe, it was only in the last

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Fig. 6.1 Ceremony for the signing of Ordinance no. 2000/2002 of the Ministry of Education (ordinance establishing the National Examination of Certification of Youth and Adult Skills—Encceja). From right to left: Maria Helena Guimarães de Castro (Executive Secretary of the Ministry of Education); Planalto Palace (Brasília [DF]); Paulo Renato Souza (Minister of Education), Brasília (DF), 07/11/2002 (copyright: © Domingos Tadeu de Oliveira Pinto/Acervo Pres. F.H. Cardoso)

decade of the twentieth century that Brazil strengthened collaboration with the Organisation in this particular area. Brazil had previously attended, as observer or non-member participant, in other OECD committees and meetings,[1] but the first contacts in education were not made until 1996. In a meeting organized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), former INEP President Maria Helena Castro, representing the education minister, was invited by the Project Manager in the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), Andreas Schleicher, to participate in the World Education Indicators (WEI) program and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Castro interview 2018).

As a result, in 1997, Brazil joined the UNESCO/OECD WEI program; from 1999, it started to figure as a non-member in the OECD

Education at a Glance reports; and it took part in the very first round of PISA in 2000. INEP served as the national project manager in all these initiatives. In 2007, the Brazilian government adhered to the first application of the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS). This chapter explores the period in which the decision to participate in these programs and initiatives was made.

Brazilian Education as an Internationalized Endeavor and the Role of Assessment

Brazilian education has a long history of engaging with the international community. One example is the work of Professor of Chemistry Paulo Estêvão de Berredo Carneiro (1901–1982) who played a major role in linking Brazilian education with UNESCO (Ydesen and Castro 2016). Brazil was a very active member state of UNESCO since its very creation in 1946. In 1963, Brazil joined the Regional Bureau for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, a UNESCO project, with the purpose of assisting the region's 37 member states in the definition of strategies for their education policies. Brazil signed the Education for All declaration in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990, which was used as reference to draft a Ten-Year Plan of Education for All launched in 1993 (Brazilian Federal Government 1997). From the late 1980s, the World Bank became an important funder of educational initiatives in Brazil. While Brazil has had a long history of international dialogue—especially via UNESCO—in education, since the 1990s, these relations became tighter and articulated to a global governing complex, which fostered managerial reforms in public administration. In this process, international and regional agents increasingly took on the role as legitimate judges of the quality of Brazilian education, and funding schemes became more often conditioned to underpin standardization of information and practices and demonstration of results (Bernussi 2014).

Large-scale assessment was not entirely new to Brazilian public education practices at the time. The 1988 Constitution established the quality of education as a universal right (Brazilian Federal Government 1988), but it lacked practical regulation on how to achieve it considering the distribution of competencies among federated entities (Abrucio 2010). It would be the responsibility of subsequent governments to interpret and act toward this goal. A very disputed law was approved in 1996 reorganizing the school system and the attributions of the different levels of govern-

ment (Simielli 2008), conferring autonomy to local administrations that would be evaluated by the federal government, who should "grant a national process of assessment of school performance" (Brazilian Federal Government 1996; 9th Article—VI). The same law required the construction of a long-term education plan for the country, which was first presented in 1998 and was approved only in 2001. Within the scope of this reform, the National Institute of Educational Research (INEP) was restructured to be able to unify, standardize, and centralize production of data, related research, and evaluation of public education. Partially funded by the World Bank as part of a related project, the National Basic Education Assessment System (SAEB), created in 1990, saw the introduction of testing of a sample of primary education students. The aim was to identify associated factors of school performance, such as school management, autonomy, and organization, teacher competencies, socioeconomic characteristics, and working conditions (Bonamino and Franco 2013). In 1998, the National High School Exam (ENEM), a non-mandatory, standardized assessment of individual student performance in high school, was created and became an alternative to higher education entrance examinations. A revision and aggregation of ongoing measurements and assessments culminated in the establishment of the Index of Basic Education Quality (IDEB), in 2007. In short, large-scale evaluation of school and student performance in primary and secondary education for accountability purposes became one of the central axes of Brazilian educational policy in the second half of the 1990s and has consolidated along the first decade of the 2000s (Bonamino and Sousa 2012; Coelho 2008; Horta Neto 2007; Kauko et al. 2016).

In Brazil, this period is seen as a reform period in both public education, articulating large-scale assessment with redistribution of responsibilities and financing, and in public administration as a whole, with the dissemination and adoption of results-based accountability instruments, often linked to funding by international organizations (IOs) and leading to awards and sanctions (Segatto and Abrucio 2017). While IOs became increasingly important agents in the definition of guidelines, methods, and even sanctions for public education in Brazil, the initiatives subject to international influence were also heavily tied to national debates involving coalitions of public agents, politicians, and epistemic communities, so it has been a particularly fertile period of encounters between international and national reforms. The aim of this chapter is to understand how the relationship between Brazil and OECD is enacted in the narratives of change about

Brazilian public education between 1990 and the early 2000s (Mol 1999), focusing on actors' description of innovation and expected outcomes of accounted changes, prospectively and retrospectively.

Theoretical Framework, Methodology, and Chapter Structure

I draw on the concept of public action developed by Dubois (2009) to move away from state-centric accounts of public administration and address actions, relations, and practices undertaken by state and non-state actors to define and engage with public affairs. This does not mean to move away from the state, but to address it as an open, heterogeneous assemblage of networks, agents, and conflicting forces—an effect of its practices (Mitchell 1999). To further develop this concept, colleagues and I have suggested that engagement in public affairs is enabled by the creation and circulation of specific languages and repertoires that mediate public concern, dialogue, conflict, or collaboration (Spink and Silva 2014; Spink 2016). The use and diffusion of certain words and expressions can then be considered performative in the sense of pragmatic philosophy: they are not an aspect of an action, but a necessary condition for the action to occur; they are part of the actions (Dewey 1998; Austin 1962). Also drawing on pragmatic philosophy, Noortje Marres (2005, 2007) claims that public action is the organization of actors who are jointly implicated in an issue, independently of previous social or institutional bonds. The public issue allows actors to engage and act publicly, being the driver of action.

If we take these assumptions seriously, the collective process of definition—by verbal, visual, or material language—of an issue becomes a central point of the organization of political life. The historical movements and changes in languages related to public affairs can be described as the trajectories of the engagement of actors in making certain themes publicly debatable and communally workable. Public action languages offer an interesting perspective to understand engagements cutting across organizational and geopolitical boundaries, such as the connections in the process of adopting the language of learning evaluation in Brazil in the 1990s from the OECD.

If, at the national level, this theoretical framework renders non-state actors legitimate and active in the definition of and action over public matters, at the global level it allows us to understand the multiple flows and

directions of engagements in the definition of transnational public issues. This is especially important for the understanding of the local translation of international trends in Brazilian educational public actions; while terms and expressions adopted by Brazilian agents were inspired by the OECD, their accounts of change show that the process of local engagement has been an open, creative, collective process highly related to local context and agency (Farah 2008).

Starting from this framework, this chapter will address how agents responsible for implementing OECD programs and agendas in Brazilian education view their own experiences, both at the time and in retrospect. To do so, interviews and documents were analyzed in order to shed light on the ways the narratives and repertoires of change provoked by the programs and agendas they were involved in were mobilized, prospectively and retrospectively. Narratives of change play an important role in forming and describing public issues, especially in public administration. Policies, plans, and reforms are expected to change a state of affairs for the better (Czarniawska-Joerges 1989).

Speech transcripts, articles, and statements produced by INEP agents; articles, interviews, and government plans by former Brazilian presidents and ministers of education—to whom INEP agents reported—from 1994 until 2002 served as the empirical sources for analyzing prospective narratives, while semi-structured interviews with some of the actors engaged in the production of these documents provide the basis of the retrospective review. The four interviewees were directly involved in the implementation of the WEI project and in the first PISA cycles participation: a former president of INEP, a former director, and two employed statisticians. While documents are viewed as enactments of expectations and justifications for the future, agents' retrospective testimonies re-shape the meaning-making of past actions from a contemporary frame of reference. Interviewed policymakers, statisticians, and educators are still very active in the field, so they often remain advocates of past events, although sometimes in a revised manner. Confronting the prospective view on innovation and outcomes with agents' retrospective meaning-making allows analytical insights into the interplay between different narrative temporalities revealing a diachronic contrast between the policy enactments of innovation and change in the Brazilian education system.

The chapter is divided into two analytical parts: the first analyzes the prospective narratives enacted in documents produced between 1996 and 2000 by public agents involved in the first Brazilian participation in the

WEI project and PISA evaluation cycle. This analysis emphasizes the enactment of the initiatives while they were occurring, with strong focus on justification and expectations. In the second part, the focus of analysis falls into the retrospective narratives about the same period, expressed in interviews conceded by INEP agents to the author in 2018. In the last section, the two analyses are brought together in a concluding discussion considering the contributions of this approach to our understanding of this period and the possibilities for further research.

The Enactment of Change in Documents and Interviews

The 1990s has been a decade of intense political turmoil in Brazil. Right after the democratic constitution promulgated in 1988, the first president elected by direct vote after the military regime, in 1990, renounced in 1992 when accused of corruption. Brazil faced a very high rate of inflation at the time, and the fiscal adjustment became a central agenda for subsequent governments and a prerequisite for international investment (Abrucio 2007). Until the 1990s, public education in Brazil was the responsibility of the federal states and municipalities, and the public debate was focused on the problems of coverage of basic education. As other countries in Latin America, Brazil signed the Education for All commitment in 1991 and participated in different regional and international education projects. It was a time of opening: in the economy, in public administration, and in education. In this section, the interaction between local and foreign modes of seeing and acting toward public education will be explored, focusing particularly on the notions of innovation and outcomes that were being negotiated by INEP agents in the process of implementation of WEI and PISA.

Prospective Innovation

The implementation of joint actions with the OECD in education in the 1990s was not only about executing them but also about convincing people it was worth doing them, legitimizing, explaining, and diffusing their achieved and expected results. In a context in which these evaluations were expected to present worrying numbers for the Brazilian educational system, advocating for these actions was a big part of the action itself. To do this, INEP agents wrote articles, delivered speeches, signed editorials

for newspapers, and used different available media to shape the issue at stake. INEP itself publishes a series of periodicals and books with studies on its fields of activity. It became part of its mission, especially from its restructuration in 1996–1997, to produce knowledge on education inside government. The two interviewed statisticians had articles published in the *Revista Brasileira de Estudos Pedagógicos*, which INEP has published since 1944, featuring peer-reviewed articles that occasionally have been submitted by its own employees. It is also common to find academic or independently published texts authored by INEP employees describing and analyzing their INEP experiences as researchers. As a result, the documents analyzed in this section were often authored by agents who talked about their field of activity, simultaneously as government agents and as professionals or academics, blurring the boundaries between what is an official government statement and what is not; the political and the technical, individual and organization, or even state, non-state, and intergovernmental organizations. It is precisely this ambiguity that made it possible for these documents to help cooperation and transit between different people, groups, and organizations (Leigh Star 2010).

The idea of presenting a different proposal from previous governments, something that had not been done before in Brazilian education, underlay/permeated the construction of a centralized evaluation system as a "new" approach toward public education (see also Verger, Fontdevila and Parcerisa, this volume). To present this set of initiatives as new, agents enacted this novelty as a response to a specific historical conjuncture and as a new attitude toward international cooperation in education.

In a speech delivered in 1999, former president of INEP and educational researcher Maria Helena Castro referred to an "agreement" on a specific understanding of education in the public sphere as a justification to the choice of evaluation as the central point of educational policies (Castro 1999):

> *The agreement concerning the strategic importance of looking more deeply into the levels of quality in education, as well as the variables that affect the results of the educational process, has caused educational evaluation to be chosen, by different groups, as a priority area for multilateral co-operation in educational development. With the support of international associations and organizations, various projects that promote international comparative studies have flourished, intending to generate data that may support governmental decisions on educational policy.*

Former officers and the minister of education at the time referred to this moment in Brazilian public education discussion as one in which a common understanding "by different groups" was reached (Souza 2001). The verbal emphasis on the consensual character of their proposed course of action shows that it was important to publicly advocate for this consensus, so it is possible that the declared consensus was, in fact, being advocated while enunciated.

The "new stage" was about bringing together not only people but also different things: the diagnosis, the causes, the different levels of government and society. The first acknowledged innovation aspect was the ability to deal, especially internally, with a heterogeneous set of agents. Although some actions have been in course from the early 1990s, actions made public by these documents were described as starting something different: a new approach to public education. Former President Fernando Henrique Cardoso's (1995–2003) government program described this common will as a new "conscience" able to assemble not only people but also different ingredients of public affairs: citizenship, daily affairs, social justice, and economic development (Cardoso 1994).

This understanding, recurrent not only in the former president's plan but present also in other statements, involved raising education to be of "strategic importance" to other political and societal processes, so one of the new "agreements" presented was to place education as a central issue capable of joining groups, consciences, citizenship, labor force, economic development, and social justice. The strategic role of education was presented as a foundational glue to boost development. Education would concern not only educators and students, but also economists.

Other important aspect of this "new" challenge was the claim, defended by former ministry of education Paulo Renato Souza, that access to the school system in Brazil was overcome (Souza 2001). This assumption was questioned by school community and journalists at the time (Paulo Renato Souza interview 1995), but it became the main argument to move the discussion from access to quality. The centrality of quality led to the rise of evaluation as a main axis of these new initiatives, justifying "a strong emphasis on developing national systems of assessment/evaluation and educational indicators" and the reorganization of the relations between central and states and municipalities to operationalize them (Castro 1999, p. 20). The drift to quality is related to a different understanding of the roles played by different levels and spheres of government. Decentralization became a strong lead for the new government, as were also other New Public Management—influenced reforms, enabling increased autonomy

to implementing bodies and reinforcement of planning and articulating competencies in central government (Abrucio 2007). The federal government would lead policies and reforms, and subnational governments would be accountable in terms of their performance (see also Verger, Fontdevila and Parcerisa, this volume).

If the need to evaluate was presented as an answer to an assemblage of internal factors, what would be the purpose to compare indicators and evaluations internationally? The new government conceived itself as open, and Brazil's destiny would be, according to the analyzed documents, to assume an important role in the international community. Not only these documents state that international comparison would serve as stimulus for inner improvement, but that multilateral bodies would want Brazil's participation as it would help to diffuse discussions in Latin and South America (Cardoso 1994; Castro 2000).

The narrative of innovation, at the time, was based on the enactment of a consensus to move things in a different direction, in which (1) Brazil would be a driver of regional leadership in international diplomacy, by becoming a reference in educational reform to its neighbors in South America; (2) education as a public issue would be more closely tied to economic development and social justice, becoming a concern of more powerful sectors of government and civil society; (3) the change in educational public actions would have a strong emphasis on evaluation by the central government to re-balance distribution of roles among federated states and municipalities and to improve efficiency in the distribution of financial resources and monitor quality.

Prospective Outcomes

When presenting their "new" approach, agents often designed desired scenarios for the future as outcomes of the advocated initiatives. These future expectations were documented by INEP agents when the first initiatives using quality assessment, learning tests, and new educational indicators were developed and implemented. Since INEP was implementing other assessment innovations in the same period, with the same teams, participation in WEI and PISA was often situated as part of a set of improvements in information gathering and assessment methodologies, or even in the context of a broad reform in the educational system.

The first stated aim was to increase efficiency of the educational system. This idea was connected to the assumption that if the central government

knew how and with what its educational budget was spent, it would be possible to re-allocate it in order to obtain better performance in the school system (Cardoso 1994; Castro 1999). It was not a matter of lack of resources, but of its distribution (Souza interview 1995). In 1996, the Fund for the Maintenance and Development of Basic Education and Valorization of Teaching (FUNDEF) was created by the federal government to calculate the amount of funding redistributed by the central government to states and municipalities according to the number of schools and students enrolled in basic education and a fixed percentage to be spent on teachers' salaries. The central government's role would turn from being an executioner to being the producer of information and comparisons that would enable the distribution of resources, establishment of counterparts, and the design of long-term plans.

The basis for the change in the distribution of roles, responsibilities, and resources would be methods and instruments capable of gauging quality. To offer an education that met "minimum standards of quality" was the aim described by Castro (1999), linking quality comparison to the establishment of a standard, common number to be achieved (INEP 1997). Comparison is not new in education; the new feature is the link to the ideas of policy transfer and best practices (Acosta and Ruiz 2018). Countries, states, municipalities, schools, and students became examples of what to do and what to avoid.

Quality is described both in terms of the instruments developed to measure students' learning, their knowledge and skills (INEP 1997) and quality of teaching and school, and is strongly tied to the idea of performance. Through student and school performance measures, the regional, geographical, economic, and social inequalities of Brazilian educational system would become apprehensible. Crucial was also the connection between quality and equity. Equity in the distribution of resources would increase quality of learning performance, which would improve human capital and enable social and economic development. A certain level of scholarship was considered a prerequisite to exercise social citizenship and participate actively in economic life (Cardoso 1994).

> All young people should achieve this [the medium] level of scholarship as condition to exercise life as citizens in any of its dimensions: as workers, as consumers, as active participants of society in our countries lives. (Souza 1998, p. 4)

In short, the OECD's contribution to methodologies for transforming the complexities of public education into indicators and test results matched a broader causal chain assuming that education was the main booster of a virtuous cycle. Also, for education to fulfill this role, the inequalities that would be addressed by education were not considered as causes of the heterogeneity of results observed. The solution proposed was based on the central role of the monitoring to increase efficiency of the system, reflecting in better performance evaluation, more equity in the system, and more capable citizens to improve social and economic development. The federal government, which had been until the 1990s a supporting agent to the educational system, became a key player centralizing knowledge, calculation, and redistribution functions.

Retrospective Interviews

In 2019, both PISA and WEI initiatives are still active, and their results are published regularly on INEP's website. Evaluation and assessment methodologies increased in number and in participation of states and municipalities. In a general way, retrospective views tend to see OECD's projects as a success, but not for the same reasons that informed their previous expectations. Retrospective accounts consider subtler unintended but positive developments of joining OECD's educational initiatives.

Retrospective Innovation

In the interviews, the individual role of some of the involved actors reported as an essential point for joint actions with OECD to happen. Retrospectively, the combination of institutional conditions with the belief and courage of individuals to take the risk of having Brazilian results compared with other countries was determinant for Brazilian participation in both WEI and PISA (Castro interview 2018). The institutional conditions cited were the stimulus from other multilateral organizations, namely, the World Bank, the support of the Itamaraty, the autonomous and robust evaluation structure of INEP, the support of President Cardoso and Minister Souza, allowing for Brazil to have a specific budget for PISA.

Maria Helena Castro, INEP's president at the time, was recurrently acknowledged as a crucial actor in establishing joint actions with OECD. She was the one present at the decisive meeting where she received the invitation for Brazil to participate in PISA. Later, she held the vice-

chair position on the PISA governing board and was also head of other international education evaluation projects and boards. In Brazil, she was involved in and participated in councils of different educational bodies and non-governmental organizations. The articulation of these "entrepreneur" actors resulted in institutional support from the ministry and the president, and the provision of a specific budget for Brazil's participation in PISA.

The other innovative factor was Brazil's prominent role in the participation of international education projects. Three of the four interviewees said that Brazilian participation was as important to OECD as OECD's project was to Brazil. Both technical professionals of INEP and leaders described Brazil as a strategic point of connection between Latin America and the "developed countries". According to them, Brazil—through INEP—excels in the application of methodologies, tests them, replicates them in other evaluation projects, perfects them, and contributes to the improvement of questionnaires. Brazil is seen by the agents as an international reference of innovation in the collection of data and comparative statistics.

Regional projects in Latin America gave force to Brazil when Brazil channeled regional issues to OECD. Regional issues formed the basis of hypotheses to be discussed in regional meetings and forwarded, by Brazilian agents, to OECD.

Looking across these analyses, retrospective accounts of innovation did not seem to contradict prospective ones. In the interviews, two central characteristics appeared: the role of the personal and the national entrepreneurship. At the individual and country levels, initiatives were linked more to inner forces than to external ones.

Retrospective Outcomes

Whereas prospective accounts drove attention to the effect expected on the educational system (at street level or in the delivery of public services), retrospective ones focused, internally, on the reorganization of the public administration of education and, externally, the public awareness on public education.

The first acknowledged outcome was the dispense with the "yearbook culture". One of the statisticians responsible for the implementation of the WEI project was very emphatic in appointing the turn from a yearbook culture of information collection, in which numbers served to be "put on

the shelf", to a logic of policy-orientated numbers. According to him, information collected and used in INEP and previous UNESCO yearbooks was unreliable and underused. To be able to compare data with other countries, "formal numbers" did not suffice, leading to a change in the logic and finality of data collection.

A second one was the possibility of interchange between professionals. One INEP executive was assertive, stating that "Brazilian teams managing the National High School Exam—ENEM and also the National Exam for Certification of Competences of Youngsters and Adults—ENCCEJA could be qualified by PISA teams" (Sampaio interview 2018). This influence was not only in terms of personal qualification but especially with the incorporation and development of new methodologies in different initiatives and, consequently, new indicators and new issues to be worked and talked about.

On methodologies, the two INEP statisticians attributed to OECD a strong influence on the calculation of public expenditure on education. According to them, the collection of financial data was strong internationally but encountered many barriers in Brazil. Besides the conceptual frame, for these numbers to be calculated there was the need to produce the "right" information, so other actors needed to be enrolled. In the beginning, to experiment calculation without the "proper" information, INEP's professionals had to collect manually some sample information, establish average ratios of distribution, and calculate expenditure re-distributing collected information as samples. These estimates stimulated cooperation with actors involved in the collection of school information—the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the state and municipality administrations, and later the school units—to establish cooperation to collect information. Information in schools was registered on paper until a huge, but slow, informatization process, articulated by INEP, began in the 1990s. Today, Brazilian school system provides student-by-student information on an online database.

> It was done based on experiments, because we had no experience… (…) One of the developments after two years measuring it artificially was that we were able to talk. Once Brazil is a federal country, we had to negotiate with state and municipality. (Almeida interview 2018)

The need to overcome denomination and conceptual differences between countries' school systems was also emphasized by interviewees. For the

indicators to converge and data to be comparable, it was necessary to understand these differences and establish convergences, so agents had to work on a broad correspondence scheme for school grades, learning stages, curriculum, and financing.

The development and diffusion of new indicators, especially those related to education expenditure, was also associated to the participation of OECD´s initiatives. Two interviewees pointed that "The popular [education investment] indicator today, available at INEP website and widely spread is a result of this partnership" (Sampaio interview 2018).

Discussions with OECD teams also led to the proposition of new themes for debate. Inequality and social concerns, such as the differences between education in urban versus rural settings, poverty, and race issues, were issues raised in Latin American educational meetings and were taken by Brazil to OECD for questions to be included in the questionnaire, allowing results to be related to these factors. In the other direction, debates around gender, the teachers' situation, and the distribution of educational expenses were raised internationally and were later incorporated in national debates.

Agents pointed out to some outcomes related not only to PISA or WEI but to them as part of a group of actions initiated in the same period. The first group of outcomes is about new programs and policies motivated by evaluation results. According to agents, SAEB and PISA numbers made age-series distortion become a problem, so policies were developed in order to prevent it. The other action closely linked to results of learning tests were reading-focused learning programs. As results in Portuguese were considered very concerning, it engendered a strong focus in reading in school curriculum. Lastly, the correlation of determining factors for better learning indicators shed light to the formation of the teacher and to the conditions of teaching. So, the recent focus on the teacher can be also traced as a development of OECD-influenced initiatives.

Interviewees were unanimous in recognizing the boom and spread of an "evaluation culture" in Brazilian education from the mid-1990s. Education evaluation centers flourished inside and outside government structures, and methods for monitoring and evaluating increased in number and in the discussions for their improvement. Academy played an important role in this development, as did non-governmental organizations. The ecology of NGOs was also modified: along with more traditional associations linked to educational movements, corporate foundations and institutes started to play a significant role in monitoring educational

numbers. They embraced the idea of indicators and long-term plans becoming important think tanks and even partners of public administration in certain actions.

The last outcome is the subjection of the theme of public education to simplification and transformation in numbers, and its presence in daily public life from the end of the 1990s. The press gave a lot of attention to the new educational numbers: newspaper articles have increasingly incorporated IDEB and PISA indexes in their graphics accompanying most policy education news. The percentage of the GDP and the proportion of expenditure in basic and high education became strong points of political debate since then. A newspaper headline of November 1998 announced that "One university student is worth 17 basic school students" (Folha de São Paulo 1998).

"The good thing is that education numbers became headline"— said one of the interviewees (Sampaio interview 2018)—but most of them had a dramatic tone: "Research exhibits disastrous picture", in reference to SaEB results in 1996 (Folha de São Paulo 1996); "Brazilian students don't understand what they read"; and "Brazil is in the last place in Math test" (Folha de São Paulo 2001), about the first PISA application, whose results were disclosed in 2001.

One interviewee argued that few people understand PISA in Brazil, and there is insufficient diffusion or translation of Education at a Glance. For her, indicators are misused or underused in policy-level and street-level action (Fini interview 2018). Two interviewees commented that evaluation results required a lot of explanation to avoid distortion in the news. PISA is the least understood of numbers. However, this does not stop public use of education measurements:

> The other day I saw a candidate for president of Republic criticizing our former government using PISA, and using it correctly, but without getting into details. I wondered: 'if a journalist asked him, he would not know how to answer it', but using the slogan 'Brazil, take a look at PISA for Brazil's results, and so on…'. I was wondering: 'if someone asked him: candidate, sorry what is PISA again?'. But even that has already stuck in Brazilian society, I think it is highly appreciated. (Fini interview 2018)

Participation in OECD's initiatives favored the diffusion of numbers, but once they spread, there was also the demand to contextualize, both internally and externally. One of the striking struggles of Brazilian PISA

management was the age criteria for the sample, for Brazilian students in the international criteria were not in the corresponding grades as students from developed countries due to the age-series distortion. Once this local reality context interfered in the design of the sample, excluding students in lower grades, comparison with other countries started to make more sense internally. In following applications, results started to be contextualized: comparison could be made internally—historically, geographically, and related to socioeconomic factors—and not only internationally. The initial "scandal" drew attention to the test, and educational indicators and evaluation tests became more present in daily newspapers and in discussions by the public opinion.

These new indicators made their way into long-term educational plans more recently. When the Basic Education Development Index (IDEB) was created in 2005, INEP developed a calculus to correspond the national index IDEB with PISA scores (Brazilian Federal Government 2009), so that national numbers could be compared with international ones. The IDEB score goal (6,0), stated in the 2007 Director Plan for Education for 2021, was expressly justified for corresponding to OECD´s members average score in PISA. The 2014 National Education Plan incorporates two goals that can be directly associated with OECD. Goal 20 aims "to increase public investment in public education in order to attain a minimum of 7% of the Gross Domestic Product—GDP of the Country in the 5th year of this Law and at least, equivalent to 10% of GDP by the end of the decade" (Brazilian Federal Government 2014). Goal 7.11 establishes minimum PISA scores to be met (Brazilian Federal Government 2014).

Sampaio (interview 2018) remarked that "It became ordinary to discuss in a reasoned way a phenomenon as important as education (…) People are discussing and using statistics to discuss politics." Castro (interview 2018) also stressed significant change "in the core of the educational debate", shedding light on "priority themes". Interviewed agents agreed that education numbers reached the wide public and are being valued.

But in the former officers' opinion, it was not enough. In Fini's view, PISA "is a valued index, but it is just an index. [We have learnt] Nothing. the only lesson learned is Brazil does badly" (interview 2018). Castro goes in the same direction, saying that "from the perspective of academic production and the education policies too, it [evaluation] had an important effect, and the creation of an evaluation culture was also important. What did not improve was quality" (interview 2018).

Concluding Discussion

The set of narratives analyzed in this chapter indicate that agents enact the transformations of this period in a variety of ways and that there is a marked difference between what was planned and what was later narrated as realized. Narratives in prospective documents were much more rigid in following political and bureaucratic forms of presentation of public action, establishing chains of causality to agglutinate different themes and justify the idea of education assessment. The retrospective interviews, recorded and conducted in person, dealt with personal memories presented in institutional settings. All interviews were conducted in office, so even during interviews, agents were enacting their roles and presenting their accomplishments.

A high level of personal involvement, conviction, and creativity was present in all narratives—prospective and retrospective. International methodologies were not easily translatable to the Brazilian context, so agents had to come up with ways to approximate, correspond, and associate international concepts and criteria with the national system. This was done technically in the definition of calculus and samples, relationally on the negotiation with other levels of government and school units, and publicly in the explanation of the numbers that provoked public debate. Even if they were not stated as desired goals, changes in the way INEP agents work and cooperate with other agents to be able to produce meaningful numbers for the context of education quality assessment were the most emphatically stressed unintended consequences of this process.

The fact that institutional agents also have academic careers and occupy positions in different educational forums shows that, even if these actions were formally realized as state policies, their institutionalization and public reach depended heavily on people and connections beyond their offices. Maria Helena Castro, former INEP president, is a retired professor at the University of Campinas, and, even after leaving her government office, she is currently vice-chair of the PISA Governing Board in OECD and a member of UNESCO's Agenda 2030. In Brazil, she is a member of several important non-government movements and organizations: the Board of the Brazilian Association of Educational Evaluation, the Movement for the Common Curricular Base, and All for Education, an association of associations composed of corporate and bank foundations. She has published extensively on the theme of public education from 1983 until 2015, in diverse academic journals, compiled books, and non-government-funded periodicals.

The circulation of people facilitated the circulation of languages, enabling that other groups started to use this language to talk about education with numbers. The multiple character of agents' capacities also resulted in hybrid documents, able to communicate across organizational boundaries. INEP, as an organization, also played a boundary role: even if it acts formally under the Ministry of Education, the Institute has managed to define and establish its international partnerships with relative autonomy and its employees have addressed several publics precisely in the boundary between their roles as state or non-state actors (Villani and Oliveira 2018). This multiple character enabled the reach of more varied and wider publics, enabling that the issue of education quality and assessment traveled and translated across different groups (Leigh Star 2010; Marres 2005). New agents also entered the multiple flow: in the following decade—the 2000s—several non-governmental organizations and groups started to use education numbers to pressure government and to foster "better management" initiatives. This overlap of public action flows across boundaries shows that international, national, and subnational organizations, of governmental character or not, overlap and coordinate in scales and direction not coincident with either hierarchies or organizational units; agents connected to Brazilian public education in this period and their actions are both bigger and smaller than their organizations.

Finally, there was an ambiguous notion of change in the narratives. On the one hand, OECD functioned as a "legitimizer" of internal reforms and its repertoires and calculation methodologies have had a deep influence in working methods inside INEP, resulting in changes in the production of information about education more than in the educational system itself; on the other, agents did not recognize change at the school and student level. Regarding this point, it is interesting to briefly introduce the case of Sobral, a small town in the State of Ceará, used by OECD and Brazilian authorities in charge at the time as a best practice case of learning improvement based on IDEB and PISA scores. Featured in the video series "Strong Performers and Successful Reformers in Education,"[2] produced by OECD, this turned out to be an emblematic case to strengthen the underlying argument that was in the origin of these reforms; that poverty and scarcity of resources are not obstacles to education quality. The case of Sobral also raised criticisms, but its ample diffusion shows that the presence of education performance measured in numbers in daily press, TV, newspapers, best practices leaflets, videos, and other media featuring exemplary experiences was able to reach lots of places outside INEP and to know how they were interpreted and if and how they were incorporated in daily education practices still requires further research.

Notes

1. Brazil was invited to participate as a non-member of several OECD committees during the 1990s as part of an approximation policy of the organization and became full member of OECD Development Center in 1995. Themes included science, technology, environment, commerce, taxes, public finance, and public management, among others (Souza Pinto 2000).
2. PISA Video Series available at http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisaproducts/strongperformers/.

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The Impact of PISA Studies on Education Policy in a Democratic Perspective: The Implementation of National Tests in Denmark

Karen Egedal Andreasen

Introduction

The relationship between assessments and practices is complex, with the former often significantly affecting the latter. This propensity is well known and, to a large extent, also applies within schools and education (e.g. Pereyra et al. 2011). Depending on their form and use, assessments might also influence teachers' pedagogy and activities in classroom settings and can cause a so-called backwash effect (Andreasen and Kousholt 2015). Their application can thus give rise to maintaining practices, but also contribute to changing practices of which they form a part if the assessment's design or use is changed.

An important point to also understand is that assessments always reflect values and the power of those who have access to influence assessment

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Fig. 7.1 FP9 Danish Written Presentation in public school, May 2019 (copyright: ©Dueholmskolen, Mors, Denmark)

practices (Biesta 2011). In education, this can come in the form of expressing a particular understanding of subjects and subject knowledge, which knowledge is regarded as relevant, and in which ways and forms. Assessments mediate such understandings, but this type of mediation also occurs in implicit ways—in many cases, in ways of which we are not aware (e.g. Biesta 2007; Sjøberg 2016; Ydesen 2014).

Sociologists, such as Bourdieu, have addressed and analyzed these fundamental themes and issues present in theories of assessment. With regard to assessments in education, Bourdieu concludes that, among other things, they express the ruling classes' values and are a critical means for establishing, maintaining, and passing on social stratifications (Bourdieu and Passeron 1996). In this way, they largely form a practice by which power can be expressed and exercised, but in ways that are mostly invisible.

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), initiated by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), belongs to this cadre of international education assessments that have been particularly dominant since their implementation around the turn of the century (e.g. Biesta 2011; Lawn and Grek 2012; Meyer and Benavot 2013; Pereyra et al. 2011; Sjøberg 2016). This is due to many conditions, but important components can be found in a number of instruments or 'tools' developed within the OECD framework and in the overall practices of PISA (Toledo Silva, this volume; Morgan 2007).

Using Denmark as a case, this chapter considers how PISA, through these 'tools', influences and affects national education policy and practice. Since these processes, to a great extent, occur without being explicitly expressed or addressed by politicians, one should ask whether PISA and its corresponding practice can be regarded as a challenge to democracy and democratic processes. The insights from the Danish case will be discussed more generally in relation to other countries and education systems.

International Cooperation, Governance, and Democracy in Education

Since democracy's introduction in modern Western states, theorists, politicians, practitioners, and citizens in general have concerned themselves with democracy as a concept, but also with its practical realization (Biesta 2006; Dewey 1916). Most Western states have developed individual models of democratic forms of government, and the idea of democracy is realized in many ways, which are often expressed in the different social processes and institutions within these different national contexts (Held 1987/1996). But democracy is constantly confronted with new challenges, oppositions, and dilemmas resulting from changes occurring in modern societies. These challenges have expressed themselves in a wide range of contexts, including in relation to the education sector, where, for instance, the following processes have been thematized.

The relationship between democracy and education has long appeared as a particularly complex theme. For example, Dewey's *Democracy and Education*, published in 1916, treated a number of the prevailing educational themes present at that time, many of which remain relevant today. For instance, the relationship between democracy and administration, which deals with questions about how democracy can be managed and realized within the administration of the state (Biesta 2006; Ydesen 2014;

Ydesen and Andreasen 2014), and the relationship between, on the one hand, political cooperation in international fora and, on the other hand, local governance (Popkewitz 2011; Sjøberg 2016). These themes represent axes in discussions and analyses of the issue that is the focus of this chapter, namely, the PISA studies in the perspective of democracy.

Democracy and democratic forms of government are the key pillars of modern Western welfare states and can be seen as being based on ideas and ideals about, among many other things, equality, equal rights, influence, and inclusion (Biesta 2006, 2011). At the same time, democracy as a form of government builds on ideas about a particular relationship between the state and the citizen, a relationship in which citizens have the right to influence their government and are assigned a form of 'authority'. In the twentieth century, such ideas were clearly expressed in connection with the establishment of the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which emphasized education's importance in connection with developing and preserving democracy, with this idea as its particular focal point. This was expressed in the convention as it was formulated on 16 November 1945 after the end of World War II, namely, 'That since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed […]' (UNESCO 1945, p. 1).

Thus, education was considered one of the primary means to realize UNESCO's initiatives. These were directed at both increasing the general educational level among citizens in the member countries, which would produce more enlightened citizens, and via education to ensure that citizens would learn about international understanding and democracy. Education was therefore viewed as an important formative and influential societal resource.

The growth of educational institutions corresponded with the development of complex accountability systems and ways to 'control' and administer the cost and efficiency of educational activities. Dewey also addressed such questions and reflected on the dilemmas that appeared central to the relationship among education, democracy, and assessments:

> When social efficiency as measured by product or output is urged as an ideal in a would-be democratic society, it means that the depreciatory estimate of the masses characteristic of an aristocratic community is accepted and carried over. But if democracy has a moral and ideal meaning, it is that a social return be demanded from all and that opportunity for development of dis-

tinctive capacities be afforded all. The separation of the two aims in educa-
tion is fatal to democracy; the adoption of the narrower meaning of efficiency
deprives it of its essential justification. (Dewey 1916, p. 142)

Thus, the effort to administer and control national educational expenses,
on the one hand, and the learning outcomes, on the other, represents an
imminent challenge to democracy and democratic processes.

Challenges to Democracy

Historically, the argument for the societal need for education has not only
been associated with democracy, but also with another central social con-
dition, namely, the labor market. By contributing to this aspect, education
plays an important role in national economies, which explains why so
much attention is devoted to the role education plays in the population's
welfare, as well as in the economy and efficiency of this practice. Thus, this
role also corresponds with what can be understood as a form of instru-
mental relationship between the education system and the labor market, in
which educational institutions are charged with performing the function
of ensuring the 'supply' of the necessary workforce, one that possesses the
knowledge, skills, and competencies required—either assumed or claimed
to be—at a given time (Biesta 2010; Elfert this volume; Spring 2015).

Such an instrumental relationship, as well as the costs associated with
educating the population, almost automatically generates a need for con-
trol and accountability. The control is exercised by dictating the state's
institutions deliver the 'product' that the labor market demands and that
this will occur in the most efficient way possible. The 'product' in question
is defined by the parties possessing the greatest opportunity to influence
educational agendas. Since the 1960s, the OECD has steadily advanced its
influence in this regard.

The OECD has achieved dominance in relation to the education sector
through its developed practice. Based on this practice, which includes
PISA in combination with other tools, the OECD and its suborganiza-
tions have been able to define and set educational agendas, which also
appear dominant in local and national policies (Biesta 2011; Meyer and
Benavot 2013; Papadopoulos 1994). Thereby, a picture emerges of a pos-
sible problem area in the gap between, on the one hand, the OECD/
PISA's influence on education policy and practice and, on the other, dem-
ocratic processes. As mentioned, the goal of this chapter is to investigate

this situation using Denmark as our example. The insights from the analysis will be discussed more generally in relation to other countries and education systems.

Over the several decades since World War II, Danish educational policies were influenced by progressive pedagogical ideas, which were also reflected in a critical attitude toward grading and examinations, and a resistance against national mandatory standardized forms of testing. During the twentieth century, while standardized forms of testing in most Western countries were present and becoming a critical part of their schooling systems, such testing was not a national mandatory practice in the Danish compulsory school. PISA played a role in changing this completely by delegitimating the prevailing dominant discourse—one that reflected a critical stance toward and resistance against such a testing practice—and legitimating a strengthening as to the use of assessment and testing in the compulsory school. Thus, Denmark offers an interesting example in illustrating and making visible in a specific way how OECD influences and interferes in national politics, and the processes and tools by which this happens, of which PISA is one.

Via their application in education, such assessments highlight differences among individuals, produce categorizations, and play an important role in processes for both including and excluding students, pedagogic practices in classrooms in general, and school governance in particular (Biesta 2011). By defining, communicating, and influencing specific understandings of which criteria are important in schools and education as well as in people's lives in general, surveys such as PISA also prompt the asking of important questions in a democratic society (ibid.), in which central ideas are associated with inclusion and equal rights (Biesta 2006, 2011).

A Brief Overview of PISA Studies and OECD Tools and Practices

The PISA program and PISA studies were initiated in 1997, and they have been carried out every three years 'in the key areas of reading, mathematics, science, and problem-solving' (OECD 2018, p. 3). However, in recent years, they have also focused on other kinds of skills, competencies, and conditions, and included age groups other than the original ones, who were students finishing their secondary school education (Lewis, this volume).

The results from the first study were published in 2001. At that time, 32 countries participated; four of them were not OECD member countries, but they had agreed to participate in the research. Overall, 265,000 students participated in PISA 2000. In PISA 2015, 72 countries participated, approximately 540,000 students, 9000 of which were from approximately 330 schools in Denmark. These can be considered comprehensive studies, whereby the number of participating countries has more than doubled since the first study was produced.

We will consider PISA from an analytical perspective because the most interesting issues are not the studies themselves. Before 2000, other organizations had carried out similar types of international performance measurements, such as those by the International Organization for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) from the 1950s (Lawn and Grek 2012). Although the PISA surveys did not represent something completely new, what was particularly interesting and noteworthy with PISA is the practices of which they form a part: these include the 'Indicators of Education System' (INES), OECD country reports, country notes, and so forth—and the effect the PISA studies have achieved in the form of influence on policy and practice in the education sector in certain member countries. It is precisely this influence that makes it interesting to closely examine the question of how the studies are connected with, or 'linked to', and influence the political system in OECD member countries. The abovementioned tools were all developed within the framework of the OECD's suborganization Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI), established in 1968 with the specific purpose of working with education systems by applying a research and policy perspective (Centeno, this volume; Lindblad et al. 2018; Lundgren 2011; OECD 2017).

From the 1980s, the increasing interest in education led to the OECD and CERI initiating the development of a range of so-called indicators (i.e. INES) that could be used in comparing different countries' education systems. The process started in 1988 with a preparatory phase 1, followed by phase 2 (1990–1991) with the development of the indicators, and phase 3 (from 1992) with a shift to actually using these indicators (OECD 2012). Since 1992, the publication *Education at a Glance* has made available comparative statistical data on member countries' education systems based on these indicators and for use in education policy planning in member and non-member countries (OECD 2017). From the first part of the twenty-first century, country reports focusing on specific countries

and their education systems and challenges have also been produced (Grek and Ydesen 2021; Papadopoulos 1994; Morgan 2007).

The following brief timeline outlines the process:

- 1968: CERI is established and, from this point, produces different types of country reviews/country reports
- From the 1980s: Development of INES
- From 1992: Publication of *Education at a Glance*, which is based on INES
- From 1993: Publication of *What Works in Innovation in Education*
- From 1997/2000: PISA launched in 1997 and implemented with surveys every third year from 2000

Today, CERI still describes one of its important goals as providing and promoting 'international comparative research, innovation, and key indicators' (OECD 2019, p. 1) and 'providing a "test-bed" for developing new tools and techniques to support better education policies and practices, new assessment instruments, approaches to building education system capacity, and indicators to monitor progress (OECD 2019, p. 2).

The purpose of influencing countries' education systems and their development is thus stated explicitly with the use of an expression such as 'monitor'. With this word, it is also clear that the results PISA decides to promote are by no means inconsequential.

PISA's Impact and the Resulting Challenges to Democratic Processes

In addition to functioning as a coordinating body between member and non-member states, the OECD performs a wide range of activities. One important activity is the organization's role in generating statistics and preparing analyses and surveys within the education sector for use in the individual member countries, which are also carrying out PISA studies.

To a great extent, these products are based on comparative statistics and the production of hierarchal rankings. Individual member countries can freely choose whether or how they use this information. Having the will to choose to use the information, however, does not mean a country controls how such use might influence education policy in national contexts, to point out one example. Ulf Lundgren, a previous CERI board

member from Sweden, who was personally involved in the development of both PISA and INES, expresses it in the following statement: 'It was obvious that the data collected also had a steering effect. Even if the OECD does not have the mandate to change policies, they influence them' (Lundgren 2011, p. 26).

Such activities and instruments do not take the same form as, for example, the OECD's enacting of 'decisions' or 'international agreements' subject to democratic processes. Instead, they work by informing politicians and guiding decision-making processes in certain directions, a more opaque activity. Influence practiced in this manner will naturally proceed differently according to the national context in question, but in principal without being subject to democratic processes and rules in the same way as when political decisions are made in the customary manner through regular channels of legislative or parliamentary means.

The OECD is aware of this, as we see in Lundgren's quotation. In an analysis published in 2012, the organization also considered PISA's *impact* on the education sector in different national contexts. Here, individuals considered experts from selected OECD countries (an expert from each country was mentioned) were asked about the degree of influence they believe PISA had on political processes in each of their countries. In general, the influence was estimated to be extensive (Breakspear 2012). With regard to Denmark, the expert who was asked estimated that the degree to which PISA informed the policymaking process was extremely high (ibid.). Although this analysis can, to some degree, be questioned due to the very narrow study population on which it is based—and the conclusion regarding Denmark alone is based on just one expert's assessment—it nonetheless provides food for thought that PISA's impact is assessed as so significant. The influence and the strong political orientation toward the PISA results are, not unexpectedly, expressed in several contexts in the political decision-making processes in Denmark. As an example, it can be mentioned that the Danish prime minister in January 2010—the same year the Danish national tests were implemented—described a range of political targets up until 2020, one of which noted that Denmark must be ranked in the top five in the PISA studies (Breakspear 2012; Regeringen 2010). That this has not come to pass is, however, beyond the scope of this chapter's analysis.

In addition, the political decision regarding developing mandatory national standardized proficiency tests for the Danish primary and lower secondary education system in 2005/2006, with their subsequent imple-

mentation in 2010, provides an example of precisely the kind of influence and its associated processes discussed above. In particular, it shows how PISA, in interaction with a number of the other tools mentioned developed under OECD/CERI, influenced and mediated this process, but in a manner that occurred outside the customary democratic channels.

Briefly, in December 2005, the then-Minister of Education Bertel Haarder presented a proposal to change the Danish law on primary and lower secondary education. The proposal, which passed in 2006, was called 'Strengthened Assessment and Use of National Tests as an Educational Tool as Well as Mandatory Tests, etc.' (Undervisningsministeriet 2006). With this, a political decision was made that was completely new in Danish primary and lower secondary education: to introduce the use of mandatory standardized national tests. Test development was completed, and the tests were implemented from 2010.

This decision changed many conditions in Danish primary and lower secondary education, introducing and establishing a completely new practice for evaluating students' academic development, and which thereby also affected teachers' pedagogical practices. In connection with a research project on assessment in primary and lower secondary education, I was present as a researcher in the schools and in some classes that I followed during that period. I had the opportunity to make observations precisely on the days the tests were carried out nationally for the first time (Andreasen and Kousholt 2015). I also followed students and classes for an extended interval thereafter, and thus could track the practice that arose surrounding the tests. The role the tests played for students, teachers, and school leaders will be described below.

The following section describes, and offers an analysis of, the underlying process and the question of what action initiated the processes that led to political decisions such as this and, more specifically, which roles PISA and the OECD/CERI played in these decisions. This specific event and the entire process that led up to it can thus be seen as a case illustrating how the OECD/CERI can influence decision-making processes via their informing the political layer. It is an influence that begins at the international level, via local and national political decision-making processes and educational decision-making processes in schools, and moves all the way down to its effects on classroom pedagogy and, thereby, on the individual child. It is also a case that clarifies the importance of considering the extent of the OECD's influence in relation to education policy at the national

level and the exercise of power, as well as on democracy and democratic decision-making processes as an outgrowth.

Denmark: Case Study

During the 1980s and 1990s, a certain concern among specialists and researchers in the area of reading prevailed regarding Danish students' reading proficiency. Danish reading researchers' analyses appeared to suggest, among other things, an increasing number of pupils with low skills in reading (Elbro et al. 1981). While no definitive answer to the question was found, the end result was a dawning focus on Danish students' academic development.

Danish Students' Reading Proficiency in an International Comparison from the 1990s

Around 1990, Denmark participated for the first time in one of IEA's international comparative studies of students' academic development in reading (Gustafsson 2012; Mejding 1994). The results obtained from Denmark's participation, which appeared shortly thereafter, were a disappointment for Danish politicians and also came as a surprise to many others concerned with schools and education. Danish students did not perform as well as students in the other Nordic countries, and the results were generally regarded as shocking by many, giving rise to considerable discussion among politicians and different groups of educational experts (Allerup 2018).

During the same period, the development and use of international comparisons began to intensify. This occurred, among other ways, in the form of the OECD/CERI's program INES and, from 1992, the annual report *Education at a Glance*, whose content, as described above, was based on INES' indicator system.

However, Denmark was one of the countries that in some ways presented challenges when these kinds of comparable statistics had to be generated, since it, as with many other countries, did not offer national mandatory standardized proficiency tests in primary and lower secondary education. Thus, it was not possible to state students' academic level and development using the indicators for issues such as these with any degree of certainty, due to inadequate data resources allowing CERI to perform analyses, generate reports, and draw comparisons (e.g. Henningsen and Allerup 2017).

It was within this context that PISA, from 1997, carried out its studies and published the first of these in 2000 in the report *Knowledge and Skills for Life—First Results from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2000* (OECD 2001). The Danish results were published in a separate report: *Danish Students in an International Comparison* (Andersen et al. 2001). The results from this survey, similar to those from the IEA study, were not positive for Danish school students, who also performed worse in this study on many points than did students in the other Nordic countries (Henningsen and Allerup 2017). The poor ranking of Danish students' skills development at school in international comparisons was repeated again later in PISA 2003 (Gustafsson 2012).

There was talk of studies, in interaction with other OECD activities and initiatives during the same period, that in the future would have a significant impact on Danish education policy. This seeming ability to document that Danish students were not learning effectively in their schools and were showing poor academic gains allowed these studies to become interwoven into the political fabric of the day, where they were able to *delegitimize* previous decades of education policy and political arguments about education (Gustafsson 2012). In this way, they prepared the ground for political initiatives toward strengthening the control and use of evaluations in primary and secondary education. This influence was evident despite widespread criticism by recognized statisticians within the education sector directed at the studies themselves and the quality of the statistics they generated (e.g. Henningsen and Allerup 2017; Kreiner and Christensen 2014).

OECD Country Report About Denmark and a Claimed Lack of Assessment Culture

From the 1990s, the OECD had, as noted above, produced the so-called country reports. Based on the INES indicators, these provided a review of individual countries' school systems and, in continuation of this, numerous recommendations. In 2004, such a review was produced for Denmark that concerned the Danish primary and lower secondary school system (Undervisningsministeriet 2004b). An important conclusion reached in the report described a 'lack of an assessment culture' in schools (Shewbridge et al. 2011; Undervisningsministeriet 2004b, p. 70).

The report described this failing was present in different ways. For example, the reviewers believed they could reasonably conclude that the

teachers 'lacked informed discussions of the importance of the concept of "standard"' (Undervisningsministeriet 2004b, p. 70).[1] In another example, it was concluded that 'due to a lack of objective information, we also do not know how the teachers would be able to discover that the international standards have potentially increased' (ibid., p. 109) and that 'it must be difficult for the teachers to measure how well their students perform in science or the other subjects that are taught' (ibid., p. 108). The report argued strongly with the use of such phrases for the development and strengthening of what was described as an 'assessment culture', and stated that it was 'certainly the single change that is most important to achieve if other initiatives are able to be introduced so that they have an impact and the standards can be raised' (ibid. 2004b, p. 129).

Furthermore, the report concluded that 'there appears to be a certain agreement about there being a need for a shift in culture in the secondary school from an "input culture" to a work culture that is more dominated by observations of the students' work' (ibid., 2004b, p. 97). While it is not stated who were the spokespersons for this 'certain agreement', all in all, this report managed to have a significant impact vis-à-vis the new law under development pertaining to primary and lower secondary education, as discussed below.

New Law on Primary and Lower Secondary Education 2005/2006 and the Introduction of a New Assessment Practice

In 2005/2006, the Danish parliament passed a new law affecting Danish primary and lower secondary education in which was stated that a national mandatory standardized proficiency test should be developed. The bill that passed in 2006 was entitled 'Strengthened Assessment and Use of National Tests as an Educational Tool as Well as Mandatory Tests, etc.'. The then-Minister of Education Haarder expressed the following:

> The law aims to strengthen the continuous assessment of what the students gain from teaching in school. With the amendment, it will be explicitly expressed that the ongoing assessment of the students' gains from the teaching must involve the binding attainment and final objectives […]. Furthermore, it is decided that, as part of the assessment of the students' gains from the teaching, centrally developed tests in selected subjects in certain year groups must be used. (Haarder 2005a, p. 1)

The OECD's role in these processes also appears explicitly in the speech outlining the bill, in which the liberal Haarder refers to evaluations from the OECD:

> The latest studies show that the academic results are still unsatisfactory. Progress in the academic area requires, according to the OECD's and others' evaluations, a particular effort and forward-looking initiatives, in the same way that it has been pointed out from various sides that the assessment culture in Denmark is insufficient. (Haarder 2005b, p. 1)

This law not only introduced national tests, but also a whole body of laws establishing a practice specifying that results gleaned from the national tests should be used in specific ways and activities. This body of laws included: (1) national academic goals, (2) a mandatory student plan and teacher–student dialogue, (3) requirements for the schools that concerned developing a mandatory annual quality report containing, among other things, results from the national tests and which were to be publicly accessible, and (4) a new grading scale designed for absolute grading to replace the former scale meant for relative grading in which the distribution of grades in a population will influence the grade of the specific pupil following a normal distribution. The idea of absolute grading is that it should correspond with, for instance, specific scores on a test.

A few years before the law was passed, in the same period that the OECD's country report was produced, the Danish government had launched an initiative: Modernisation of Tests, Examinations, and Grades (Regeringen 2004). In this, the introduction of national tests was forecast, even if indirectly:

> The necessity of the use of external examiners to ensure the reliability and credibility of the test results must be reassessed at the same time as new forms of test are introduced. *Tests that exclusively test fundamental academic skills and abilities (monodimensional tests) will often be able to be carried out through the use of IT and without external examiners.* In this way, it will be possible to move resources from these forms of tests to new (polydimensional) forms of tests that assess education's overall, non-simple academic goals [italics added]. (Regeringen 2004, p. 10)

In this formulation, the later initiatives were argued for, and also included the introduction of national academic goals, which can be seen as the requirement for being able to carry out academic evaluations based on

test results. At the same time, other formulations also indirectly argued for another initiative in the shape of developing the new grading scale. Here, the OECD country report's criticism of what it assessed as a lack of a common standard is also seen, for example, in the following statement:

> The renewed goals are absolute sizes. For pupils and students, it must be clear what is to be learnt, what subject is to be tested, and the performance that should be possible according to the tests. Performance assessments must be carried out in relation to the academic goals. This requires a sufficiently precise description of the goals so that the extent to which the pupil/the student has achieved these goals can be assessed. (Regeringen 2004, p. 20)

Simultaneously, we can see an argument for developing a new grading scale taking shape:

> An assessment of the extent of goal attainment requires an absolute evaluation of what was performed in relation to the academic goals. For this purpose, there is a need for a grading system that is suitable both in relation to the assessment methods, and for expressing and communicating information about the achieved results. (Regeringen 2004, p. 24)

A project with this in mind was initiated and resulted in a new scale that was evaluated and determined to meet such requirements. It was put into use in 2006/2007 (Undervisningsministeriet 2004a).

Subsequently, much work in formulating the so-called learning goals for all subjects and year groups in primary and lower secondary education has taken place, work that was also strongly criticized from many sides, and recently resulted in changes lifting the restriction of adapting the teaching to only those for whom it was originally intended (Undervisningsministeriet 2017).

The Backwash Effect of Assessments

As noted above in this chapter, as a researcher working on a three-year project, from 2010, I was able to follow directly the national tests' implementation and how the practice surrounding them developed, as well as how students experienced and responded to them. From the beginning, the body of laws attached to the national tests established certain fixed elements in the practice itself. These included, for example, its use in con-

nection with the drawing-up of student plans, the holding of teacher–student dialogues, and the mandatory school quality report

What was noteworthy to observe beyond this, although not unexpected, was that the tests' content and tasks became significant for parts of classroom teaching. The tests were held only once a year for certain year groups with a voluntary 'trial' assessment, but I observed that teachers were aware of them when the time for test-taking approached. To some extent, teachers adapted their teaching and activities with their classes to the tests. In other words, the tests had a backwash effect that affected education and teaching and caused what is also known as 'teaching-to-the-test' (Andreasen and Kousholt 2015). Within evaluation theory, this is described as *assessments' constitutive effect*. Via these paths, the initiatives from the OECD/CERI thus can be observed influencing teaching all the way into classrooms at the local schools.

Concluding Discussion

The processes described above depicting how the use of national tests passed through the legislative body and became law in 2005/2006, and then saw implementation in Denmark from 2010, shed light on the strength with which the PISA studies in interaction with the other OECD/CERI tools influence the political agenda, arguments, and choices, and also how this process is accomplished. As the former Head of CERI Ulf Lundgren (2011) stated, no doubt exists that PISA's and CERI's activities exert a controlling effect. By these methods, these tools influence political processes in ways that can be discussed and problematized, as seen from a democratic perspective. The OECD's views and proposals are clearly reflected in the range of laws and amendments passed in Denmark at the same time as the decision was made regarding national tests, including, for example, the drawing-up of a changed grading scale, the introduction of goal-oriented teaching, and the introduction of the school quality report.

The challenge of educational testing to democracy has been analyzed and discussed in relation to another educational test practice, namely, high-stakes testing (e.g. Ydesen 2014). Ydesen analyzes and discusses the influence of high-stakes testing at micro, meso, and macro levels (pupil/individual, institution, and national levels, respectively) (ibid., p. 100). Because it has no formal consequences—such as giving pupils access to further education, or documenting competencies of specific pupils or results obtained from specific schools—PISA cannot be considered a high-

stakes test, but its results, according to PISA, are meant to inform politicians. In so doing, PISA surveys nevertheless can be said to lead to some of the same effects and consequences as those observed in educational high-stakes testing. By informing the political level (macro) and, as described, influencing political decisions, the design of PISA itself also influences what is being assessed at the national level and thus, also to some extent, the specific design of national standardized testing. This naturally leads to PISA surveys implicitly influencing pedagogy (micro level), as well as institutional practices (meso level). This result is interesting and illustrates the general influence of educational assessment practice on education systems at all levels, and how it might compromise and challenge democratic ideals.

Circling back to Bourdieu, he points out that assessments express values, and this also applies to PISA and the practice of which PISA is a part—values that, through this process, influence education policy and educational practice. If one reviews the development of primary and lower secondary education in Denmark, the country has, like many other places in the world, been dominated by battles waged by and among different educational positions, ideals, or ideas about what characterizes good teaching and a good school. On the one hand, there have been proponents for a school system with an emphasis on its disciplinary role, teaching based on control and strict management of students' behavior and activities, selection, an orientation toward performance, as well as strong top-down management of the teaching content. Such views have stood in contrast to proponents for what is expressed in the ideas characterized as 'progressive education', as stated, for example, by John Dewey and many others. This view criticizes authoritative education and argues instead for an education that integrates democratic ideals—and thus also promotes democracy—for student influence and an extensive degree of student-adjusted teaching and inclusion. Over time, these positions have been expressed in political debates and decision-making processes and relate to political standpoints. The political orientation observed over recent decades and its stance toward greater control of schools can be said to have given such education ideas greater dominance over the so-called progressive education, whereby the political dimension in PISA's practice suddenly comes clearly into focus.

Nevertheless, it remains interesting to observe that in some ways, political interest in PISA appears to be declining, for example, due to realizing that one's place in the rankings does not necessarily move significantly, no matter the type of test administered, intense criticism of the studies, and a

growing demand for competencies that resist measurement with this type of study, although one can see that PISA is seeking to adapt to these changes (Henningsen and Allerup 2017). It is also interesting to consider the importance that such developments will have in the future, and how they will likely affect political decisions and educational developments over time.

NOTE

1. All translations of research literature and primary sources from Danish to English used in this chapter were produced by the author unless otherwise stated.

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OECD and Educational Policy in China

Yihuan Zou

INTRODUCTION

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has risen to become, in recent decades, one of the most influential international actors in the global education field. Its influence not only covers its member states but also extends to non-member states (see Elfert, this volume; Lewis, this volume). The mechanism of its influence depends on both the membership status and the political, social, and cultural background of the respective state. Mainland China (hereinafter referred as China) started its cooperation with the OECD as a non-member state in 1995. Since then, the cooperation has progressively expanded to a broad array of policy areas, of which education is an important one. In this area, the two partners have various collaborations in key OECD initiatives, including the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), PISA for Schools, and the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), as well as participating in review reports on educational development and co-organizing international conferences on educational policy, and so on.

Over the last few decades, China has achieved impressive gains in economic development and is emerging as a global power. But its path to

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Fig. 8.1 Chinese Minister of Education visits the OECD, 5 November 2013. Left to right: Yuan Guiren, Minister of Education, China; Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General. (Copyright: ©OECD)

progress does not fit the norms of development of the OECD member countries (OECD 2009: 5). Although there are common policy issues facing China and other countries, and China is open to adapting so-called international 'best practices' in addressing them, it would be a mistake to believe that China is just seeking simply to imitate them. The OECD's influence on the educational system of China must instead be understood in terms of the specific collaborations between the two, but also in relation to the Chinese institutional context policy objectives, modes of decision-making, and its governance culture. This chapter will review the OECD's educational collaboration with China since 1995 and shed light on at least this *modus operandi* for how OECD interacts with non-member states in education, and how OECD policy ideas in education have been adopted in a specific national context. The examination of the OECD's influence on the Chinese educational system might also contribute to better understanding the role of international organizations in global governance. Specifically, the research questions are:

- What are the main collaborations between OECD and China in educational policy?
- How have the OECD's policy ideas been used in the Chinese educational field?
- How can the OECD's impact on Chinese education be understood in a global context?

Empirically, answering these questions will rely on reviews of archival material from the websites of the Ministry of Education of China, the OECD *ilibrary* and website, the China Education Yearbook, and other existing research literature. This chapter will first propose an analytical framework through which to understand the OECD's impact on individual countries, before a short mapping of the educational collaborations between OECD and China, followed by an analysis on how the OECD's ideas have been put to use in the Chinese context. Finally, there will be a concluding discussion on how the OECD's impact on Chinese education can be understood in a global context.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: UNDERSTANDING THE OECD'S IMPACT ON EDUCATION IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

With the emergence and mediation of the OECD and other international organizations, a global field of educational policy has emerged in recent years (Carnoy 2016). Previously, nation-states used to make their own educational policies relatively independently, meaning that different states were relatively unrelated to each other. But as demonstrated in this volume, the OECD has created a common set of indicators and frameworks to which nation-states relate and adhere. By its thematic reviews and its comparative work, the OECD may act as an international mediator and shaper of knowledge, and thus a policy actor in its own right, rather than merely as a comparative forum for the discussion of ideas (Henry et al. 2001; Lewis 2017).

To understand the OECD's impacts on education in individual countries, Archer's (1994) three-level analysis of international organizations' implication in policy making provides a useful framework. At the first level, international organizations can serve as *instruments of policy*, where they help identify problems, inform national debates, or legitimate already-taken policy decisions. At the second level, they can be *policy making*

arenas, serving as meeting places or platforms that enable formal, diplomatic interaction between member states. And, at the third level, they can be *policy actors in their own right*, where they become identifiable actors, distinguishable from their member states.

Besides these three analytical levels, the dimensions of power involved in policy making can also shed light on the analysis of the OECD's impacts. Lukes (1983) differentiates three dimensions of power in policy making process: decision-making, controlling preferences, and establishing frames of reference. The dimension of decision-making involves taking the decision directly. Controlling preferences refers to agenda setting, and setting what comes to attention. And establishing frames of reference points to the capacity to achieve consensus by shaping perceptions, cognitions, and preferences in such a way that people accept their role in the existing order of things.

Although China is a non-member country of the OECD, there are still numerous collaborations between them, and China has readily made use of information offered by the OECD. After a short mapping of the educational collaborations between the OECD and China, the major forms of OECD ideas in the Chinese educational field will be reviewed through these theoretical frameworks. The review will try to shed light on the way of how OECD has impacted on China, specifically, in which level(s) OECD has an impact on Chinese education, and which dimensions of power have been exerted.

Educational Collaboration Between OECD and China: A Short Mapping

The OECD and China started an official relationship in 1995, first in the economic area and then gradually expanding to other areas. Their collaboration in education can be traced back as early as 1998. From that year, China, together with some other non-member countries such as Brazil, India, Russia, and Thailand, started to contribute to the OECD annual publication *Education at a Glance* through the *World Education Indicators* (WEI) program, which OECD co-ordinates in co-operation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (OECD 1998). Since then, the educational collaboration between the two parties has increased in a variety of forms.

OECD Reviews of Education in China

A retrieval from the OECD website database shows its reviews of education in China cover two types of review: (1) The country review of the Chinese educational system published as *Education in China: A Snapshot* (OECD 2016) and (2) Thematic reviews of various aspects of the Chinese educational system. This second set of thematic reviews include publications such as *Current Issues in Chinese Higher Education* (OECD 2000), *OECD Review of Financing and Quality Assurance Reforms in Higher Education in the People's Republic of China* (OECD 2004), *OECD Reviews of Tertiary Education: China* (OECD 2009), and *OECD Reviews of Vocational Education and Training: A Learning for Jobs Review of China* (Kuczera and Field 2010).

These are all the retrievable OECD reviews specifically focused on Chinese education from its online database. They are mainly coordinated by the state Ministry of Education (MoE) of China, and/or the policy consultancy agency under its auspices, the National Centre for Education Development Research (NCEDR).

Conference Co-organization Between the OECD and Ministry of Education of China

OECD and the MoE of China have co-organized several conferences on shared interests, mainly in the area of higher education. The participants include OECD experts, Chinese MoE officers, and Chinese researchers. The main mediator of these conferences is the National Centre for Education Development Research (NCEDR), which is also in charge of translating and editing the discussions to be published in Chinese. The major conferences retrievable from the China Education Yearbook, the Chinese Ministry of Education website, and other Chinese publications are as follows: (1) International Symposium on Higher Education Development Policy, Beijing, November 27–29, 2000, with the proceedings published in Chinese as *Country Reports on Higher Education Development Policies* (Zheng and Fan 2002); (2) International Symposium on Higher Education Development and Funding Policy, Beijing, July 11–14, 2004, with the proceedings published as *Development of Higher Education and Financing Policies in the Context of OECD-China Programme* (Fan and Yan 2005); and (3) International Symposium on Higher Education Governance, Beijing & Guiyang, April 27–May 2,

2008, with the proceedings published as *Development of Higher Education and Governing Policies in the Context of OECD-China Programme* (Fan and Ma 2010).

Collaboration on PISA and TALIS Between the OECD and China

China's participation in PISA started with OECD's collaboration with the local authorities in Shanghai in 2009. With the support of the Education Committee of the Shanghai government, the Shanghai Academy of Education Sciences established the Shanghai PISA Group to oversee the PISA test (Shanghai PISA Group 2010). After Shanghai participated in PISA in 2009 and 2012 and twice emerged as the top-performing schooling system, the Ministry of Education decided to enlarge China's participation in order 'to show the achievement of educational reform in China to the world, and implement the open-up strategy for educational reform and development' (National Education Examinations Authority 2016, p. 3, my translation).[1] In 2014, the MoE signed an agreement with the OECD to arrange for Shanghai, Beijing, Jiangsu, and Guangdong to take part in PISA 2015, with the mediating group shifting to the China National Center for PISA 2015, which is affiliated with the National Education Examinations Authority (National Education Examinations Authority 2016). This agency is under the direct auspices of the Ministry of Education. Based on the results of PISA 2015, the overall result of the four Chinese economies/provinces (excluding Hong Kong SAR and Macao SAR) was tenth place among the 72 participating countries/schooling systems.

Based on the collaboration with the OECD in PISA, Shanghai also took part the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) program in 2013, when this program enlarged its participation for the first time.

Collaboration in Educational Indicators Between the OECD and China

China has contributed to the OECD annual publication *Education at a Glance* since 1998. In 2010, it launched a Chinese version in collaboration with the China National Institute of Education Sciences, an agency under the auspices of the MoE (China Education News Web 2011). Since then, *Education at a Glance* has also been made available in Chinese, and China is now also a participant in the OECD Working Party on Indicators of Educational Systems (INES).

Since 2007, China has become one of the key partners of the OECD through the OECD Enhanced Engagement process, which aims to strengthen the OECD's co-operation with Brazil, Russia, India, Indonesia, China, and South Africa (the so-called BRIICS emerging nations) with a view to eventual OECD membership. The process gives the OECD Members and the six countries an opportunity to examine one another's policies as peers, in order to help disseminate OECD policy advice and these countries' own experiences, and to build consensus on policy standards (OECD 2011). In the educational domain, China is now one of the invitees for the Education Policy Committee in OECD, whose role is assisting governments to develop effective, efficient, and evidence-based policies for education through disseminating and exchanging policy information and ideas among OECD members and non-members.

In addition to these formal collaborations in education, there are also OECD reports, policy frameworks, and initiatives that have been translated and/or introduced in Chinese. These include *Education Policy Analysis* (OECD series publication, translated into Chinese since 1998); *Learning to Bridge the Digital Divide* (published by OECD in 2000, translated into Chinese in 2009); *What Schools for the Future?* (published in 2001, translated in 2009); *Learning to Change: ICT in Schools* (published in 2001, translated in 2008); *Trends Shaping Education* (published in 2008, translated in 2009); *Educational Research and Innovation: Higher Education to 2030* (two volumes, published in 2008 and 2009, and translated in 2011 and 2012); *Languages in a Global World: Learning for Better Cultural Understanding* (published in 2012, translated in 2017); and *Leadership for 21st-Century Learning* (published in 2013, and translated in 2017).

Understanding OECD Ideas in the Field of Chinese Education

OECD ideas, programs, and initiatives mainly appear in Chinese educational officials' speeches, consultancy articles/reports, as well as providing background information to educational policies. Information from the OECD is often regarded with a high level of reliability, and thus high authority. It is mainly used to demonstrate Chinese educational achievements, to locate China in the international landscape in order to pave the way for certain policies, and to show the international reference of policy.

Showing the Educational Progress and Achievement in China

Showing the educational progress and achievement is the most notable form of how the OECD helps to shape the Chinese educational field. Ministers of education often cite international comparison data offered by international organizations, such as the OECD, to show the achievement of Chinese education. When reviewing the educational development during the 12th Five-Year Plan period (years 2011–2015), the then-minister of education, Yun Guiren, cited Shanghai's successful result in PISA. He said to the journalists at the news release that:

> since the 12th Five-Year Plan, especially after the 18th CPC (China Communist Party) National Congress, the development of our education has accelerated, and got magnificent results such as promoting the whole people's quality, enhancing innovation-driven development, and serving the goal of building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects … The international influence of our education has steadily increased. The Shanghai students have got the first place twice in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) organized by OECD … have shown that Chinese education have gained more and more international influence. (Dong 2015)

Chen Baosheng, the current minister of education, made a similar speech about Chinese education at the 16th World Congress of Comparative Education Societies, citing Shanghai's PISA results to demonstrate the educational progress of China:

> China has established the world's biggest educational system in recent years, with the equity and quality of education improved, peoples' rights of education protected, quality of the people enhanced, and the development of economy and society promoted … [W]e put quality-enhancement as the core task for educational reform and development. Students from Shanghai have taken the first place twice in the PISA mathematics, science and reading tests organized by OECD. (Xie 2016)

These speeches demonstrate the extent to which PISA has become one of the major means by which China's educational performance is measured and reported, as well as justifying the impact of previous system-level reforms.

When reporting the TALIS 2013 results, the mainstream newspaper *People's Daily* used the title 'Shanghai teachers get internationally ahead in

many indicators; they pay attention to research on teaching and teach according to students' needs'. And, in the beginning of the report, it is stated that

> OECD released the second round TALIS (the OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey) result on the 18th, which shows that the junior middle school teachers in Shanghai have ranked the top one in more than ten indicators such as professional development, class efficiency, guiding students for individualized learning, etc. (Jiang 2016)

This is a demonstration on how mainstream media report the educational progress in China with reference to OECD data. These reports catch attentions from both the public and the policy-makers.

In a consultancy article on the opening up policy in education to enhance the international exchange in education, published in the official website of Ministry of Education, PISA and TALIS were both also cited to show the international influence of Chinese education. The author Zhang Minxuan, director of the Institute of International and Comparative Education, Shanghai Normal University, referenced the OECD in this way:

> We have also actively participated in the activities of other international organizations through various ways … to increase the international influence of Chinese education. For instance, Shanghai has taken part in PISA organized by OECD, and got the first place twice in reading, mathematics and science. The result has drawn great attention from governments of many countries and the mass media. And based on this experience of Shanghai, Ministry of Education organized four provinces/cities, including Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu and Guangdong, to take part in the PISA test in 2015. Besides, this year Shanghai has joined the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) organized by OECD. These international big data of multidisciplinary tests and survey greatly increased the international influence of our education, and also enhanced the confidence of our educators and parents in our basic education. (Zhang 2015)

Thus, the internationally competitive data produced in OECD PISA tests and the TALIS survey have been cited by Chinese officials, mainstream media, and consultants to show the achievement and international influence of Chinese education. These common indicators constructed by the OECD have drawn both Chinese policy-makers' and public attention to the aspects of education related to indicators and set a frame of comparing

how well these aspects are internationally. When showing the progress and achievement of Chinese education, the 'internationally comparable' quantitative data offer a new approach of accountability. According to these instruments, China is not only doing well in terms of being better than its past, but also, backed up with OECD's authoritative data, being ahead of other countries.

Showing the Gap Between China and Developed OECD Countries and the Legitimation of Policy

The second form of OECD ideas in the Chinese educational field arises from the Chinese authorities often making use of reports from international organizations, such as the OECD and UNESCO, to show its educational development status in the international context, very often in a way that emphasizes how China is behind the OECD countries. The idea here is to pave the way for certain actions with external reference. This can be termed as an externalization strategy in policy making (Schriewer 1990), meaning that policies/practices elsewhere are used to justify local reform agendas.

When launching a new policy, *the Second Phase Preschool Education Three-Year Action Plan,* the Department of Basic Education in the MoE referred to the OECD initiative to justify the goal of a kindergarten enrolment rate of 75% for preschool education by 2016. The officer in charge replied to journalists' questions that:

> [the kindergarten enrolment rate] is to adjust to the international trend. All the OECD member countries and the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) countries have made the development of preschool education as an important strategy for early development of human resources and accelerated its coverage. In 2012, the average kindergarten enrolment rate of OECD countries is up to 92.8% … We need to further increase the kindergarten enrolment rate to set a solid foundation for our national competitiveness in future. (Ministry of Education 2014)

In a newspaper article published in *China Education Daily* reporting the background information for launching *the National Plan for Educational Development during the Eleventh Five-Plan Period (2006–2010),* the director of Department of Development and Planning, Ministry of Education, Han Jin, compared the years of education of the population in China and the average of the OECD countries to legitimate this new policy:

> Although we have entered into a new stage of educational development …
> And there is still a big gap between us and the advanced countries in the
> world. For example, although the years of education for the population over
> 15 years old in our country has reached 8.5 years, it is still more than three
> years behind the average of the OECD countries; we are still lacking of
> innovative, high-tech and excellent talents … Especially there is a big mis-
> match between the scarce supply of good quality education and people's
> enormous demand for that. (Tang 2007)

In both the above two cases the MoE employed the OECD data to show
China's lagging behind in educational development and tried to demon-
strate the necessity of the newly launched policy.

China launched a higher education expansion policy in 1999. And in
2003, when the first cohort of college students after this new policy grad-
uated with a more challenging job market, Zhou Ji, the then-minister of
education, spoke at the meeting on the work for enhancing college gradu-
ates' employment situation:

> Firstly, college graduates' employment involves the realization of the great
> goal for building a moderately prosperous society. Human resource is the
> first resource. And the core of international competition is the competition
> of talented people … The gross enrolment rate of higher education in our
> country reached 15% last year, and the world average is 17.8%, the average
> of the developed countries is 61.1%. Only 5% of our labour force are with
> short-cycle higher education diploma in 2000, and the percentage of that in
> OECD countries is 26% in 1998. (Zhou 2003)

This citation of OECD figures by Minister Zhou can be regarded as an
indirect response to the debate on the higher education expansion policy,
which led to a more challenging situation in educational quality and
employment. Thus, it is a further legitimation of the policy. In another
article about educational development in China, Zhou Ji (2005) states that:

> In today's world, talent is the core and focus of international competition,
> and our country is still in the inferior position in talent competition.
> Although the average years of education for people over 15-years old has
> got ahead of that of the world average, we are still more than three years
> behind the average of the OECD countries. And only 7.2% of our labour
> force are with higher education experience, which is obviously lower than
> 12.6%, the world average in 2000 … The prominent lack of high-level,
> innovative talents is impeding the self-led innovation in our country.

When used to locate Chinese education in the international landscape, and especially showing its lagging behind, the OECD ideas help to create an urgency for certain actions, and thus pave the way for certain policies. In this way, OECD reports serve as policy instruments used by the Chinese authorities to identify problems of deficiency in comparison with other countries and to legitimate decisions that have already been taken by the Chinese authorities. These reports also shape what is available for comparing, in which dimension, and by what criteria. Therefore, they also shape what comes into attention in policy making and policy preferences.

Using International References to Support Certain Initiatives, Frameworks, and Actions

The third major form of OECD ideas appearing in the Chinese educational field is that they are cited to show international reference of certain initiatives, frameworks, and actions and thus support certain new policies. Differing from just locating Chinese education in the international landscape, this form of using the OECD ideas is conspicuously normative, where the OECD frameworks, initiatives, and standards are regarded as a highly authoritative reference for what the Chinese education should do.

Demonstrating this normative function, a member of the National Advisory Council on Education, Tao Xiping, wrote a consultancy article on how to enhance the quality and equity in educational development, published in *Guangming Daily*, a mainstream Chinese newspaper, and forwarded by the official website of the MoE. This article explicitly references the OECD view of educational excellence and stated that:

> schools are the main actor for realizing the national quality standards of education; so, we should pay attention to the evaluation of schools, and make the evaluation a stethoscope of how schools perform. *The OECD view of educational success* covers not only the standard of excellence but also the standards of equity and inclusiveness, i.e., not only about the improvement of overall quality of school education, but also about the improvement of education for students from poor families, which leads to equity, and the inclusion of students with special difficulties, e.g., students with disabilities, which leads to inclusiveness. And this would make education the equipment of social compensation. (Tao 2016; emphasis added)

Another consultancy article advocating the use of big data/ICT for personalized education, published on the MoE website, also references an OECD initiative to lend its support to the advocated policy:

> Educational reforms around the world are advocating personalized teaching, and personalizing education is now the leading educational thought in the world. In 2006, OECD released a report titled "Schooling for Tomorrow: Personalising Education", which criticized one-plan-fit-all type of school knowledge and organization improper for both personal needs and the development of knowledge society, and put personalizing education as an important agenda in a changing era. (Liu 2017)

Here both the policy consultants of the MoE took the OECD values in a normative way, as the ones China should also pursue.

The chairperson for the Chinese Preschool Research Association, Hu Yongping, wrote a consultancy article advocating an improved system for preschool education, stating that:

> [w]hat is the proper share between the state and parents in the investment of preschool education? According to the OECD data in 2011, among the OECD countries the average share of the parents is only 18.7%, the average EU parents' share is down to 12.9%. Among the countries next to us, the parent shares of Russia, Japan and Korea are 9.4%, 37.8%, and 44.3%, respectively. According to the OECD data, the state investment usually accounts for 60%-70% in the cost of preschool education, and in some developed countries, it is more than 80%. (Hu 2015)

In this case the OECD data offered a standard of 'properness'.

A consultancy article advocating the educational tours for primary and secondary students references the OECD together with other international organizations:

> Facing the fast social change, economic reform, and new information technology, educational reform is bound to happen. And many international organizations, countries and regions are thinking about how to cultivate future citizens who can better adjust to the work and life in the 21st century … OECD has put forward the idea of "21st century key competencies". And EU also raise the idea of key competencies. Those ideas and concepts have gradually become the foundations for educational reform and policies in many countries. (Zhao 2016)

Here the OECD key competence framework served as an important normative reference for the Chinese students' competence framework.

In 2003, the MoE released a *Report on Chinese Education and Human Resource Issues* (Chinese Education and Human Resource Issues Group 2013). When making international references, it made use of the classification of educational development levels from UNESCO, UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), and OECD. In the report, countries are classified into educationally *well-developed*, *moderately developed*, and *under-developed* countries, mainly according to their population, economy, educational development, and educational investment, and with other factors such as gross enrolment rate, real GDP per capita, and proportion of educational investment in GDP being selectively taken into consideration. China is listed among the educationally under-developed countries in this classification. In order to catch up, the need for more investment into education came naturally to the policy agenda. Here the MoE took the OECD and other international organizations' framework as important policy reference.

In the above reference to OECD standards, advocates, and framework, the Chinese authorities have treated them not only as international reference of certain policy action, but also as some well-recognized international standards of what should be done. However, these 'international standards' would not exist without the active construction of them by the OECD and other international organizations. Given that China has made explicit reference to the policy initiatives, frameworks, and actions of the OECD and other international organizations, it seems that this does not just inform China about other countries' policy actions and consequences, but also construct a normative frame of reference in shaping what is desirable. Therefore, the OECD simultaneously plays the role of a policy arena, which offers platform for policy idea exchange, and the role of a defined policy actor that shapes policy directions in its own right.

Concluding Discussion

Although there are a lot of OECD reports, data, framework, and initiatives available, China does not take them all in or use them in a literal way. The transfer of OECD ideas, programs, and initiatives is attuned to China's own purpose and the specific Chinese social context. In terms of impact, OECD ideas have mainly offered a new approach to accountability and new mechanisms for legitimating policies in the Chinese educational field.

When Chinese ministers of education and mainstream media cite OECD data and reports, one of the main points they are trying to highlight are the achievements and the international influence of the Chinese educational system. Thus, the OECD indicator and league tables offer a new approach to educational accountability for China. There used to be just one approach for accountability—the reference point of the past situation, or one's previous performance. Now, accountability references not only work in relation to the Chinese past, but also in relation to international comparisons. In other words, ministers are seeking to demonstrate that China is good not only in terms of being better than its own past, but also by being good internationally.

However, the use of this data about China should be undertaken with caution. For instance, the performance of Shanghai students on PISA hardly offers any information about the average situation of education across China. Shanghai only represents the best region in China, and the development of education is largely unbalanced throughout the country. It is therefore not a fair comparison when China uses a very best small part to make comparisons with the average situation of other countries or regions, or for Shanghai to act as a synecdoche for all of China. And the cost to Shanghai students in achieving these results is beyond the reach of almost all other regions. This new way of accountability is also double-edged; while the league tables can be used to show achievements and glories, they are also the source of pressure and blame. In 2015, when the four Chinese economies did not achieve so well as the previous Shanghai results, the media called for a rethink on why it fell so far behind (China Education and Research Web 2016).

The OECD also offers China tools and frameworks, just like maps, to locate itself in the international world. And the Chinese authorities often use them selectively, to show that some aspects of Chinese education lag behind the developed countries, and often OECD member countries. The sense of 'lagging behind' international standards did not exist before the creation of PISA by the OECD. In this way, the urgency or necessity of certain policy actions becomes apparent, meaning that the intended policy gains legitimacy from this international comparative logic.

At first look, it may seem that China can pick up which frameworks to apply, and when to apply them. However, when certain policies have been legitimized within a certain framework, other policies may also gain their reference to the framework, and the framework is outside China's discretion. This development may indicate a shift of the loci of educational pol-

icy making. For instance, when the investment of preschool education asks for an increase with reference to the OECD standards as shown above, what about primary education and higher education?

When China chose to make use of the OECD indicators and frameworks, an externalization strategy in policy making (Schriewer 1990), it embarked upon a one-way street. At the beginning, when choosing whether to participate, it may be voluntary; however, once the path has been taken, it would be difficult to opt out as the expectations and inertia set their place. And it can be said that China's education system is now not only China's; the international reference is always there. And there is no possibility in sight to get off the merry-go-round.

With the mediating of international organizations such as the OECD, the global field of educational policy gains more and more importance in contrast to the traditional nation-states' relatively independent policy making. As the above analysis has shown, China, even as a non-member country, has been significantly influenced by the OECD in terms of educational policy making. Looking through the three dimensions of power (Lukes 1983), it can be said that although the OECD has not been involved directly in any decision-making of educational policy in China (and maybe also in other countries), it has shaped what comes into attention in policy making and the frame of policy reference.

At the same time, the OECD has played all the three roles of international organizations delineated by Archer (1994): instrument of policy, policy making arena, and policy actor. First, the OECD indicators and frameworks have been used by the Chinese authorities as instruments of policy to identify problems in education and legitimate already-taken policy decisions. Second, the OECD, as a policy making arena, has informed China about the education standards and policies in other countries, which have been used by Chinese authorities to locate China in the international world. Last, but not least, in the active constructing of the indicators, frameworks, which shapes educational policy attention and preferences, the OECD can be regarded as a distinguishable policy actor.

The most notable way that the OECD achieves these influences is through the quantification of various aspects of education in terms of indicators, measurement, and numbers, as it is shown by the references to OECD ideas in the Chinese educational field. Although measurements and numbers can help us see complicated things in ways that make it possible to intervene in them productively (consider measures of global warming), they can also narrow our appraisal of value and relevance to

what can be measured easily, at the expense of other ways of knowing; for instance, consider how education became years of schooling in American sociology (Espeland and Stevens 2008). For those aspects that cannot be easily quantified, there is probably a potential reduction of relative importance and priority, and even an 'out of sight, out of mind' effect. Hence, the analysis in this chapter seems to point to a reductionist chain in educational policy via the self-perpetuating reinforcement of quantifiable indicators, which leads to increased public and political attention, and which again leads to increased importance of quantifiable indicators. As pointed out by Hansen and Porter (2012), an important condition behind the importance of such indicators is the distinctive properties of order, mobility, stability, combinability, and precision. With the OECD's and other international organizations' creation of a common set of indicators and frameworks through which nation-states are known and compared, the OECD policy agendas and the processes of comparison themselves establish a universal (Western) norm against which the policy values of individual countries are relativized (Henry et al. 2001). And together with them goes a certain version of globalization in education.

Note

1. All translations from Chinese in this chapter are made by the author unless otherwise stated.

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OECD, PISA and the Educationalization of the World: The Case of the Southern Cone Countries

Felicitas Acosta

INTRODUCTION

While the phenomenon of standardized international assessments dates back to the first third of the twentieth century, those assessments have had a great impact on educational systems around the world in the last 40 years. A number of authors have discussed the systematic increase of international standardized assessments and the role they play in global discourses on education quality where the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) through the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) plays a significant part (Pereyra et al. 2011; Meyer and Benavot 2013; Centeno 2017; Steiner-Khamsi and Waldow 2018; Volante and Fazio 2018).

The number of countries that regularly participate in international large-scale assessments (ILSA) has increased sharply over the past 15 years, with the share of countries participating in PISA growing from 42 in

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Fig. 9.1 OECD Secretary-General Angel Gurría (left) and President of Uruguay Tabaré Vázquez (right) at OECD Headquarters, Paris, France, 30 October 2015. (Copyright: ©OECD)

2000/2001 to 73 in 2015, with an additional 7 countries participating in PISA for Development (Lockheed 2015). It is well known that the OECD, together with the PISA tests, has expanded worldwide with effects on the extension of the scope, scale, and the explanatory power of the latter (Lewis and Lingard 2015; Morgan 2018).

This growing global testing culture (Addey et al. 2017; Smith 2016; Ydesen and Andreasen 2019) is based on a powerful semantic of scientificity, validity, objectivity, and mechanization related to the technology of standardized testing (Alarcón and Lawn 2018). The copious literature on the topic has considered both convergences (Volante and Fazio 2018; Wiseman and Waluyo 2018) and divergences (e.g. Carvalho and Costa 2015; Fischman et al. 2018; Lingard 2018; Piattoeva et al. 2018; Waldow et al. 2014) in how such technologies are received and appropriated.

The purpose of this chapter is to offer a comparison between the countries of Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile concerning their connections with the OECD. In particular, it aims to analyze how these three countries of

the Southern hemisphere have established relations with the OECD at the level of the educational system through the implementation of the PISA tests. The interest of focusing on these countries lies in the fact that they do not belong to the club of the wealthy nations of the North, yet they are assessed with the tools used in those countries (see also Krejsler, this volume). At the same time, these countries have participated in five PISA editions with no substantial improvement on results, as shown in Fig. 9.2. The question is then why do they keep participating.

As stated by Addey and Sellar (2017, 2019), participation in ILSAs has been studied from multiple theoretical perspectives, including rational, normative emulation and political economy approaches (Verger 2016). The authors list a variety of reasons for participating: state legitimation, economic rationales, technical capacity building, educational reform, and pedagogical innovation, among others. When referring to countries from the Global South, Addey (2015) introduces the idea of a global ritual of belonging oriented toward developing or strengthening geopolitical and economic affiliations: in other words, the value of PISA for the relationship it entails with the OECD.
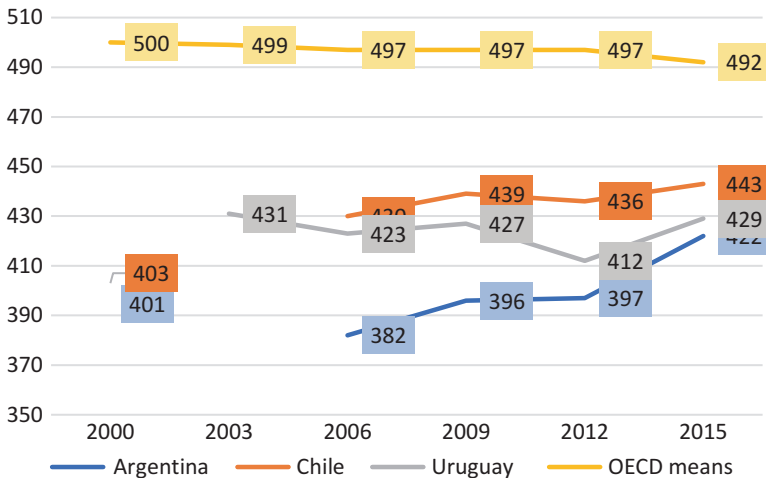

Fig. 9.2 Average results in the three areas assessed by PISA. OECD means Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay by PISA edition. Argentina and Chile did not participate in 2003. Due to sample errors Argentina's 2015 results were excluded from the OECD table results

This chapter's argument revolves around the idea of a combination of two different reasons for participating in the PISA tests for the countries under study. On the one hand, the aforementioned political and economic rationale expressed in PISA as a significant indicator of stronger ties with the OECD. On the other hand, an intensification of the historical process of internationalization of schooling: in the nineteenth century, modern states were supposed to establish educational systems by schooling expansion; present-day globalized states are expected to legitimize schooling through standardized international assessment, where the OECD plays a significant role.

Both reasons could combine in the new forms of educationalization of social problems. Educationalization refers to the deployment of mass schooling as a means to address social problems, such as the consolidation of nation-states and capitalism (Tröhler 2013; Tröhler et al. 2011). The origins of this process lay in the eighteenth century, when a new set of social problems in the wake of the dissolution of the feudal world—mainly the problem of subjective and collective destructuralization—turned education into the new technology of moral and social regulation. The educationalization of social problems advanced over the course of the nineteenth century with the spread of schooling and, in the twentieth, with the consolidation of educational systems. Schooling served as the materialization of the process of educationalization.

Tröhler and Lenz (2015) argue that since post-war, educationalization has enlarged its scope. Indeed, as pointed out by the authors, the launching of the Sputnik in 1957 gave way to a continuous cycle of educational reforms oriented by the growing influence of international organizations. Education performance based on the assessment of learning outcomes became the corner point of educational policies, paving the way for a global testing culture (Alarcón and Lawn 2018; Ydesen and Andreasen 2019). The passage to an educationalized world under the guise of internationally assessed education systems could well describe the present-day situation of schooling (Acosta 2019).

So, in its first form, educationalization provided a solution to social and economic problems through schooling. At present, we seem to be facing the emergence of a new form of educationalization in which the OECD plays an important role because, as stated by Morgan and Volante (2016), it articulates a discourse that is attractive to policymakers seeking a solution to social and economic problems: 'invest in your people's education and you will be rewarded with higher economic returns' (p. 14). In this

regard, along with the question about the underlying reasons to participate in the PISA tests, we also wonder if PISA represents the new form of materialization of the *educationalization* of social problems?

The analysis is based on secondary sources: (1) previous studies on the PISA tests in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay; (2) reports produced by the OECD/PISA for each one of these countries; (3) documents of the ministries of education and educational measurement agencies from each state from the last two editions of these tests (2012 and 2015); and (4) articles from press. The chapter first develops the three cases and provides some comparative conclusions at the end of each case. Each case's development is structured in two parts: information about the country's relationship to the OECD and its participation in PISA, including how the local ministries of education get involved in the implementation or in producing information based on the test results. Regarding the questions guiding this chapter, that is, why the countries participate and what are the new forms of educationalization through PISA, the former is discussed in turns, whereas the latter is found in the conclusions at the end of the chapter.

Argentina: From Reluctancy to Commitment

Argentina is currently an OECD 'partner country', the highest category for a non-member country. Consequently, Argentina participates in several specialized committees and task forces, and it is a member of the OECD Development Centre. Since Argentina established relations with the OECD, the country has adhered to 30 OECD legal instruments mostly related to the exchange of tax information and the fight against foreign bribery. In 2015 a right-wing administration called *Cambiemos* won the national elections. Since then Argentina has strengthened its co-operation with the OECD by submitting the *2016–2017 Action Plan*, which will mobilize OECD support for Argentina's key reform priorities across 16 policy areas including education and competencies (Carrió 2017; OECD 2017a).

As regards PISA, Argentina has participated since 2000 except for the 2003 edition, when it did not take the tests for reasons associated with the country's economic crisis in 2001. The national ministry of education through its evaluation department is in charge of the tests. Between 2000 and 2012 Argentina did not improve significantly in any of the subjects since the country started to participate in PISA tests.

While results in PISA 2015 showed improvement, the country was affected by a change in the sampling criteria, which canceled the compara-

bility of country results in terms of both other countries and previous years. According to OECD, Argentina's results were excluded from the PISA 2015 publication because the population complying with the selection requirements for the sample was lower than expected. Rivas and Scasso (2017) agree: the Argentinean sample does not comply with the minimum quality standards. But the key questions about the reasons why this problem could not be timely identified and solved remain unanswered (p. 154). Nor the OECD offered further explanations, and the new administration in office since late 2015 has not demanded explanations.

Over time, the PISA results have been used by shifting administrations, such as the center-right *Alianza* administration (1999–2001), the center-left *Kirchnerist* administrations (2003–2015), and the right-wing *Cambiemos* administration (2015–2019). Argentina's official position (documents, reports) on PISA-related education policies has been reluctant until 2015: education ministry orientations have shifted from a cautious or distant position in terms of PISA tests to new avenues of communication between the national assessment and PISA, especially since the *Cambiemos* administration took power (Rodrigo 2015; Leal 2017). Nevertheless, the growing importance given to standardized evaluations can be traced over time.

In May 2013, former Education Minister Alberto Sileoni from the *Kirchnerist* administration launched a new Programme of Participatory Assessment to be implemented at the three levels of the Argentinean education system and integrated into an educational assessment system with a collaborative—not punitive—approach. The new Programme included the continuity of national and international assessments, such as the National Assessment Operation (Operativo Nacional de Evaluación, ONE for its acronym in Spanish), UNESCO Third Regional Comparative and Explanatory Study (TERCE) of learning achievement, and PISA.[1]

When presenting the new Programme, former Minister Sileoni expressed the government's reluctancy toward the latter: he said that quality in education involves a link between the processes and results that foreign agencies cannot measure (TELAM 2013). In this sense, former Undersecretary of Educational Planning Marisa Díaz added that UNASUR (Union of South American Nations) formally submitted to the PISA consortium four observations about the tests: 'Our objections relate to what is being compared, how the samples of young students being assessed are designed, how test contexts are analysed, and how results are publicised' (Dillon 2013). According to Díaz, within the educational area of

MERCOSUR (Mercado Común del Sur), a technical committee was formed to establish regional assessment criteria to be applied to national assessments—including the environment, regional history, and solidarity, among other issues (Dillon 2013).

Despite this reluctancy toward PISA, a shift took place in 2014 in the *Kirchnerist* administration: in April 2014, the monthly official journal of the Assessment Department of the National Office of Educational Quality Information and Assessment (Dirección Nacional de Información y Evaluación de la calidad Educativa, DiNIECE for its acronym in Spanish) published for the first time a section devoted to the PISA 2012 tests (DiNIECE 2014a). The following number of this official journal announced that arrangements were being made for the pilot test of PISA 2015, and it also provided additional information about the PISA 2012 results (DiNIECE 2014b).

Similarly, the June 2015 edition of the official journal (DiNIECE 2015a) provided information about the Training and Awareness Programme for PISA 2015, which was designed by DiNIECE and made available to the educational community. As part of the Training and Awareness Programme, the Assessment Department of DiNIECE designed teaching material for students and school directors to become familiar with the PISA tests. The teaching material was also aimed at raising awareness among students of the fact that it is in their right not to deal with unknown topics in evaluation contexts; improving the assessment conditions and the quality of the Argentinean students' participation in the PISA tests; and encouraging students to commit themselves to represent their country in an international assessment cycle (DiNIECE 2015b).

As noted before, after the change from the *Kirchnerist* administration to *Cambiemos* in 2015, assessment has become the linchpin of the national education policy. The Methodological Notes included in *Aprender 2016,* the new national evaluation test, refer to PISA 2012 as a model for the operationalization of specific dimensions and the drawing up of questions and questionnaires for national assessments in secondary schools (Ministerio de Educación y Deportes de Argentina 2016a, b). For the first time since Argentina started participating in PISA, the website of the Office for Educational Assessment provides the educational community and the public at large with a series of free PISA sample test items for the three subject areas to be assessed—mathematics, reading comprehension, and science—while encouraging the dissemination and use of such free sample test items.

The collected information seems to show that Argentina underwent three phases in its relationship with the OECD and PISA: a first phase marked by reluctant participation that even included criticism of certain characteristics of PISA's assessment mechanism (2006–2013); a second phase, under the same administration as the first, of proximity through an awareness campaign of the students participating in PISA (2014–2015); and a third phase, under the current government, of alignment both to OECD's and PISA's agendas.

Across the variety of reasons outlined in the presentation for participating in PISA (state legitimation, economic rationales, technical capacity building, educational reform, and pedagogical innovation), the rationale behind this shift in Argentina is a combination of many. However, the reasons seem to be more linked to the political and economic dimension rather than to the pedagogical aspects. An example of this could be the lack of explanations about the undetected errors in the PISA 2015 sample. The OECD did not provide these and the incoming administration did not go deep into the matter. Paradoxically, students participating both in the sensitization and in the tests received no explanation about their education performance.

So, the shifts in the governments' political orientations seem to be more related to a change of attitude toward PISA and the OECD than to other kinds of factors. At the same time, the proximity phase mentioned above (2014–2015) could well point to the weight that the international standardized assessment has, despite a specific government's political orientation.

URUGUAY: ADOPTION OF A TECHNICAL AGENDA

Uruguay is a not a member country of the OECD. Despite that, in October 2015 the official OECD website informed that Uruguay had joined the OECD Development Centre (OECD 2017b). Tax consultant Carlos Loaiza Keel (2017) says that 'the region, including Argentina and Brazil, has now a unique opportunity to become candidates—which is consistent with the negotiations to reach a key commercial agreement between Mercosur and the European Union'—since 'the region is an interesting significant player for the OECD, which is trying to increase its representation' (Munyo 2017).

In Uruguay, the National Public Education Administration (ANEP for its acronym in Spanish) is the agency that signed agreements with the OECD

for participation in PISA starting in 2003. It appointed the Research, Evaluation and Statistics Division (Departamento de Investigación, Evaluación y Estadística Educativa, DIEE for its acronym in Spanish) to be responsible for managing the Programme in the country. Uruguay has taken part in five PISA rounds. Uruguay has had a standardized performance assessment in place for two decades, developed by the ANEP.

As regards PISA results, according to the *First Results from PISA 2012 in Uruguay* report (ANEP et al. 2013) 'the trend over the last ten 10 years basically shows a steady performance with small fluctuations' (pp. 2–3). Rivas and Scasso (2017) explain that in Uruguay, 'the evolution with re-scaled results for the period 2006–2015 shows a stagnation scenario, and even a step backwards between 2009 and 2012. In the 2012 and 2015 rounds, Uruguay's performance improved by an average of 7 points, although these differences are not statistically significant for any of the three subject areas. A change in the measuring method accounts for the improvement' (p. 127).

In comparison to Argentina, Uruguay's administrations have taken into consideration the OECD's recommendations more specifically, through the construction of technical networks and publication of technical reports. Rivas (2015) points out that PISA experts worked hand in hand with the local agencies to improve testing mechanisms and procedures. The construction of these networks derives from a political decision. Pedro Ravela (2013), Executive Director of the INEEd (Instituto Nacional de Evaluación Educativa[2]) between 2012 and 2014, emphasized that PISA is the widest and most serious study on comparative education, due to the amount of participating countries, the diversity of information collected (not limited to tests), and the technical quality of the teams and institutions involved—which also have some limitations: 'Although Uruguay disagrees with the focus on the rankings—our goal as a country is not to beat others or compete with others—we believe that having the PISA information is relevant to developing policies that ensure the right of learners to learning' (p. 2).

In relation to technical reports, according to DIEE-ANEP's 2014 *Educational Efforts in Science and Technology in Formal and Non-Formal Educational Contexts* report (ANEP 2014), since the 2003 PISA Uruguay has published several journals, which aim to provide input for educational policy design, analyze the test results in the areas being assessed and the socio-economic and curriculum factors associated with student performance, describe interesting experiences in other countries, and suggest

specific variables to be studied. The reports by the DIEE describe and analyze the frames of reference and results of both national and international tests. Reports also analyze the country results of the assessment activities considering various theoretical aspects as well as several variables of the students' contexts (ANEP et al. 2016; OECD/ECLAC 2014).

In 2016 ANEP together with PISA Uruguay published the summary for Uruguay based on the OECD report *Low Performing Students: Why They Fall Behind and How to Help Them Succeed* (ANEP 2016). The report describes the official position stating that the first step for governments is to address low student performance, and to turn that priority into education policies and additional resources. The same year, the OECD drew up the second *Multi-dimensional Review of Uruguay*, comprising an *Initial Assessment* (Volume 1) and an *In-depth Analysis and Recommendations* (Volume 2), with recommendations for both secondary and tertiary education, first by improving the methods to identify the most vulnerable students and then developing support mechanisms, as well as identifying policies that will bolster the teaching profession, such as autonomy and leadership in schools (OECD 2016a, b, c, d, e).

Finally, in December 2016 a seminar entitled 'What to do with PISA results: a proactive perspective to educational challenge' was organized by a prominent think tank. Politicians, decision makers, and academics gathered to discuss PISA 2012 results and reactions (Steffen 2016).

The case of Uruguay has similarities with Argentina. The country is interested in joining the OECD, just like Argentina's new administration. It also participates in the PISA tests with no significant result improvements. However, the relationship with the OECD through PISA seems to have been much smoother since the beginning, as evidenced by the technical institutions that work together with the OECD producing data and reports about Uruguay's education system.

This characteristic might add a new reason to the economic rationales, such as becoming a member of the OECD, to participate in PISA: technical capacity building. The creation of specific organizations or committees, the drawing up of reports by local assessment agencies, and the joint production of information might point to this trend. In this respect, Uruguay seems to have adopted the PISA technical agenda, although in tension with one of its main features: the use of rankings. This difference stems from the traditional configuration of the country's education system, which relies heavily on the state's supply and has no demand financing mechanisms in place.

Another aspect that points to the peculiarities of the case is the wide variety of actors that seem to have participated in the discussions revolving around the results and uses of PISA tests: media, think tanks, academics, grassroots communities, and centralized and decentralized government bodies. This situation is consistent with the local education system's deliberative organization.

Chile: Political and Educational Alignment

Chile joined the OECD as a member in 2010, but the journey of the country's accession started in 2007, when the OECD's Council of Ministers resolved to start membership talks with Chile, among other countries (OECD 2010, 2017c). Over the next two years, 20 OECD commissioners were in charge of reviewing the country's policies: 'Being an OECD member is a certificate before the world that Chile is implementing good economic policies (…) thanks to the active participation of the Chilean state apparatus in this Forum, the country managed to take part in the OECD's 200 committees specializing in various areas, facilitating progress in key areas such as education, energy and the environment' (Paulina Nazal, former Director of Multilateral Affairs for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs cited in UChile 2014).

Chile participates in PISA and in PIAAC (Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies). The Agency for Education Quality [Agencia de la calidad de la educación], a decentralized organism working together with the Ministry of Education, is in charge of these assessments. The country created a national learning outcome assessment system (SIMCE, for its Spanish acronym) in 1988 with the aim of institutionalizing several assessment initiatives that were implemented since the 1960s. The SIMCE tests are administered yearly to students from six different grades of the education system. The results by institution are public and presumably inform the parents' choice of school for the voucher system.

Chile has taken part in PISA tests since 2001, with five cycles until 2015. On average, results for the three subject areas have improved slightly in the last three years. However, some analysts see this as a sign of stagnation, as the country results are still not as good as the OECD average in the three assessed areas: 'As of 2000, [Chile] was among the Latin American countries with the best test results, similar to those of Mexico and Argentina. With the new comparable adjusted methodology, between

2006 and 2015 Chile scored 9 points higher in Reading, 6 points higher in Mathematics and one point lower in Science. None of these three differences is statistically significant, which shows stability over time' (Rivas and Scasso 2017, p. 91).

The *OECD Economic Surveys Chile* 2015 (OECD 2015) states that the country has made significant progress over the last decades attracting more students to the education system. In spite of this, performance remains well below most OECD countries, with wide gaps between the students with the highest socio-economic background and the students with the lowest socio-economic background.

Chile's government administrations have been stable toward PISA and the OECD. The fact that Chile is an OECD member is probably one of the causes beneath this alignment. The Agency for Education Quality of the Chilean Ministry of Education has published various informative documents on PISA, and its website provides several downloadable documents on the country's results (http://www.agenciaeducacion.cl/estudios/estudios-internacionales/pisa/).

The PISA findings are used to analyze and compare national test results. As explained in the *National Report on the PISA 2012 results in Chile* (Agencia de la Calidad de la Educación 2014a, b), besides administering the PISA test rounds for 15-year-old students, Chile decided to assess an additional sample composed of second-year classes selected by the secondary schools themselves. The objective of this additional test round was to make technical comparisons with the PISA tests considering the same students and classes.

Furthermore, the report *OECD PISA 2015—Programme for International Student Assessment* (Agencia de la calidad de la educación 2015) emphasizes how beneficial it is for Chile to participate in the PISA assessments as they enable 'to analyse the country's results from a compared perspective, identify differences and similarities with other education systems, show the paths taken by other countries, identify success cases that Chile may take as examples, inspire new ways of improvement, diversify the assessment focus, and contribute to monitoring the system from an external view and informing education policies' (p. 5).

The PISA tests are included in the *National and International Assessment Plan 2016–2020*, a policy document developed by the Ministry of Education together with the Agency for Education Quality and approved by the National Education Board. The objectives are to reorganize the frequency of external assessments (i.e. the number of census-

based tests a student could take during their school years is restricted to a maximum of three) and to promote a more thorough analysis of test findings (Ministerio de Educación del gobierno de Chile n.d.). The Plan also seeks to develop capacities in the education sector for a more efficient use of the information gathered, with a focus on developing evaluation practices at schools for teaching purposes, in accordance with the learning objectives set by the national curriculum.

The interaction between the organization and the country includes ministers taking part in special events as well as expert commissions visiting Chile, including OECD's Director for Education Andreas Schleicher's visit in 2014. As a result of these missions and in response to a request by Chile's Ministry of Education, two reports were created by the OECD that review national policies for education (2014 and 2016). The 2016 review analyses the processes implemented under the 2014 Education Reform, identifies the progress attained, and offers recommendations to optimize improvements (OECD 2017; Centro de Estudios MINEDUC 2017).

Different authors have pointed out the enduring effects of PISA and other international assessments ongoing in Chile (Camargo 2006; Cox and Meckes 2016; Rivas 2015): integration of concepts into national normative instruments, especially in curriculum design, creation of new agencies such as the Superintendency of Education, the passing of new laws related to the reports on results from various standardized tests. Indeed, one of the latest OECD reports, *Política educativa en perspectiva 2015* (Education policy in perspective 2015), was published in Spanish with probably the major editorial house on education issues in Iberoamerica: Santillana (OECD/Fundación Santillana 2015).

Chile differs in at least three aspects from the cases of Argentina and Uruguay. First, it is a member of the OECD, meaning an alignment with the economic policies in place in the country in recent decades. Second, standardized assessments have a longer history in the country and are part of the education demand financing system. Finally, the national assessment system is aligned with international assessments. These three differences could explain Chile's strong alignment with the OECD and PISA.

Regarding the reasons to participate, beyond the scarce achievements reflected by the results, the list is longer than in the previous cases. On the one hand, the economic motivations such as joining the OECD; on the other the creation of technical instruments to develop aligned systems at the national and international levels to assess students; political reasons associated with the sanction of new education laws can also be found;

finally pedagogical reasons such as the recent changes to curricula related to PISA and the ministry of education reports (Cox and Meckes 2016). It could be assumed that the stronger the tie, the larger the set of reasons for participating.

Concluding Discussion

The purpose of this chapter was to offer a comparison between the countries of Argentina, Uruguay, and Chile regarding how these three countries have established relations with the OECD at the level of the educational system through the implementation of the PISA tests. The interest of focusing on these countries lay in the fact that they do not belong to the club of the wealthy nations of the North, where the OECD was created, yet they look up to this economic organization and use its assessment tools in their education systems performing below average over the years.

As stated in the presentation, the last decade has shown an increasing number of studies revolving around the issue of nation-states' motivation for participating in large-scale assessment tests such as PISA. From many different perspectives, a variety of reasons have been evoked: state legitimation, economic rationales, technical capacity building, educational reform, and pedagogical innovation, among others. Results from this study fit into these reasons.

The chapter's argument revolved around the idea of a combination of two different reasons for these countries participating in the PISA tests. On the one hand, the political and economic motivations underlying each country's participation in PISA, in particular, the will to establish stronger ties with the OECD. On the other hand, the shifts in the internationalization of schooling, in which present-day globalized states are expected to legitimize schooling through standardized international assessment, where PISA plays a major role.

Preliminary results indicate convergent and divergent processes in the ways of linking to the OECD and PISA. All three cases demonstrate the importance of the relation that each country has with the OECD. In Argentina, this is estimated particularly under the *Cambiemos* administration. Consequently, the educational systems became part of an agenda of economic policy and international affairs, a possible global governing complex, through the implementation, among others, of the PISA tests.

The cases also strengthen the importance of the connection between the reasons aforementioned, national politics, and the economic and political global role played by the OECD. The particularities of each case are outlined here, where evidence for policy together with national politics seems to be at the base of the differences among the different cases toward linkages between national educational policy and PISA.

Argentina underwent three phases: from reluctance to participation (2006–2013) to student's test sensitization (2014–2015) to alignment under the new administration. Uruguay seems to have adopted the PISA technical agenda although in tension with one of its main features: the use of rankings. As stated before, Chile could well present a case for policy alignment in assessment: not only does the country participate intensively in ILSAs but has also tailored the *National and International Assessment Plan 2016–2020* to encompass national and international evaluations such as PISA. Chile and, to a lesser extent, Uruguay reflect a greater tendency to consider the recommendations of the OECD for their education systems. Despite these differences there are shared effects: settling the issue of national evaluation is one of them; whether to combine it with international assessment as in the Chilean case, to refine national assessments like Uruguay, or to create new local or regional initiatives, as in Argentina until 2016.

These cases could indicate that regardless of the test results, there is a will to maintain the linkage to the OECD. This could stem from an eagerness to be part of the OECD but also, simultaneously, from educationalization processes, as the OECD seems to present a solution to economic problems through the improvement of human resources. The emphasis given to assessment, mentioned in the previous paragraph, could point to a new form of educationalization: if it was established through schooling expansion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, at present it seems to advance by way of education systems being assessed systematically.

The cases under study show convergences and divergences in the rationales for participating in standardized assessments in which they show nearly no improvement over time. Regardless of this, submitting students to this kind of assessment does not seem to be in question, quite the contrary. At the same time, this new phase of the educationalization process appears to be led by an independent organization such as the OECD. The implication is that the OECD's policy shaping work in education spills into a whole range of other societal domains—directly and indirectly—creating new and expanding windows, channels, and spaces for governance.

Notes

1. Standardized tests to measure educational quality, *Operativos Nacionales de Evaluación* (ONE for its acronym in Spanish), were implemented in Argentina from 1993 to 2014. In 2015 these were replaced by *Aprender*, also a national standardized test.
2. The INEEd is a public institution of non-state law. This means that it is fully autonomous in its actions. It is linked to the Executive Branch through the Ministry of Education and Culture. It has its own budget established by law. The INEEd is in charge of conducting external assessments for early childhood, primary, and secondary education.

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OECD's Education Initiatives and Programs in a Global Perspective

The OECD's Campaign for Distributed Leadership: The Risks of Pushing for More Accountability and Teacher Responsibility

Jessica Holloway

Introduction

After being introduced and emphasized as a key point of discussion at the 2001 and 2004 Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Education Committee meetings, educational leadership has received significant attention in policy and practice discussions globally. This has happened alongside an increased focus on accountability, as schools are subjected to new means of measurement, evaluation, and comparison via national, subnational, and international testing schemes (Hallinger and Murphy 2013; Neumerski 2012; Nettles and Herrington 2007). In this accountability era, school leadership is emphasized as a key mechanism for increasing student achievement and boosting schools' (and nations') standing (Hallinger and Murphy 2013; Neumerski 2012; Nettles and Herrington 2007). This changing education landscape has vastly

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Fig. 10.1 Canada's leadership in education on the global stage at the C21Canada150 Summit, PEI, July 20, 2017. (Licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License)

shifted the role of the educational leader (Anderson and Herr 2015). In terms of both function and structure, educational leadership has been reorganized to meet new policy demands that are grounded in accountability and associated data-related routines (Eacott and Norris 2014). School principals operate more like private sector managers (Anderson and Herr 2015; Eacott and Norris 2014), and school teachers are recruited to absorb the increased managerial responsibilities (Bolden 2011; Spillane 2005; Hallinger, Wang, Chen and Liare 2015).

The OECD has advocated for 'distributed leadership'—or the distribution of leadership roles and responsibilities among multiple faculty members within a school—as a means for accommodating the increased tasks and responsibilities associated with accountability in schools. In the USA, new federal grant schemes are similarly promoting distributed leadership as a way for schools to increase student outcomes. This chapter problematizes the global campaign for distributed leadership as situated within prevailing accountability discourses that value data-driven orientations of schooling over democratic ones. It draws on multiple sources of data—

such as policy documents and reports by the OECD and US federal government—to trace the evolution of distributed leadership as a product of contemporary modes of educational governance. This analysis demonstrates how distributed leadership has emerged as a key element of the accountability era. Ultimately, it critiques the accountability-based promotion of distributed leadership as a missed opportunity to advance democratic ideals that might otherwise be achievable by including more participants in decision-making processes in schools. In other words, it argues that including more teachers in key decision-making processes *can* expand teachers' capacities to exercise professional authority and agency in important ways. However, when their share of the leadership is primarily constrained to accountability-related matters, then their involvement is more utilitarian in nature rather than educative and democratic.

Background

Over the past few decades, primary and secondary educational leadership has changed in various ways, including, but not limited to, (1) changes in practice related to school leader roles, responsibilities, and purposes; (2) changes in leadership preparation programs and licensure requirements; and (3) changes in local leadership structures. In 2015, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) in the USA published new professional standards for K-12 educational administrators. According to the authors, the new standards were developed in response to a new 'global economy [that] is transforming jobs and the 21st century workplace for which schools prepare students' (NPBEA 2015, p. 1). They also pointed out that administrators face challenges related to 'technologies [that] are advancing faster than ever', and 'cuts in school funding [that] loom everywhere, even as schools are being subjected to increasingly competitive market pressures and held to higher levels of accountability for student achievement' (ibid.).

Simultaneously, educational leadership preparation programs have shifted their emphases to student learning (away from instructional leadership or the science of administration), and growing distributed leadership models have opened new pathways for teachers to serve in dual capacities as both teachers and leaders (Gronn 2002; Harris and Muijs 2004; Liljenberg 2015). These shifts not only change what educational leaders do, but also change who the educational leaders are. Like all matters, these changes must be understood in relation to the social, political,

and historical contexts within which they have been made possible. Currently, education matters are configured by a market-based discourse (Ball 2003; Falabella 2014; Rizvi and Lingard 2009), which designates a particular type of educational leader, as well as a particular leadership structure (Bolden 2011; Eacott and Norris 2014). As argued by Youngs (2009):

> The amount of reform that has arisen due to accountability measures and perceived performativity issues in schools has resulted in an intensification of work for both principals and teachers. During the same period of time there has been the rise of distributed leadership and teacher leadership in a manner that has stayed generally quiet in relation to policy critique. The environment has been ripe to distribute leadership work across a school's professional staff. With economic pressures working against any significant increase of staffing, schools had only one way to go, distribute leadership tasks or experience principal and senior management role overload. (p. 382)

Therefore, in a break from the traditional, single-leader structure, schools are assuming more distributed forms of leadership where leadership tasks are spread among multiple school actors (Bolden 2011; Gronn 2002). Select teachers are recruited to undertake additional roles as curriculum coaches, peer evaluators, and related leadership positions. This practice has been lauded by politicians as more democratically just (U.S. Department of Education 2014) and has subsequently been promoted through new federal policy initiatives, such as the 2017 *Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program Grant Competition*. However, set against the backdrop of a market-based schema that grounds leadership in managerial values and techniques (Anderson and Herr 2015; Falabella 2014), we must question the extent to which 'democratic' ideals are made possible.

Relevant Literature

In the name of quality and efficiency, market-based logics have fundamentally reshaped public schools so that they function as market enterprises, whereby competition, choice, and product outcomes are highly valued and rewarded (Ball 2003; Hursh 2007; Rose 1999). In the USA specifically, a series of federal policy initiatives, such as No Child Left Behind (NCLB), Race to the Top (RttT), and NCLB waivers, have introduced a set of accountability procedures and instruments that function to quantify,

evaluate, compare, and rank various facets of education, including both students and teachers, as well as schools, districts, and states (Koyama 2011; Suspitsyna 2010). This classification apparatus allows for a systematic way for external stakeholders (e.g., government officials, taxpayers, parents) to make relative value judgments about the worth of a teacher, school, and so forth (Ball 2003; Falabella 2014; Hursh 2007; Shore and Wright 1999). As a result, school administrators have been inundated with unprecedented levels of managerial tasks and responsibilities, especially in terms of increased data collection, analysis, and reporting on student achievement and teacher effectiveness. The response to these new demands has resulted in a (re)making of the school leader—one who resembles a private business manager, whose responsibilities hinge on performance-oriented actions so as to demonstrate accountability and excellence (Anderson and Herr 2015; Eacott and Norris 2014).

As public schools are reconstituted in market versus public terms, managerial values and techniques become central mechanisms for steering educators' behaviors (Rizvi and Lingard 2009). This includes an increase in accountancy-like tasks that require multiple school actors, at multiple levels of management, to carry out such demands. As tasks are distributed, so too is the leadership structure (Spillane 2005), but not necessarily power (Hatcher 2005; Youngs 2009; see Verger, Fontdevila & Parcerisa, this volume). Bolden (2011) argued that the distributed model may be a function of the changing policy landscape, rather than an attempt to create more democratically oriented schools. Distributed leadership places an extra burden on already-busy teachers, though it is packaged and sold as a reward for excellence (Holloway et al. 2018). This begs a moral question regarding the ethics of distributing tasks, but not power and authority.

Policy Context

Since the OECD first introduced educational leadership as a key means for improving the quality of education in the early 2000s, the organization has written a number of reports and policy recommendations about how (1) schools are currently structuring leadership (OECD 2008), and (2) what schools should do to mobilize leadership to drive school improvement (OECD 2008; Stoll and Temperley 2009). What has emerged most prominently in these documents are recommendations to decentralize

leadership and distribute leadership across multiple stakeholders (e.g., teachers and school boards). Decentralization is recommended to provide local actors the authority to make decisions about their specific contexts and their communities' needs. This has been taken up widely across the world, such as with charter schools in the USA, academies in the UK, and autonomous schooling in Australia. Such decentralization has been recommended in conjunction with increased accountability and performance expectations. School principals, for example, have been afforded greater discretion in terms of hiring and financial control, but this is in exchange for high-stakes expectations for their performance on various testing and inspection schemes (e.g., RttT accountability in the USA, Ofsted Inspections in the UK). These new forms of accountability have produced an exorbitant amount of responsibilities and paperwork for school principals (Holloway et al. 2018; Youngs 2009), requiring new arrangements of leadership that can help manage the increased tasks. It just so happens that distributed leadership, or the sharing of leadership responsibilities across multiple school actors, has also received new attention over this same period of time. In fact, in their report titled *Improving School Leadership Volume 1: Policy and Practice* (OECD 2008a), the OECD named distributed leadership as one of the key levers for increasing student learning and achievement. This has happened at the same time that national systems are pushing for a new focus on distributed leadership.

Distributed leadership in the USA is not a new concept necessarily. Various forms of distributed leadership have been present in US schools for many years, most commonly in the form of school board involvement and assistant principal participation in school governance. Since around the time that NCLB changed the role of data and accountability in schools, however, leadership teams have expanded to include teachers as an important component for helping schools achieve the required performance standards, and for managing the increased responsibilities related to data collection and reporting (Hallinger et al. 2015). Teacher leaders, such as reading coaches, English-language specialists, and the like, grew increasingly common across the country. In many cases, this was in direct response to stipulations of NCLB, which mandated that schools unable to make two years of Adequately Yearly Progress (AYP) use state funds allocated for developing school improvement plans. While most states did not explicitly dictate how schools were to spend these funds, many states dissuaded schools from investing in recurring expenses. As such, targeted professional positions, such as coaches and specialists, who could help

increase student test scores in certain content areas and/or subgroups of students were viewed as valuable (and temporary) assets.

Once the stipulations of NCLB were recognized as being impossible to fully meet, competitive NCLB waivers permitted schools to modify their accountability systems to focus more on teacher accountability (rather than school-level accountability). Similar accountability expectations were written into the competitive Race to the Top (RttT) initiative as well, which spurred a whole new set of needs for various data collection, analysis, and reporting duties. With the focus on the teachers, the same types of data routines were needed not just for the whole school, but for each individual teacher. Such requirements included multiple observations and evaluations of each teacher, value-added assessment of their impact on student test scores, and ongoing, targeted professional development. This onslaught of new accountability-related tasks far exceeded the capacity of one or two principals, requiring many schools to distribute these new responsibilities among the school staff. The teacher leader—who was once responsible primarily for working with teachers to increase student achievement scores—was tasked with new and more pressing responsibilities related to evaluation (Holloway et al. 2018). This new teacher leader, or the 'glorified evaluator' as one participant in a recent study called herself (ibid.), is common in the distributed leadership structures that currently dominate US schools. It is important to note that in no way is this meant to romanticize the NCLB-era teacher leader—for that iteration of the teacher leader was similarly defined by accountability and associated responsibilities. Rather, this chapter aims to track the evolution of distributed leadership, with a particular focus on the role of the teacher leader who has risen to prominence through the accountability movement more broadly.

In the analysis that follows, I will draw on policy documents and artifacts to map the evolution of distributed leadership at the level of the OECD and the USA. Specifically, I will use a policy-as-discourse approach to illustrate how distributed leadership is a product of the prevailing data-driven discourses that constitute current educational matters. The analysis also shows that while notions of democratic practice are touted as important reasons for including teachers in decision-making processes, the current manifestation of distributed leadership is framed almost exclusively as a means for absorbing the added pressures of accountability, rather than promoting democratic practice among teachers and school leaders.

METHOD

Theoretically, this chapter engages with Carol Bacchi's (2000) notion of policy-as-discourse, which argues that 'language, and more broadly discourse, sets limits upon what can be said' (p. 48), and, in turn, thought and done. In other words, policy does not solve some problem that already exists in an objective reality; rather, policy works to constitute problems through the very act of specifying the solutions (Miller and Rose 2008). As such, this chapter avoids framing teacher accountability as a solution to a 'real' problem, but is rather problematized as a product of the high-risk discourse framework within which it has been produced.

Analytically, the chapter draws on policy documents and artifacts to map the evolution of distributed leadership at the level of the OECD and the USA. Data include (1) OECD meeting minutes and reports (i.e., *Meetings of the Education Committee at the Ministerial Level* 2001–2018); (2) OECD reports, toolkits, and recommendation guides regarding educational leadership, broadly, and distributed leadership, specifically; (3) US policy documents related to distributed leadership (e.g., federal grant schemes); and (4) application materials for the awardees of the 2017 *Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program Grant Competition* (which prioritizes systems of distributed leadership). Together, these materials were used to problematize distributed leadership as a product of prevailing accountability discourses.

Throughout the data collection, coding, and analysis stages, Saldaña's (2013) analytic memos were used for tracking ongoing sense-making and theorizing as high-level observations and questions evolved into patterns, trends, and, finally, specific interpretations about the data. First, open coding (Saldaña 2013) was used to get an idea of the scope of the data. This helped with data reduction, and for determining which documents were most relevant for the research questions. The first cycle of analysis focused on historicizing distributed leadership in the OECD and US policy spaces. This historical tracing allowed for understanding the original definition and rationalization of distributed leadership, as well as the evolving stances on the topic.

The second cycle of analysis focused on the ways in which 'distributed leadership' was positioned as a policy solution and/or lever. This was done in two stages—one for the OECD documents and one for the US grant applications. Each application was first analyzed individually for making comparisons between the cases without making generalized assumptions about the group as a whole. Then cross-sectional and categorical indexing

was performed to build on the individual cases by noting similarities, contradictions, and other patterns (Mason 2002). Finally, bringing these analyses together helped identify how distributed leadership has been constituted as a product of the prevailing data-driven discourses that increasingly operate as a global governing complex.

THE OECD'S EVOLVED STANCE ON DISTRIBUTED LEADERSHIP

According to a review of OECD records of previous *Meetings of the Education Committee at the Ministerial Level*, it was not until the February 2001 'Investing in Competencies for All' meeting that the OECD evoked school leadership as a necessary area of focus for education systems. At that point in time, the recommendation was rather vague and pointed to a need for establishing leadership as a means 'to help create a rich infrastructure of advice, knowledge, intermediaries, and networking opportunities' (p. 9). The committee also pointed to the growing trend toward decentralization and autonomy and argued that such conditions could help create a rich environment to 'encourage innovation, provide supportive expertise, and give direction through leadership' (p. 9). Ultimately, the committee posed the following question for consideration:

> What policies are most promising to develop an environment of leadership and support that is both highly accessible to teachers and schools and avoids an exodus of talent from classroom teaching itself? (p. 9)

During this early discussion, the committee suggested that while teachers might be best suited to assume leadership roles, doing so might have unintended consequences for classrooms (e.g., an 'exodus of talent'). At this time, there was also an intensified focus on accountability and learning outcomes, but there was no direct link between these priorities and school leadership per se. However, by the March 2004 OECD meeting, school leadership was directly implicated in the push for increasing student learning outcomes:

> The quality of school-level leadership is critical. Principals and other school leaders are important influences on how effectively schools improve student learning. They also significantly influence the extent to which teachers perform well, achieve job satisfaction, and continue to develop professionally. Improving the recruitment, training and support of school leaders is a key means of building teachers' skills and making teaching more effective. (p. 14)

The shift from leadership as a means to encourage innovation and support expertise to that of building teachers' skills and effectiveness parallels a simultaneous trend toward emphases on increased testing and accountability within OECD priorities (see Verger, Fontdevila & Parcerisa, this volume; Lewis, this volume). As global discourses around standards and competition began to circulate, the role of the school leader shifted from educative responsibilities to more managerial responsibilities (Hallinger et al. 2015). During this time, broader discourses about school leadership began to position the school principal as a critical role in managing the academic performance of their schools, while the degree to which a principal was deemed 'successful' began to focus primarily on the school's academic performance level. Similarly, the traits of successful school leaders began to prioritize those related to instructional leadership (Hallinger et al. 2015).

At the conclusion of the 2004 meeting, the OECD called for an extensive review of the international activity related to school leadership (OECD 2008a). The review took a few years to conduct, and the report—*Improving School Leadership*—was released in 2009. The report stated the following reasons for the new emphasis on school leadership (pp. 12–13):

- **Teaching needs to improve** (e.g., evaluating teacher performance; coaching, planning professional development; 'orchestrating teamwork')
- **Pedagogy is changing** (e.g., 'School leaders need to master these new forms of pedagogy so that they can monitor and evaluate their teachers' practice'.)
- **Centers of autonomy and accountability are shifting** (e.g., 'School leaders are now often accountable for learning outcomes for teachers and students, where previously their accountability was for input into learning processes'.)
- **Policy and practice need to work better together** (e.g., 'Effective implementation depends on the motivation and actions of school leaders. Policy makers need to engage school leaders in meaningful and continuous dialogue and consultation on policy development and formulation'.)

Important to note about the listed reasons above is the specific focus on instruction and accountability. This is categorically different from the OECD's original message of innovation and creativity. Like Hallinger and

colleagues (2015) indicated in their extensive review of school leadership practices, policies, and research, the OECD's shifting message parallels a more global discursive shift that placed renewed focus on the principal as the 'instructional leader' of the school, which happens to align with the intensified focus on accountability and school effectiveness discourses of the same period of time. Again, it should be recalled that while the OECD was pushing for closer attention to school leadership, it was also increasing its presence in the global testing space via PISA (see Part II, this volume).

The relationship between increased accountability (including the OECD's specific role in the global testing space) and the reconceptualization of school leadership cannot be overstated. This relationship is brought into stark clarity in the *Improving School Leadership* report and its companion toolkit, as identified explicitly near the beginning of the report (OECD 2009, p. 10): 'The increased responsibilities and accountability of school leadership are creating the need for distribution of leadership, both within schools and across schools' (p. 10). In the *Toolkit* (OECD 2009), there is an entire section devoted to 'reducing the burden of school principals' (p. 17). It is recommended that:

> One way to meet challenges is to distribute leadership across different people and organisations, for example deputy principals, middle-level managers and people in other schools. This can improve school effectiveness by building capacity for continuous improvement, for addressing within-school variation and for succession planning. (p. 17)

This was a thread that continued throughout the report and toolkit—that increased accountability demands have transformed leadership to require more people to accommodate the added tasks and responsibilities. This makes sense given the number of education policies that have prioritized testing and data reporting (e.g., NCLB in the USA and policies associated with 'new public management' in the UK; Hallinger et al. 2015).

Though not as prominent as the accountability orientation of distributed leadership, the report also stressed the benefits related to curriculum leadership and capacity-building, as evidenced in the following:

> There is a need to reinforce the concept of leadership teams in national frameworks, to develop incentive mechanisms to reward participation and performance in these teams and to extend leadership training and development to middle-level management and potential future leaders in the school. (OECD 2008a, p. 11)

While the curriculum leadership and capacity-building target different objectives than accountability per se, it is still the case that these goals are also constituted by accountability-based logics and discourses. In the above excerpt, for example, the ideas of 'incentive mechanisms' and 'rewards for performance' are common features of neoliberal accountability systems where individuals are placed within a competitive field and incentivized to constantly compare and compete (Ball 2003; Holloway 2018). As I have argued previously, 'incentive-driven distributed leadership might place teacher leaders in precarious positions that demand more of their time, while limiting their capacities to participate in the leadership practices they deem most valuable' (Holloway et al. 2018, p. 551).

As previously noted, the OECD's shifting narrative about the importance of school leadership and the promotion of distributed leadership echoes similar trends across educational leadership policy, practice, and research globally (Hallinger et al. 2015). However, there are other interesting points about the OECD report and toolkit that are worth noting. For one, while 'distributed leadership' was significantly promoted throughout the toolkit, this should be understood as a possible response to other OECD initiatives and discourses pushed by the OECD itself. If we view the report and toolkit as a product of a particular time, we can see that it came after the OECD conducted an analysis of what schools were doing in regard to leadership. This was in 2005, which was five years after the first PISA testing commenced and countries were seeking new ways of responding to the emerging global field. This timeframe also coincided with massive accountability-related reform efforts across a number of countries, fundamentally changing schools' responsibilities in terms of data collection, analysis, and reporting (Hallinger et al. 2015). Reforms like No Child Left Behind in the USA were in their early years, while countries like Australia were gearing up for their own high-stakes testing schemes with the *National Assessment Plan—Numeracy and Literacy* (NAPLAN). As such, when the OECD conducted their report of school leadership, it makes sense that schools were in the process of vastly changing their leadership structures in response to the new 'burdens' faced by principals. This is significant because it highlights the pragmatic purpose behind most forms of distributed leadership. Rather than distributed leadership being promoted on philosophical, ethical, or democratic grounds, distributed leadership was a logistical solution to a problem supported and promulgated by the OECD itself. In fact, the OECD explicitly tempers any concerns that distributed leadership might weaken the power of the principal:

> An increase in the power and influence of others does not diminish the power and influence of the principal, but rather extends and enlarges it while reducing the individual burden of school leadership tasks. (OECD 2008a, p. 17)

After years of analyzing the patterns of leadership, the OECD began to see distributed leadership as a viable solution to the question they originally posed during the 2001 Meeting of the Education Committee:

> What policies are most promising to develop an environment of leadership and support that is both highly accessible to teachers and schools and *avoids an exodus of talent from classroom teaching itself*? (p. 9, emphasis added)

In the following section, I use policy documents from the USA to illustrate how distributed leadership has been taken up within one national context. As the OECD has found in its analyses and reporting, the USA has adopted an accountability-oriented notion of distributed leadership that values compliance and efficiency rather than shared input and democratic participation.

Case Study: USA

This part of the chapter will focus specifically on a 2017 US federal grant scheme that incentivized states to adopt leadership models that were based on performance-based compensation. The purpose of the *Teacher and School Leader Incentive Program Grant Competition* was

> to support the use of performance-based compensation, and other human capital strategies that enhance and sustain performance-based compensation, in order to increase students' access to effective educators in high-need schools, and to expand the array of promising approaches that can help these educators and other personnel succeed. (U.S. Department of Education 2018, n.p.)

The analysis included all 14 of the winning applications (publicly available), most of which were proposed by school districts or consortia of school districts. It should first be noted that the case of the USA does not necessarily follow the recommendations of the OECD school leadership *Toolkit* (OECD 2009). That is, it was not a result of the OECD's recommendations. Rather, the 2017 round of grant funding was a new iteration

of a previous grant scheme (TIF) that also incentivized new human capital management systems, but which focused less on the whole leadership model. As such, many states and school districts that were successful for the several previous rounds of TIF grants had already implemented some form of distributed leadership structure (see, e.g., Holloway et al. 2018; Holloway et al. 2019). Therefore, many of the applications reviewed for this analysis noted that their proposed system was an expansion/improvement on a previous system.

First, distributed leadership, specifically, was not an explicit requirement of the TIF grant, yet all 14 winning applicants proposed some form of formal distributed leadership model as part of their new system. This mostly included the promotion of teachers to mentor or instructional leader roles. Importantly, evaluation scores and student achievement scores were consistently used as the basis upon which a teacher was 'rewarded' with a leadership role. For example:

> The master teacher position will provide a unique opportunity for seasoned teachers to take on leadership and growth roles without leaving the classroom that they love. They will be selected based on interest, evaluation of their effectiveness as a teacher, and student growth and academic achievement. Master teachers must demonstrate instructional proficiency over time (evaluation ratings and student growth/performance data) and their ability to teach transparently (willingness and ability to talk about their practice and explain it for others). They will model proficient and replicable practice and coach residents. (East St. Louis School District 2017, application, p. 22)

Among all of the applications, the most emphasized purpose of distributing leadership was to increase student achievement and teacher effectiveness. In fact, there were *no applications* that even mentioned benefits associated with teacher input, voice, or influence in decision-making processes, which is a common virtue emphasized within the distributed leadership literature (Briggs and Wohlstetter 2003). There was a small exception from the Insight Education Group, Inc. (2017), which stated that the 'specific job responsibilities [of lead and mentor teachers] may vary but core responsibilities include instructional coaching, leading job-embedded professional development … data analysis, demonstration lessons, and *participation on the School Leadership Team*' (p. 23). However, the application also stated that 'Lead teachers are *focused solely on building capacity within teachers* while mentor teachers *support the professional*

development while also teaching their own classroom' (p. 24, emphasis added). Again, a narrow focus on instructional leadership and improving student achievement is prioritized in this application, as with the other proposals.

In some cases, there were clear indications that workload was a major consideration for distributing leadership. This was most commonly associated with high levels of observation and evaluation-related expectations, as exemplified by East St. Louis that required the following number of observations for *each* teacher in the school: 'Gold-level teachers are observed three times per month; silver level six times per month; and bronze level ten times per month' (pp. 3–4). Increased expectations for ongoing observation and evaluation are also a key feature of other federal policy schemes, such as RttT. Therefore, these high numbers are not uncommon across school districts, regardless of their participation in the TIF competition.

Another common trend across the proposals was the tendency to frame 'teacher leadership' as a reward for high-performing teachers, as demonstrated by Fort Wayne's application:

> FWCS continues to design a system that promotes teachers and principals based on proven ability to raise student achievement. *PEER* will connect promotion and salary advancement to an Educator Effectiveness Model that includes use of validated Rubrics and specified student growth measures. *Promotion and salary advancement will be linked to performance-based compensation strategies that reward Highly Effective and Effective educators.* (Fort Wayne Community Schools 2017, p. 17, emphasis added)

As mentioned earlier, previous research has shown that doing so can put teacher leaders in precarious positions, since the notion of leadership as a 'reward' can guilt teacher leaders into remaining in such positions even when doing so is personally or professionally unsatisfying or even damaging (Holloway et al. 2018).

Concluding Discussion

The analysis presented in this chapter shows that while notions of democratic practice and shared decision-making are touted as important reasons for including teachers in decision-making processes, the current manifestation of distributed leadership is framed almost exclusively as a means for

absorbing the added pressures of accountability, rather than promoting democratic practice among teachers and school leaders. After widespread changes to accountability (globally) and specific accountability changes (nationally) created ripe conditions for distributed leadership (Hallinger et al. 2015), the OECD and the USA produced specific recommendations and incentive schemes to promote distributed leadership as a means for addressing the new challenges associated with accountability.

According to this review of OECD records, it was not until February 2001 that the OECD emphasized school leadership as an area of focus for education systems. At that point in time, the recommendation was rather vague and pointed to a need for establishing leadership as a means 'to help create a rich infrastructure of advice, knowledge, intermediaries, and networking opportunities' (p. 9). At this time, there was also an intensifying focus on accountability and learning outcomes, but there was no direct link between these priorities and school leadership. However, by 2004, school leadership was directly implicated in the push for increasing student learning outcomes, which paralleled a simultaneous trend toward increased testing and accountability.

Ultimately, analyses of the OECD and US documents suggest that the 'problem' that distributed leadership attempts to 'solve' is that the demands and responsibilities for principals are changing due to increased 'burdens' on principals. This is largely attributable to new and increasing demands related to accountability (e.g., data collection, analysis, reporting). The important thing to note here is that this push for increased accountability demands has been largely supported and promulgated by the OECD. Therefore, distributed leadership is a 'solution' to a 'problem' for which the OECD has advocated. This is important because, if we view discourse through the lens of Foucault's (1988) problematization framework and Bacchi's (2000) policy-as-discourse framework, then we can see how framing 'distributed leadership' as a solution to an 'accountability problem' eliminates the possibility to see distributed leadership as an educative, democratic arrangement that might otherwise be possible. In other words, the ways in which distributed leadership has been discursively problematized via an accountability register restricts other possibilities from emerging. The US case makes this point, as each of the grant proposals based their distributed leadership 'need' on account of building capacity and carrying the new burdens placed on principals. Not only is there a missed opportunity for better versions of distributed leadership to occur, but schools also run the risk of dealing with Anderson and Middleton's

warning that 'shared governance structures may not result in significant participation in decisions (Malen and Ogawa 1988) but, instead, result in contrived collegiality (Hargreaves 1994), reinforced privilege (Lipman 1997), and even create a tighter iron cage of control for participants (p. 279). They also note the drain on resources, including money and time, as well as the problems with teacher burnout due to heavy teaching and mentoring loads.

As Youngs (2009) argued, 'these performative environments can also perhaps restrain, rather than enable, emergent distributed leadership practice across a professional staff, students and the school community that is informed by more educative and democratic ideals' (Youngs 2009, p. 382). Put simply, if distributed leadership is framed as a logistical solution to a logistical problem, then it misses an opportunity to promote distributed leadership as a means for involving more people in important decision-making processes, which is what teachers, students, and their communities ultimately need.

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CHAPTER 11

Constructing School Autonomy with Accountability as a Global Policy Model: A Focus on OECD's Governance Mechanisms

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INTRODUCTION

In the last decades, most countries in the world have faced major pressures to reform their educational systems. The emerging demand for global skills in increasingly interdependent economies, the challenges generated by technological innovation, and the competition between educational systems to achieve better results stand out among other sources of reform pressure. In this scenario, school autonomy with accountability (SAWA) reforms have been disseminated widely due to their promise to modernize education systems and strengthen their performance. In current educational reforms, school autonomy and accountability tend to be conceived as inseparable policy measures.

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Fig. 11.1 Middle-grade classroom. National assessments and standardized tests are increasingly present in school classroom dynamics such as the one represented in the picture. (Photo by NeONBRAND on Unsplash)

Governments (in their role as principals) are expected to give more autonomy to schools (the agents) in organizational, budgetary, and/or curricular terms—as long as schools accept being held subject to stricter supervision via external assessments and accountability measures. SAWA offers schools the possibility to adapt educational interventions to their local realities, thus giving more pedagogic and managerial powers to schools and strengthening the involvement of teachers (see also Holloway, this volume). By following the SAWA route, schools are expected to have the necessary room to maneuver to strengthen their instructional strategy and improve students' learning outcomes (De Grauwe 2005).

International organizations with great political reach, including the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), have played a key role in the construction and diffusion of SAWA as a global policy model. During the 1980s, the OECD started promoting school effectiveness and school improvement research through the

International School Improvement Project (ISIP) (Hopkins and Lagerweij 1996). The project was instrumental in galvanizing an expert network around school governance questions, and laid the foundations for the school improvement movement that took shape and consolidated during the 1990s (Bollen 1996; Hopkins and Reynolds 2001). The repertoire of policies advanced through these years prefigured to some extent the SAWA agenda that crystallized during the early 2000s, and particularly given their emphasis on schools as key units of change. Over the last two decades, the OECD has increasingly resorted to accountability, external assessments, and school autonomy measures when advising countries on how to organize and govern education (Bloem 2015; Niemann and Martens 2018). This shift has been paralleled by greater levels of conceptual and theoretical elaboration on the foundations and potential of these policy tools. For the OECD, SAWA is a policy model that seems to be context-resilient in the sense that it is expected to make education systems perform better in most territories, no matter their level of economic development or their administrative traditions. SAWA is a policy agenda that is congruent with the New Public Management (NPM) agenda that the OECD has advocated in different public sectors since the 1980s (Morgan 2009; Pal 2009). Both SAWA and NPM promote the fragmentation of public systems into smaller managerial units, outcomes-based management, and higher levels of accountability pressures among service providers.

This chapter aims at understanding the role of the OECD in the development and international dissemination of SAWA policies. Specifically, the chapter analyses the governance mechanisms through which these reforms are being promoted by the OECD, namely, data gathering, education policy evaluation, and the generation of policy ideas through different knowledge products and policy spaces. Methodologically, the chapter is based on a systematic literature review of a corpus of 33 papers, which we triangulate with official documents produced by the OECD. The chapter is structured as follows. In the first part, we present our research framework, which covers both our theoretical approach and our methods. In the second part, we present our main results, which we organize according to the different governance mechanisms articulated by the OECD around SAWA reforms. In the last part, we pick up the main points in a concluding discussion.

Research Framework

The OECD as a Global Education Policy Actor

The OECD is an international organization (IO) that mainly operates as a platform for state cooperation and ideational exchange. The OECD describes itself as a "forum in which governments can work together to share experiences and seek solutions to common problems".[1] In comparison to other IOs, the OECD's legal and financial instruments are modest, and its policy work mainly operates at the ideational level (Pal 2009). According to OECD officials, the main role of this IO in the education sector consists of comparing data, preparing policy reports for member countries, and facilitating horizontal learning between states (Schleicher and Zoido 2016). However, this is far from meaning the OECD is powerless, or that it simply operates as a neutral intermediary organization between states' interests and ideas. The OECD also plays an active role in agenda-setting, policy development, and policy transfer dynamics globally. In fact, the numerous knowledge-based activities developed by the OECD are a purposeful source of power, and a way for this IO to gain influence over its member (and even non-member) countries' policy agendas and decisions.

In the last decades, the OECD has become a key player in education, mainly via soft power mechanisms, and it is conceived as a prestigious interlocutor in the context of many education policy debates. The OECD's legitimacy in the education domain comes from its evidence-based and technocratic (i.e., apparently un-ideological) approach to problems of different natures, and its capacity to generate new sources of data and manage knowledge for policy purposes. According to Marcussen (2004, p. 29):

> the OECD is bound to play the so-called idea game through which it collects, manipulates and diffuses data, knowledge, visions and ideas to its member countries and, to a still larger extent, to a series of non-member countries.

As most IOs do, the OECD, since its formation in 1961, has focused on agenda-setting activities and, accordingly, has been telling countries the main problems they should prioritize in different policy sectors (Ougaard 2010). Nonetheless, more recently, this IO has become increasingly involved in policy development activities and its role has shifted from that of problem identifier to that of solution builder. Over the years, the OECD

has built an extensive knowledge base, as well as the confidence and moral authority to develop and prescribe policy solutions (Berten and Leisering 2017). As we develop below, in education, the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) has become an inflection point in this respect, due to the capacity of this program to commensurate complex educational processes, such as teaching and learning, in concrete numerical indicators, and due to the country comparisons that derive from this quantification exercise (Martens 2007; Grek 2009; see also Lewis, this volume).

IOs can activate a range of governance mechanisms to transfer their preferred policy solutions to different territories and policy spaces. Martens and Jakobi (2010, p. 7) identify three main mechanisms of governance that are particularly present in the context of the OECD. They are: (1) Idea generation, defined as "a central activity by which the OECD stimulates political debates and develops new policy aims and goals"; (2) Policy evaluation, which "enables the organization to assess and guide a country's policy efforts"; and (3) Data production, which "although easily perceived as a non-political statistical exercise, makes it possible to compare countries directly with each other". As we show in the following sections, the OECD is very active and effective when it comes to triggering and articulating these three mechanisms with the goal of disseminating SAWA solutions internationally.

METHODS

Methodologically speaking, this chapter draws on the combination of two main data sources; namely, the results of a systematic literature review (SLR) on processes of education reform and policy instrumentation along the lines of SAWA; and a documentary analysis of OECD publications and working documents, with an explicit focus on accountability and school autonomy policies.

The SLR allowed for identifying clear instances of the OECD's influence over processes of reform and policy-shaping, as well as enabling circumstances and mechanisms that favor the penetration and appropriation of the OECD agenda in different contexts (see Verger et al. 2019). The review was informed by indexed publications retrieved through the SCOPUS database and followed the conventional steps of this literature review approach (cf. Gough et al. 2012). While the review contemplated a total of 158 papers, for our purposes here, we rely on a more reduced

subset of papers (n = 33) that inquired into the role of the OECD in SAWA reforms more explicitly.

The analysis of OECD publications, in turn, allowed us to characterize how educational problems and SAWA solutions are discursively articulated by this IO, and identify the causal ideas and principled beliefs through which the SAWA agenda is sustained and legitimized. We considered four main types of knowledge documents: documents published by the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) with a focus on different aspects of education governance; country reviews of national policies for education; different documents concerned with PISA (including press releases and executive summaries of PISA reports); and working documents that included the agendas and/or main outcomes of meetings on SAWA-related issues held in the context of the OECD Directorate for Education and Skills.

OECD Governance Mechanisms and SAWA Reforms

Data Gathering

Data gathering is one of the main sources of IO power, since "the process of measuring, data production, and standard setting can make certain activities visible and legitimate and obscure other possibilities, conferring a self-propelling momentum on trends that may have been more consciously initiated" (Porter and Webb 2007, p. 48). The OECD has historically played an important role in "quantification and statistical mapping" in the field of education (Gorur 2015, p. 582). Quantification and data gathering allow the OECD to capture, describe, and compare the main characteristics of national education systems.

The OECD began to develop education indicators to promote the international comparison of educational systems in the 1960s. In the beginning, these indicators were intended to provide relevant information for educational planning to education ministers (Martens and Jakobi 2010). Nevertheless, in the mid-1960s, the education ministers of the member states pointed out to the OECD the need to produce comparable data in education in order to calculate the efficiency of education systems (Papadopoulos 1994). Since then, the OECD has developed variegated initiatives in this field, although it was not until the 1990s and the 2000s that this IO became the leading international organization (together with the World Bank) regarding the collection and production of comparable

statistical data in education (Cusso and d'Amico 2005; Sellar and Lingard 2013). PISA is the most influential data-intensive initiative of the OECD among political elites, in part because of its capacity of measuring and comparing learning achievement internationally, but is not the only one. Other well-known assessments and statistical products of this IO are Education at a Glance (EAG), the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC), or the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) (Gorur 2015; see also Lewis, this volume).

According to Martens and Niemann (2013), the mechanism of data gathering and production is crucial to understand the prominent role of the OECD in global governance. The OECD cannot sanction member countries per se, but the "naming and shaming" dynamics it promotes through the generation of league tables, such as those included in the PISA reports, are an effective form of framing and conditioning country decisions and promote the engagement of countries in a sort of "global education race" (cf. Sellar et al. 2017). This educational race intensifies for political but also economic reasons since, in a highly competitive and interdependent economic environment, learning achievement becomes a governmental asset to attract foreign investors and to aspire to generate more knowledge-intensive jobs.

PISA has had a substantive effect in the promotion of SAWA policies at the national level. The release of PISA results are central to many governments' perception about the education quality, equity, and/or efficiency problems that they face, and triggers educational debates of different intensities in countries and regions. As a result of these debates, and the consolidation of a narrative of a "learning crisis" that accompany these debates, policy-makers are inclined to select policy solutions that allow them to keep a better control of their educational results, such as national assessments and test-based accountabilities. In countries such as Germany, Switzerland, England, Denmark, Australia, Spain, and Norway, PISA results have fostered public debates leading to the adoption of SAWA policies at some level (Baxter and Clarke 2013; Engel 2015; Gorur 2015; Møller and Skedsmo 2013; Moos 2014; Sjøberg 2016; Sellar and Lingard 2013).

For example, in Germany, the so-called PISA shock in the early 2000s triggered the adoption of an output-oriented governance approach (Niemann et al. 2017), while in Norway, the scandalization triggered by the publication of PISA 2000 and 2003 was key to build a political consensus around accountability and quality assurance systems (Hatch 2013;

Camphuijsen et al. 2018). In other countries, such as Spain, PISA has been used strategically to legitimize the adoption of large-scale assessments and managerial school autonomy (Engel 2015; Popp 2014; Verger and Curran 2014), and has enabled bipartisan convergence around NPM policy principles (Dobbins and Christ 2019). In the case of England, mediocre PISA results in the first editions did not result into a shock, but were used to problematize the role of the inspection agency and, specifically, to promote a more instructional improvement approach among inspection services (Baxter 2014).

The statistical data produced by the OECD, mainly via PISA, triggers competition dynamics at both international and national levels. In the context of the so-called education race generated by PISA, the enactment of national large-scale assessments and accountability policies has become very strategic, and a necessary condition for governments to promote better learning outcomes and activate school improvement dynamics at a distance. By promoting competition, PISA reinforces the adoption of SAWA policies indirectly. However, the OECD, via PISA, also advocates these types of policies explicitly. In numerous PISA reports, SAWA is portrayed as an appropriate way to address performance issues and improve learning outcomes. As stated in the press release of PISA 2006:

> more importantly, there are a number of school policies and practices that are crucial for performance without being necessarily tied to resources. Let me just highlight three of them—institutional differentiation, autonomy, and accountability, because they feature so prominently in national education policy debates. (OECD 2007, p. 1)

The performative effects of international rankings can be observed in Denmark, where, according to Moos (2014), the prime minister stated in 2010 that the aim of the educational system was to become one of the top-five nations listed in the PISA report. In developing countries and emerging economies, the country aspirations might be more modest, but they also use PISA as a benchmark in their educational development plans. For example, in the case of a non-OECD country such as Brazil:

> The explicit goal of the PDE[2] in 2007 was for the IDEB[3] score to reach the OECD average level by 2021 (INEP, 2016; PDE, 2007), thereby achieving full alignment with international large-scale assessment models. (Kauko et al. 2018, p. 570; see also Toledo Silva, this volume)

PISA is influential not only due to the data it gathers and how it presents it, but also because it has become an "international reference" in terms of assessment systems. As an international reference, PISA has contributed to the reconfiguration of national assessments at the country level. Countries as diverse as Brazil (Kauko et al. 2018), Spain (Verger et al. 2018), Chile (Parcerisa and Falabella 2017), and Canada (Martino and Rezai-Rashti 2013) have adopted national assessments in the image of PISA, or have adjusted their national assessments to PISA methodology. The strategic adaptation of existing national assessments to PISA methodology, contents, and standards is seen as a way to modernize the national assessment system, but also of strengthening countries' competitiveness in the global educational race.

Overall, PISA has reached a significant impact and popularity among OECD member and non-member countries, and the data produced by this IO through PISA enjoys great credibility and legitimacy globally (Gorur 2015). As we show in the next sections, the ideational environment created by the comparative and audit culture (cf. Kamens 2013) that OECD induces via PISA facilitates also the deployment of idea generation, meaning-making, and persuasion strategies, which on many occasions result in the diffusion of SAWA policies internationally.

Policy Evaluation

The second OECD governance mechanism considered by Martens and Jakobi (2010) is policy evaluation, that is, activities oriented at providing countries with education guidance and policy advice. In the context of IOs, policy evaluations usually adopt the form of peer reviews in which experts in a particular policy domain identify policy issues and put forward policy recommendations. Peer review has been characterized as a practice revolving on multilateral surveillance and indirect coercion (Marcussen 2004; Porter and Webb 2007) that sets in motion benchmarking dynamics (Schuller 2005). In fact, the OECD is explicit on the fact that the effectiveness of its reviews relies on the peer pressure resulting from informal dialogues, public scrutiny, comparisons, and the impact of public opinion.[4] As noted by Pagani (2002), while peer review is not exclusive to the OECD, this IO has made a distinctly extensive use of this monitoring technique, to the point that it features today as one of its most distinctive practices (see also Krejsler, this volume).

In the OECD's education work, the most extensively used and prominent evaluation instruments are the Reviews of National Policies for Education (RNPEs). Other related instruments are Thematic Reviews, Country Background Reports, Country Notes, Country Case Studies, and Education Policy Outlooks. Policy development initiatives of the OECD, such as *Synergies for Better Learning*, also rely on background country peer evaluations. While such evaluation modalities differ in procedures and form, they all are oriented at identifying the country's weaknesses and main educational challenges, and suggesting and prioritizing certain courses of action under the forms of policy recommendations. RNPEs, however, stand out on the grounds of their interactive nature, their reliance on face-to-face interactions and field visits, and the length of the policy cycle they trigger off (e.g., the frequency and nature of follow-up mechanisms). For all these reasons, RNPEs are instrumental in the diffusion of the OECD educational agenda, the internalization of such agenda among national policy-makers, and the consolidation of the OECD as a policy expert and authorized knowledge producer (Grek 2017).

OECD country reviews have been strategic in the advancement of SAWA reforms in several countries, although not always for the same reasons. In some cases, country reviews are one of the sources that have contributed to problematize some aspects (or the general functioning) of the education system, and trigger domestic dynamics similar to those sparked by PISA results (see above). This has been the case of Scotland (UK), where the OECD report published in 2007 (*Quality and Equity of Schooling in Scotland*) animated a policy debate on the organization and management of the schooling system. Although the review recommendations were hardly observed by the new Scottish National Party government that took over in 2007, Grek (2016) draws attention to the crucial effect that the report had in changing both the parameters of the national debate and the country's self-perception.

In other cases, country reviews have a clearer or more direct effect in the selection of new policy instruments or the redefinition of existing ones. This is, for instance, the case of Chile, where, amid a national debate about the quality of education, the OECD country review published in 2004 was instrumental in securing the accountability solution. The OECD report not only affected the general direction of policy-making efforts, but also translated into a series of changes in the design and procedures of the national standardized test (SIMCE) (Bravo 2011; Parcerisa and Falabella 2017).

The case of Norway is especially illustrative of how the OECD's evaluation practices influence both the identification and prioritization of particular policy problems, and the selection of particular policy responses. A series of reviews and reports published by the OECD during the last 20 years in Norway have shaped the terms of the national education debate and have contributed decisively to the advancement of a system of low-stakes accountability. As early as in 1988, a RNPE conducted by the OECD questioned the high levels of decentralization of the education system, and called for the need to introduce centralized control mechanisms. Later on, in the mid-2000s, another OECD review on *Lifelong Learning in Norway* also played a significant role in securing the centrality of assessment and outcomes within the new educational strategy devised in the Green Paper (2003) and White Paper (2004), accordingly (Baek et al. 2018).

However, the publication of a country review or the engagement of a given country in the review process cannot be mechanically associated to policy changes or the reconfiguration of education agendas. As noted by Schuller (2005, p. 177), "the utility of the national reviews depends in part on the willingness of the country to confront issues and to be candid in the information it supplies"—and such readiness cannot be taken for granted. While OECD reviews in some contexts have provided a turning point, their role is much more limited in other settings or circumstances. Likewise, the impact of a review does not always last, nor does it entail a durable change in the framing of the debate and national priorities. In Ireland, for instance, the shift toward a more managerial or economistic approach to education was evident in the 1992 Green Papers that were themselves largely inspired by the OECD's RNPE of 1991 (Halton 2003). However, this approach was soon eventually abandoned following the appointment of a new Minister of Education and the negative consequences of this reform approach (with an excessive focus on accountability and rankings) observed in England (Halton 2003).

To be sure, the effect of evaluation practices in terms of policy change does not depend exclusively on their impact over decision-makers. The ultimate impact of OECD reviews depends also on their public reception, and on how the public puts pressure on governments according to the review findings (Porter and Webb 2007). The Chilean case is particularly illustrative of such dynamics. As documented by Parcerisa and Falabella (2017), the OECD review published in 2004 helped frame the discourse of the student movement, which was highly critical of segregation and the

inequality induced by the quasi-market system. These protests called into question the education system and, along with poor results in student performance, contributed decisively to create a context favorable to the advancement of accountability reforms. However, such dynamics do not appear to be the rule, but the exception. In fact, reviews are likely to receive only limited attention within domestic constituencies. On occasions, the government might even act as a gatekeeper and limit dissemination practices or media attention, thus neutralizing a key influence channel. So, neither the impact of OECD reviews over national policies, nor their effect over public opinion and public sentiments, can be taken for granted. In most cases, the transformative potential of OECD reviews, and their capacity to bring about a process of policy change, remains an empirical question.

However, and regardless of the direct effects of OECD reviews in terms of national policy change, another of the effects of this evaluation labor is the consolidation and dissemination of a common understanding of what constitutes appropriate policy. As noted by Porter and Webb (2007), "peer review requires standards and criteria against which a member state's policies can be reviewed" (p. 6), and such criteria are not always explicit. Rather, policy evaluation is likely to be guided by implicit principles and standards. This is why, even if their ultimate impact on domestic policy-making is uncertain, country reviews and RNPEs are informative in their own right.

A look at the RNPEs published in the last decade suggests that the recommendations about accountability included in these reviews, despite being tailored to country specificities, tend to respond to a few common principled beliefs. Among them, two principles feature prominently. First, one can see the need to encourage or consolidate a shift from inputs and procedures to outcomes as a focus of policy attention. This is particularly so in middle-income countries, such as Brazil (see OECD 2010) or Costa Rica (see OECD 2017), where an input-centered perspective has long prevailed. Second, the need to instill an evaluation culture predicated on greater levels of accountability and transparency, and involving the appraisal of different education stakeholders (including teacher and schools but also local and national administrators) against well-defined performance and quality benchmarks and standards. Such ideas can indeed be found in most of the reviews conducted in the last decade,[5] and are explicitly positioned as drivers of high-performing education systems (see, for instance, the reviews recently conducted in Norway [OECD 2011a] or

Greece [OECD 2018]). Overall, accountability and autonomy are generally emphasized as part of the necessary strategy to address broadly defined goals and portrayed as intrinsically desirable, but less clearly framed as a response to a particular challenge.

When it comes to specific policy instruments and tools, RNPE appear to be more heterogeneous in nature. Also, the degree of precision and detail in the definition of instrument settings is also quite variable. For instance, while calls for the strengthening of monitoring mechanisms and teacher and school appraisal schemes are widespread, the stakes attached to such assessments are subject to variation and are not always clearly delimited. A number of the reviews are, in fact, rather ambiguous or vague on the desirability of these arrangements—and some even call for some caution in their implementation. This is the case of the RNPE conducted in Colombia, which calls into question the design of the (collective) teacher bonus currently in place and warns against attaching increasingly higher stakes to a single measure, at the same time that it admittedly remains vague on what could constitute a more desirable accountability scheme (see OECD 2016). In general, in RNPEs, it is possible to identify a general preference for complex quality assurance systems relying on a wide range of sources, even if recommendations regarding specific policy-design features are more heterogeneous and subject to great variation in terms of the detail provided.

Idea Generation

Idea generation is a broad governance mechanism by which the OECD promotes policy debates between countries and constructs policy recommendations and programs. Two main types of policy ideas are being generated and disseminated in the context of IOs such as the OECD: causal ideas and principled beliefs. Causal ideas are more scientific and evidence-based in nature (i.e., *what works*), whereas principled beliefs respond to a more normative approach to policy (i.e., *what is acceptable*) (Marcussen 2004). Both types of ideas are connected in the sense that the tested policies, best practices, and benchmarks that the OECD promotes need to fit within its "explicitly normative agenda" (Pal 2009, p. 1061).

Idea generation is connected to—and, to a great extent, grounded on—the two governance mechanisms mentioned above (i.e., statistical data generation and policy evaluation), but it involves the proactive interpretation of these data and evaluations for policy purposes. The OECD is

well aware of the policy potential of the data it generates, especially through successful initiatives such as PISA. In fact, initially, the OECD outsourced the elaboration of the PISA report to independent consultants. However, it stopped doing so with the 2006 PISA cycle since, for the OECD, producing the PISA reports in-house is the best way of framing and controlling the policy message that derives from this international large-scale assessment (Bloem 2015).

PISA is the most important source for the policy development activities of the OECD. *PISA in Focus, Education Indicators in Focus*, and the *Strong Performers and Successful Reformers* video series are good examples of the OECD attempt of interpreting and translating PISA's quantitative results into tangible policy lessons and recommendations (Bloem 2015). SAWA recommendations are consistently present in these knowledge products, but also in other Directorate for Education and Skills initiatives. These include the *Synergies for Better Learning* series (Bloem 2015), or CERI initiatives such as *Governing Complex Education Systems* and *Strategic Education Governance*, which involve the participation of country representatives in a series of seminars and meetings, during which good practices are identified and the potential and weaknesses of country participants are assessed.[6] Beyond written products and international seminars, another way the OECD disseminates policy ideas is by giving advice to governments. Several studies show that the OECD has played a direct role as advisor in the context of SAWA reforms in countries like Spain (Dobbins and Christ 2019; Engel 2015; Verger and Curran 2014), Portugal (Carvalho and Costa 2017), and Mexico (Echávarri and Peraza 2017). In the context of these interactions at the country level, OECD officials play a strategic role in advancing educational reform by establishing bridges between international discourses and national politics, and by mediating between the fields of policy and research (Carvalho and Costa 2017).

The SAWA agenda gained centrality in the OECD internal discussions in the middle of the 2000s. In 2004, the OECD education ministers' meeting debated test-based accountability issues and "revealed wide differences of view among countries in how information on student learning outcomes can and should be used" (OECD 2005, p. 3). This debate triggered a series of informal meetings, training, and research initiatives with external experts and country representatives. The main focus of these initiatives was to find out whether increased accountability could benefit students' achievement and make educational results more equitable. The research base of these lines of work was to a great extent developed by the

German economist Ludger Woessmann. This author, after conducting different analysis with the PISA database, concluded that "enhanced accountability is associated with overall improvements in performance", and that there are "important complementarities between some testing and aspects of school autonomy as well as parental choice" (OECD 2008, p. 7).

The main policy message that derives from this line of work on SAWA, and which has been echoed in different OECD publications like *PISA in Focus. No. 9* (see OECD 2011b), is that managerial school autonomy is conducive to better educational results when combined with school rankings. Despite these findings being not necessarily conclusive (or could be subject to multiple interpretations), they have provided with arguments to advocates of SAWA when promoting educational reforms at the country level (see for instance Pagès and Prieto 2019, forthcoming). Nonetheless, to be fair, initiatives of the OECD on evaluation and assessment that came in the 2010s are more nuanced in their conclusions. These more recent initiatives do not advocate rankings and market accountability so strongly, but rather encourage formative assessments and multi-stakeholder accountability systems that do not put pressure exclusively on school actors (see, for instance, Burns and Köster 2016; OECD 2013).

Through the promotion of SAWA, the OECD advocates something else than a specific policy program or specific policy instruments. Rather, it promotes broader policy principles and a normative understanding of how educational systems should be modernized and organized. The OECD policy work has a strong normative dimension and, as it has been acknowledged by Woodward (2009, cited in Sellar and Lingard 2013, p. 715), "it is arguably through challenging and changing the mindsets of the people involved that the [OECD] achieves its greatest influence".

In education, the normative work of the OECD has contributed to governments taking for granted that they need to adopt assessment instruments, accountability measures, and performance targets to develop modern educational systems. Through initiatives such as PISA, the OECD has also contributed to governments assuming that datafication and a comparative perspective to educational performance are both effective and appropriate governance mechanisms that can improve educational systems in different ways. Several studies on SAWA reforms point to the role of the OECD in the promotion of an "evaluation culture" that, in countries such as Italy (Grimaldi and Serpieri 2014) and Ireland (McNamara et al. 2009), has contributed to the disruption of the conventional organization of edu-

cation systems, and has altered the ideational context of educational reform. This literature implies that some governments would be adopting national assessments and accountability systems by following a logic of appropriateness, and not necessarily a logic of consequences. According to McNamara and colleagues (2009), the adoption of the Whole School Evaluation program in Ireland, and the emerging evaluation culture in the country, did not seem to respond clearly to any particular problem. It was, to some extent, a response to demands from employers' groups and sections of the media favorable to greater levels of accountability, but it was mainly motivated by the need of the Irish government to "comply with" EU and OECD policy recommendations.

Concluding Discussion

The OECD's role in policy transfer dynamics goes beyond that of a neutral broker between states. This IO develops and actively disseminates policy ideas, such as school autonomy with accountability (SAWA), in the education sector, which fit within the broader agenda of the OECD on public sector administration reform. To a great extent, the SAWA agenda is congruent with the premise that, for the OECD, "it is vitally important to constantly try to improve [public sector] management practices and institutions" as a way to promote "the economic success and competitiveness" of its member countries (Pal 2009, p. 1078). SAWA provides the OECD with a narrative about educational reform that focuses on school governance instruments, but that is wide enough to accommodate different political perspectives on how to use these instruments and for which purposes.

To disseminate SAWA, the OECD activates three main mechanisms of soft governance; namely, data gathering, policy evaluation, and idea generation. Figure 11.2 summarizes the main initiatives through which the OECD mechanisms operate, and refers to a series of countries where these mechanisms have been documented as influential. While the figure refers only to OECD member countries, the reliance on soft governance mechanisms (and the fact that participation in policy evaluation and data gathering practices is not restricted to member states) enables the OECD to extend its influence beyond its membership (see Lewis, this volume).

	Data gathering	Policy evaluation	Idea generation
Mechanism of influence	Competitive dynamics at the international and national levels Identification of policy problems/agenda-setting Creation of political opportunity windows to advance/legitimize policy change	*Evaluation process*: Internalization of causal and principled beliefs among national decision-makers *Evaluation results*: Identification of policy problems/agenda-setting Identification and shaping of policy solutions	Dissemination of causal and principled beliefs through persuasion and technical advice Advancement of a comparative perspective encouragement of normative emulation practices
Main products or initiatives	PISA Education at a Glance TALIS PIAAC	Reviews of National Policies for Education, Thematic Reviews, Country Background Reports, Country Notes and Country Case Studies, and Education Policy Outlook	PISA in Focus, the Strong Performers and Successful Reformers series, Strategic Education Governance
Illustrative country cases	USA, Germany, England, Spain, Norway, Denmark	Scotland, Norway, Chile	Spain, Portugal, Mexico, Italy, Ireland

Fig. 11.2 OECD governance mechanisms as used in the promotion of SAWA reforms

It should be noted, however, that even if certain governance mechanisms play a particularly prominent or visible role in some countries, they never operate in a void. Rather, different governance mechanisms reinforce each other. It is precisely when these mechanisms are activated simultaneously that the SAWA proposals of the OECD are more likely to prove influential at the country level. For instance, the fact that a policy review of the OECD comes after a PISA scandal is expected to make countries more receptive to this IO's reform recommendations.

The OECD governance mechanisms over domestic policy do not necessarily operate vertically. OECD reviews lend themselves to countries' appropriation and instrumentalization in a particularly clear way, as a consequence of its *à la carte* and interactive nature. Hence, governments that commission a national review are likely to use the review to legitimize or advance their own agenda (Schuller 2005). Similar bottom-up dynamics can be observed in the case of the publication of PISA results, which governments interpret in such a way that better serves their political interests and/or policy preferences. Such instrumentalization dynamics should not be understood as deviant behavior on the part of evaluated states. Rather, as advanced by Centeno (2017), the OECD is frequently "eager to be 'instrumentalized'" (p. 100), as the OECD agenda is only likely to succeed, acquire legitimacy, and enjoy wide circulation if its proposals resonate with national interests (see also Toledo Silva, this volume).

Overall, the potential for the OECD governance mechanisms to advance the SAWA agenda appears to lie in their capacity to open a policy window through which the problem, policy, and politics streams (cf. Kingdon 1984) are affected in a relatively coordinated and coherent way. Through national reviews, data gathering, and idea generation initiatives, the OECD effectively acts as an *instrument constituency* (cf. Béland and Howlett 2016) that is able to theorize and operationalize SAWA policy instruments, at the same time as it matches these instruments to a wide range of problems. As an instrument constituency, the OECD promotes SAWA solutions in very different settings and attaches these solutions to a broad range of problems, including lack of transparency in public administration, low overall performance of the educational system, equity issues and learning gaps, lack of teachers' engagement, and so on. However, the OECD is more ambivalent on the particular uses and configurations of the different SAWA instruments and, in the case of national policy reviews and other types of country documents, it tends to adjust its more concrete SAWA prescriptions to contextual specificities.

Future research should analyze how the SAWA agenda has evolved over time within the OECD, and more systematically look at the role of this IO in the promotion of SAWA reforms. Assessing the OECD's influence on national policy-making is methodologically challenging, due to the fact that the kind of changes put forward by this IO are not readily observable. Evaluation practices, regular encounters, and other forms of exchange trigger dynamics of normative suasion powered primarily by socialization practices, face-to-face interactions, and meaning-making exchanges are particularly difficult to trace and document empirically (Checkel 2005; Grek 2017). As noted by Beyeler (2004), congruence between the OECD policy ideas and policy change is not enough to establish proof of the OECD influence, and references to the OECD in the context in national debates are an equally unsatisfactory proxy. The OECD footprints over processes of national policy reform remain thus an elusive, as well as fascinating, subject for future research.

Notes

1. See www.oecd/about.
2. Plano de Desenvolvimento da Educação (or Education Development Plan).
3. Index of Basic Education Development.
4. Cf. https://www.oecd.org/site/peerreview/peerpressurearelatedconcept.htm. See also Pagani (2002).
5. It should be noted, however, that this agenda appears to be less clearly defined or well articulated for reviews published during the late 1990s and early 2000s. In these RNPEs, calls to accountability, external evaluation, and monitoring are sparser, and more unequally distributed, among reviews and regions.
6. See, for instance, http://www.oecd.org/education/ceri/strategic-education-governance.htm.

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How a European 'Fear of Falling Behind' Discourse Co-produces Global Standards: Exploring the Inbound and Outbound Performativity of the Transnational Turn in European Education Policy

John Benedicto Krejsler

Introduction: How a European 'Fear of Falling Behind' Strategy Turned Global

This chapter maps how European education policy increasingly develops in transnational collaborations, with the OECD being only one among a number of transnational bodies whose strategies increasingly converge in manners that simultaneously produce global effects. The governing complex emerging from these collaborations involves transnational mediators that make European and transatlantic ideas fit to travel globally—across the North and the South. The key players are the OECD, the European

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Fig. 12.1 DAC/PARIS 21, Group photo, 15–18/10/2002. Appearing on this picture: Mr. Antoine SIMONPIETRI, OECD/OCDE—PARIS21 Manager; Mr. Brian HAMMOND, Head, Reporting Systems Division, OECD Development Co-operation Directorate; Ms. Lucie LALIBERTÉ, IMF/FMI, Senior Advisor, Statistics Department; Mr. Graham EELE, IMF/FMI, DECDG World Bank; Mr. Jean-Claude FAURE, Chair, OECD Development Assistance Committee; Mr. Philippe POMMIER, France, Chargé de Mission, Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, Direction du Développement et de la Coopération Technique; Dr. Oladejo AJAYI, Anglophone Africa—Nigeria, Independent Consultant; Mr. Lamine DIOP, Francophone Africa—Mali, Directeur General, Afristat; Mr. Pali Jobo LEHOHLA, Chair: Paris21 Steering Committee; Statistician General, Statistics South Africa. (Copyright: ©OECD PHOTO OCDE—Serge ATTAL)

Union, the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), and the Bologna Process (e.g. Krejsler 2018; Robertson et al. 2016; Schriever 2012; Steiner-Khamsi 2012).

The driving discursive force in producing this new governing complex is a motivational force because it recounts the story of fierce global competition among knowledge economies, with nations falling behind if they fail to optimize their human capital (e.g. Meyer and Benavot 2013; OECD 1996; Rizvi and Lingard 2010). A 'fear of falling behind' regime in education thus appears to drive reform agendas by producing incentivizing fears that aim at

inspiring hope that success may be achieved through relentless effort. Its trajectories have become mainstay in public education debate as transnational comparative surveys like the OECD's PISA and the IEA's Trends in International Mathematics & Science Study (TIMSS) and Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) studies have increasingly been translated into rankings that produce shocks when school students do not perform as well on tests as they apparently do in other nations that we increasingly learn to fear. It feeds into the fear in public discourse that students are falling behind, that they are not employable or not becoming lifelong learners, and that they will drop out of school. At a more general policy level, it feeds into the fear that a nation or region is falling behind in a competitive global knowledge economy in which only the best will succeed. The EU Lisbon Agenda, launched in March 2000, is a prime example of this dynamic as it established a vision that by 2010 Europe would be "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" (EC 2000). The implied idea was that this agenda must be ambitiously adhered to if we are to avoid falling behind. This 'fear of falling behind' regime thus has considerable performative effects in producing a state of crisis awareness at both national and EU levels that has succeeded in motivating and driving education reforms that promise future growth if we comply with its associated panoply of political technologies in the form of testing, accountability measures, and rankings. As Rizvi and Lingard have aptly phrased it: "Policies, we know, often discursively create the contexts to which they are purportedly a response" (2006, p. 259). By expanding its standards for comparability, this regime brings these effects into performative circulation in networks and collaborations globally. As Appadurai (2006/1996) warns us, however, this kind of impact morphs considerably as it travels and translates into vastly different contexts with different policy needs and conditions.

This chapter scrutinizes the fascinating case of Europe responding to global challenges by attempting to achieve simultaneously increased inbound integration and an increasing outbound export of ideas and standards. The inbound integration takes place in the form of mutual peer pressure in favor of common standards and guidelines among different nation states with entrenched national identities and centuries-long traditions of internecine competition and warfare. The outbound export takes place according to a diverse mix of mainly soft power strategies like "partnerships", "joint ownerships", "attractiveness projects", and "shared values".

Altogether, Europe constitutes an interesting case for exploring the dynamics of globalization. Or as Manuel Castells puts it: "European integration is, at the same time, a reaction to the process of globalization, and its most advanced expression" (Castells 2000, p. 348).

THEORY: GOVERNMENTALITY, TRUTH REGIMES, AND EURO-GLOBAL IDEOSCAPES

This chapter adds to research that stresses the importance of understanding the performative effects of policy that increasingly travels, within regions like Europe as well as between dominant and less dominant regions in the world: how and by what parameters these effects become comparable and what ideas of public good they represent (Meyer and Benavot 2013; Rizvi and Lingard 2010). The chapter draws on and contributes to current debates on how comparison in education can be conceptualized, including borrowing and lending approaches (e.g. Steiner-Khamsi 2012), traveling policies and discourse formation approaches (James and Lodge 2003; Nóvoa and Lawn 2002; Rizvi and Lingard 2010; Schriever 2012). It draws attention to the issue of how political technologies emerge to produce consensus to integrate a group of widely different countries, and how they are then exported to a wider global community. Drawing upon Appadurai (Appadurai 2006/1996; Carney 2010), attention is focused in particular upon heterogeneous transformations between processes of consensus-making in transnational forums and processes of translation that take place locally to make ideas fit particular nation states' contexts and needs. Appadurai describes how so-called disorganized capitalism leads to homogenization while simultaneously stressing processes of cultural heterogenization. In order to grasp the fluidity and complex diversities of these processes of accommodation and translations, he presents five different forms of '-scapes' that characterize, in particular, the processes of globalization or—in our case—transnationalization of policy: ethnoscapes, technoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes, and ideoscapes. The suffix of '-scapes' here serves to point to the gathering of highly heterogeneous traits that acquire a certain firmness in their fluidity, thereby helping to format social scenes almost like landscapes (Appadurai 2006/1996).

The chapter draws, in particular, on post-Foucauldian conceptions of the 'history of the present' and *governmentality* as methodological approaches to mapping and visualizing the Euro-global ideo-, finance-, and other scapes that emerge from the interplays between European

national education policy, European transnational forums, and performative effects on global arenas (Dean 2007; Pereyra and Franklin 2014; Popkewitz and Brennan 1998). Empirically it conducts a discourse analysis of European national and transnational documents and websites as well as literature on policy reform from both contexts. The governmentality approach makes it possible to extract perspectives on how new formats for construing regional and global truth regimes emerge from the ongoing production of truth in complex transnational policy-making forums. This production of knowledge creates performative truth effects by bringing together trajectories that, in their mutual references to each other, collectively construe the present as a dominant discursive configuration or ideoscape.

Problematizing the present in its almost taken-for-granted status, the author mimics Foucault's notion of problematization by asking questions such as: How has it come about that researchers, policy-makers, and practitioners today problematize school and education in terms of knowledge economies, lifelong learning, and global comparability? How did the current situation in school and education policy emerge in its particular specificity, which has apparently made the fear of falling behind the key incentivizing driver in such a discourse? (Foucault 1998).

Foucault argued that a truth regime, that is, a discourse and its associated political technologies and practices, must be measured by the extent to which it matches and mirrors the configuration of dominant and less dominant discourses that set the boundaries for how individuals and societies can think and organize themselves at a given time and space in history (Foucault 1993, 1997). In a similar way, I argue that the dynamics of discursive forces at play among European nation states within a particular transnational framework take place within strategic spaces which are allowed by the larger discursive configurations among global players.

Within a Foucauldian framework, political technologies signify procedures that "advance by taking what is essentially a political problem, removing it from the realm of political discourse, and recasting it in the neutral language of science" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982, p. 196). In Europe, there is a long tradition of linking promises about the future to discourse about the merits of objectivity and rigorous science. In this vein, the standards-based education discourse presents the dream of finding—via political technologies like statistics, comparative surveys of states, and rigorous focus on evidence-based educational research—the benchmarks and best practices that will, supposedly, put Europe and its

students in the lead once again. The fear of falling behind regime and its associated political technologies and practices thus define education policies in terms of templates that both align and spur competition among nations within the EU region, and by expanding its standards for comparability beyond the region as well.

THE TRANSNATIONAL TURN IN EUROPEAN NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY

As demonstrated by Bürgi in this volume, transnational collaboration in Europe started out on a more comprehensive scale in the wake of US-led efforts to rebuild and ensure economic growth in war-torn countries after World War II (WWII). The United States invested a major effort into brokering a post-WWII economic world order (see also Chap. 3 in this book). The Bretton Woods agreements led to the establishment of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. In 1947, the massive US- and Canadian-funded Marshall Plan for rebuilding Europe was enacted. And to operate this plan, the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) was established in 1948, after which it was gradually institutionalized into the OECD (1961). Economic collaboration and the establishment of defense collaboration around NATO (1949) thus contributed strongly to creating the space that allowed the European Coal and Steel Community to be established, which would gradually expand into the European Economic Community (1957) and the European Union (1993). However, with a few exceptions, school and education remained an almost exclusively national matter up until around 2000. Like culture and various social and welfare issues, school and education were regarded as a sensitive area that was closely linked to national identity and nation-building (e.g. Lawn and Grek 2012). Nonetheless, from the late 1960s, and increasingly from the 1980s and onward, school and education gradually gained increasing significance, not only in national but also in transnational policy discourse, as education became increasingly related to national and regional economic growth. Future economic growth became conceptualized according to a so-called knowledge economy discourse. Education and research hereby acquired top priority even in organizations such as the OECD, whose main concern is the economy and markets (Cerny and Evans 1999; Henry et al. 2001; OECD 1996).

It was not until the EU Maastricht Treaty of 1992 that school and education were established in EU treaty language (EC 1992). Here it was affirmed that within an EU context education falls under the principle of subsidiarity, that is, the principle that competence is delegated to the level closest to actual practice, which typically means the nation state or, in some cases—like that of Germany—the level of the *Bundesländer*. This applies in particular to primary and secondary school—and, by implication, to teacher education—which are particularly closely associated with nation-building and national identity discourses that easily stir up strong national sentiments (e.g. Green 2006). Nonetheless, this discursive maneuver allowed the European Commission to maintain a coordinating role between member states concerning national education policy issues, especially those that were deemed key issues in supporting economic growth in the form of qualifying labor and similar issues. Linking education to economic concerns thus made it possible to turn education into a transnational matter, a tendency which was continued with the EU Lisbon Declaration of 2000 and the ensuing Lisbon Agenda, which extol a discourse "to make Europe the most dynamic and competitive among global knowledge economies by 2010" (EC 2000).

Consolidating the Transnational Turn in Education Policy

From around 2000, the discourses of transnational knowledge economy and lifelong learning finally and resoundingly entered national education policy discourse and practice. This happened by means of political technologies such as the OECD and IEA comparative surveys of students' literacy, numeracy, and science performance (e.g. PISA [2000], TIMSS [1995], and PIRLS [2001]). In addition to the Lisbon Agenda, another comprehensive truth regime, the Bologna Process (1999), was set on track as a broader European process (48 countries) to establish a European Higher Education Area (including teacher education) by 2010. Even this regime aimed at ensuring European success in educational terms among competitive global knowledge economies by facilitating more integrated higher education systems that could enhance the "employability of students" (Brøgger 2016; Hopmann 2008; Keeling 2006; Krejsler et al. 2014; Nóvoa and Lawn 2002).

The Bologna Process aimed to make European higher education systems comparable and establish common standards that would enable student and teacher mobility across borders and different education systems.

Formally, and abiding by dominant discourses of democracy, freedom, and diversity, the Bologna Process claimed to be voluntary. Nonetheless, it had grown by 2009 to become a formidable discursive giant administering a truth regime with an increasingly compelling set of political technologies. This included ten performance indicators and a score card system ranking the compliance of participating countries with reference to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), the mutual recognition of diplomas, a Bachelor-Master-PhD format (3+2+3), quality assurance formats concerning higher education, including teacher education, across borders, and so forth (Krejsler et al. 2012).

Further integration took place as the two dominant regimes of the EU and the Bologna Process increasingly integrated their truth production and political technologies in order to optimize education in what was called a lifelong learning perspective (Keeling 2006). As the EU developed its political technology of the European Qualification Framework (EQF), which was later duplicated into National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) in all member nation states, lifelong learning from pre-K up to PhD was divided into 8 levels, with the Bologna Process Bachelor-Master-PhD cycles being integrated as levels 6, 7, and 8 (EQF 2008). This all served to make participating countries and their education systems increasingly comparable, and knowledge, skills, and competences increasingly transferable.

The Workings of Comparability

Comparability became an increasingly inevitable requirement and constitutes a new, comprehensive political technology format that stages how education can be conceptualized and organized. Political technologies are produced like standards, performance indicators, comparative surveys (e.g. PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS on literacy, numeracy and science assessments), and imaginaries of best practices (Hopmann 2008; Krejsler et al. 2014; Voogt and Roblin 2012). Driven by the fear of falling behind, nations move ahead in a struggle between transnational and national power, toward shared truth regimes or ideoscapes, by engaging in compelling and voluntary elements which, over time, sediment in the form of increasing collaboration and, by consequence, transform school, teacher education, and educational research regimes.

The political technology par excellence in advancing consensus among nations with widely differing education policy regimes is the Open Method

of Coordination (OMC), or its similar OECD twin called Multilateral Surveillance. The OMC is the master template of a consensus-producing truth regime that advances consensus by the mutual peer pressure that grows in time-consuming and extensive negotiation processes. No decisions are taken. But consensus gradually emerges when politicians, administrators, researchers, and a plethora of other stakeholders engage in summits, seminars, and so forth; and when memos and reports are produced. Seemingly, it is all voluntary. But the fear of excluding oneself from mainstream debate, mutual funding bodies, and policy advice usually ensures the adoption of standards and performance indicators by all participating nations according to the European motto of 'unity in diversity' (Gornitzka 2006; Nóvoa and Lawn 2002; Zeitlin et al. 2005). In terms of Appadurai's notion of the fluidity between ethnoscapes, ideoscapes, and technoscapes, the Open Method of Coordination represents an interesting case (Appadurai 2006/1996) because it enables a number of different nations to gradually develop consensus in terms of a particular terminology, concepts, and associated political technologies (e.g. standards and performance indicators). This is accomplished according to procedures in which the particularities of individual national policy preferences are gradually decontextualized to a level that makes it possible to encompass all the participating nations' preferences. Nonetheless, it gradually advances consensus in ways that give direction to how participating nations can re-contextualize what has been agreed upon. In total, it integrates by making countries increasingly comparable as they abide by agreed standards while simultaneously allowing for translations back into the substrate of national particularities in ways that maintain cultural heterogeneity. In EU lingo, this is called 'unity in diversity'.

In summary, education policy has become linked to the performance of the national economy by means of a knowledge economy discourse, whereby the discourse about the purpose of school and education has been fundamentally transformed (e.g. Dean 2007; Meyer and Benavot 2013). And, as will be developed later, the OMC approach to thinking governance in the fluidity of complex and multiplying ethno-, ideo- and technoscapes in transnational and global relations opens up for an immense untapped potential. It presents a model for exporting ideas and influence while simultaneously offering a flexible and inclusive template for how dialogue between Europe and other global regions could be formatted with a direction that fits Europe.

THE COMPLEX EUROPE VERSUS GLOBAL RELATION: LOOKING INWARD AND LOOKING OUTWARD

As this transnational turn in European national school and education policy took off, it acquired—often misrecognized and underestimated—performative effects in the process by becoming a co-producer of global standards. Thus, it is common to observe the transnational turn in European education policy with an inward-looking perspective that emphasizes effects on European nation states and on European integration. The performative effects of integrating a number of widely varying nation states and their education policies into a comparative and competitive framework focus attention on one's position within the governing complex. Here one easily forgets the performative effects of these processes in producing formats that travel beyond the European region (Robertson et al. 2016; Schriever 2012; Steiner-Khamsi 2012). When you take a closer look at the European Union, however, you will discover that it harbors a plethora of approaches to dealing with and impacting its outside by integrating this outside into its interests.

Looking inward, the EU may well be conceived of as a kind of hybrid polity-form of many levels, a collective competition state, in a post-Keynesian and post-Westphalian situation, with the need for a new European space becoming obvious because each individual nation state is too small to provide answers to the question of managing its interests in a globalized economy (Dale 2009). In this respect, the EU is in many ways an answer to new demands to dealing with globalization with regionalizing answers. Like NAFTA and APEC, the EU can be seen as a defense against and an expression of globalization and its challenges. Europeanization is also an answer to avoiding brain drain and a way of dealing with competition from the United States, China, and East Asia.

Looking outward, European ties to the South have historically been imbued by colonialism as well as new imperialism. Post-WWII, however, Europe has increasingly sought to develop and present a benevolent development and civilizatory model, which, nonetheless, becomes increasingly difficult to uphold as the competitive aspect becomes increasingly urgent post-Reagan and post-Thatcher. In this respect, European integration represents an answer that is oriented toward economic competitiveness and simultaneously claims the so-called 'European social

model' (Petersson et al. 2015). In relation to the South and beyond, Europe thus seeks to extend an appeal in which it discursively distinguishes itself from the more purebred Anglo-Saxon market approaches. However, the neo-liberal breakthrough represents a turning-point in how discourse about development is framed, with education in so-called knowledge economies acquiring a new and more prominent role and gaining hegemony in policy discourse in conjunction with human capital theory (Cerny and Evans 1999).

The Global Effects of European Policy Developments and Strategies in Education

Epitomizing and connecting the arguments presented above, the purpose of this section is to demonstrate how the European roots—including the transatlantic ramifications—of the OECD, IEA, EU, and the Bologna Process conflate into a governing complex with increasing outward effects.

The story of the OECD is a story about the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) that expanded into the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (1961), which countries in the South increasingly aspire to join as a sign of their 'level of development'. Turkey joined in 1961, Japan in 1964, Australia in 1971, New Zealand in 1973, Mexico in 1994, South Korea in 1996, and Israel and Chile in 2010. Russia, Colombia, and Costa Rica are on the roadmap for accession (e.g. Henry et al. 2001; Meyer and Benavot 2013). In addition to this continuous global expansion, the OECD has developed additional tools to expand its global reach, such as 'Key partnerships' in relation to different 'Global Forums', with Brazil, India, China, Indonesia, and South Africa being preferential partners. No wonder that the OECD has acquired the title of being 'the world's most influential think tank'. And by the end of the century education had risen so high on the OECD agenda that a Directorate of Education was established in 2002. This directorate has a so-called 'Unit for Co-operation with Non-member Economies'. OECD's agenda-setting PISA surveys thus include a network of so-called 'partner countries and economies' (including most Latin American and South East Asian countries, Algeria, the UAE, and others) (Meyer and Benavot 2013; Rizvi and Lingard 2006).

OECD countries

Australia	Korea
Austria	Latvia
Belgium	Luxembourg
Canada	Mexico
Chile	The Netherlands
Czech Republic	New Zealand
Denmark	Norway
Estonia	Poland
Finland	Portugal
France	Slovak Republic
Germany	Slovenia
Greece	Spain
Hungary	Sweden
Iceland	Switzerland
Ireland	Turkey
Israel	United Kingdom
Italy	United States
Japan	

Partner countries and economies in PISA 2015

Albania	Lithuania
Algeria	Macao (China)
Argentina	Malaysia
Brazil	Malta
B-S-J-G (China)*	Moldova
Bulgaria	Montenegro
Colombia	Peru
Costa Rica	Qatar
Croatia	Romania
Cyprus¹	Russian Federation
Dominican Republic	Singapore
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Chinese Taipei
Georgia	Thailand
Hong Kong (China)	Trinidad and Tobago
Indonesia	Tunisia
Jordan	United Arab Emirates
Kazakhstan	Uruguay
Kosovo	Viet Nam
Lebanon	

Partner countries and economies in previous cycles

Azerbaijan
Himachal Pradesh-India
Kyrgyzstan
Liechtenstein
Mauritius
Miranda-Venezuela
Panama
Serbia
Tamil Nadu-India

* B-S-J-G (China) refers to the four PISA participating China provinces: Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Guangdong.

1. Note by Turkey: The information in this document with reference to « Cyprus » relates to the southern part of the Island. There is no single authority representing both Turkish and Greek Cypriot people on the Island. Turkey recognises the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Until a lasting and equitable solution is found within the context of the United Nations, Turkey shall preserve its position concerning the "Cyprus issue".

Note by all the European Union Member States of the OECD and the European Union: The Republic of Cyprus is recognised by all members of the United Nations with the exception of Turkey. The information in this document relates to the area under the effective control of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus.

Fig. 12.2 Map of PISA countries and economies: http://www.oecd.org/pisa/aboutpisa/PISA%20Map%20legend%20disclaimer.png

The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) adopts similar approaches to international surveys, and has succeeded even more in expanding from a Northern base to include increasingly the Global South nations in TIMSS, PIRLS, and even ICCS

on civic and citizenship education, thus helping to produce a forceful global language of achievement, competition, and ranking. The IEA grew out of a meeting between educational psychologists, sociologists, and psychometricians in 1958 at the UNESCO Institute of Education in Hamburg (Elfert 2013). With current offices in Amsterdam and Hamburg, the IEA has expanded its comparative surveys from initially mainly comprising European countries to including countries from all continents: "We currently have over 60 institutional members, encompassing mostly research institutes, universities, and ministries of education across Asia, Africa, Australasia, the Americas, Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East."[1]

Fig. 12.3 IEA member countries (2018): https://www.iea.nl/our-members. As an independent, international cooperative, the IEA draws strength from its diverse network of members, relying on their meaningful contributions and active engagement worldwide. We currently have over 60 institutional members, encompassing mostly research institutes, universities, and ministries of education across Asia, Africa, Australasia, the Americas, Europe, North Africa, and the Middle East

The European Union and Europe expand their reach and soft power in ongoing networking.

Fig. 12.4 BFUG membership is based on the membership of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The EHEA currently has three categories: Member, Consultative Member, and Partner. The EHEA/BFUG members are 48 countries and the European Commission. Full members: http://www.ehea.info/page-full_members

The framework, standards, and performance indicators of the Bologna Process, the intention of which was to produce a European Higher Education Area (EHEA), increasingly travel globally, across Asia and Africa as well (e.g. Mohamedbhai 2013; Robertson 2017). The EHEA can thus be seen as a competition about being the standard-setting entity. Many countries look to the Bologna Process when choosing the standards to adapt to in order to become comparable at a global level, thereby making students and teaching/research personnel more mobile, for instance. The EU has programs to step up such efforts like the Erasmus Mundus project for funding collaboration between higher education institutions and attracting top-class students globally. The Erasmus Mundus program was established to expand higher education collaboration between the EU and the rest of the world around the keywords "joint programs", "partnerships", and "attractiveness projects". The program administers scholarships to academics and students for mobility around the world and supports joint master's courses and doctorates between EU higher education institutions and institutions elsewhere in the world.

As a large overarching frame, the university-driven *Tuning Educational Structures in Europe* was launched in 2000 to advance the adoption of the Bologna Process objectives and achieve a European Higher Education Area in the many different national contexts. And in this connection each participating member state needed ways to translate the agreed homogeneous standards to fit their mutually heterogeneous systems. The *tuning* has thus developed into a process of (re-)designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating higher education (Wagenaar and González 2008). As an important initiative to deepening European integration, this initiative helped to link the political objectives concerning higher education of the Bologna Process to the EU Lisbon Agenda.[2] It was supported, "financially and morally, by the European Commission, it covers now the vast majority of the Bologna signatory states, including the Ukraine and since 2006 the Russian Federal Republic" (Wagenaar and González 2008, p. 159). Although this may be less well known, this initiative has expanded into formats involving the establishment of collaborations with other regions in the world. The Tuning America Latina, which took off in 2004, is part of this process, involving a large number of universities in both EU and Latin American countries collaborating to develop "quality, efficiency and transparency" around issues like "competence-based curriculum reform and modernization".[3] The Tuning Africa project started in 2011, and officially aims to enhance collaboration between African nations regarding the harmonization of higher education.[4] Similar initiatives have been conducted in the Tuning China and Tuning Russia projects. The so-called Tuning Academy, starting in 2000 and led by the universities of Groeningen (NL) and Deusto (ES), perhaps expresses this soft power ambition best by presenting "a project for universities conducted by universities … that offers a methodology for designing and implementing learning-centered degree programs. Tuning has developed an extensive network of communities of academics in different continents", with more than 120 countries and 1000 partner universities involved and more than 50 subject areas.[5]

Since 2004 the EU has developed the European Neighborhood Policy, the aim of which is to reach out to, integrate and impact the more immediate environment in Eastern Europe, the Balkans, the Caucasus as well as North Africa under the soft power keywords of "shared values", "collective norms", "joint ownership", and "partnership". This policy has mostly been a framework for spreading the "European values" of governance, transparency and so forth that apply to prospective EU membership candidates (Sedelmeier 2007).

As an integrated part of such efforts, the European Union is developing strong strategies to enter the global or international education market (edu-business), hoping to get a share of a market dominated by Anglo-Saxon competitors, the United States, Australia, and the UK in particular (Gunter and Mills 2017). This is a multi-billion-dollar market that is growing, which is about attracting students, setting up overseas branches of universities or institutes, e-education, textbooks, assessment formats, and so forth (Ball 2012). The more explicitly edu-business-oriented aspects of these efforts are clearly linked to the World Trade Organization processes aimed at promoting the liberalization of trade, also in relation to education, which is negotiated under GATS (the General Agreement on Trade in Services). This is about setting the rules for opening up national education systems to the global marketplace. Formally, every WTO member state has a vote. Nonetheless, meetings are dominated by the United States, the European Union, Japan, and Canada. This is because these nations have the dominant institutional capacity to produce viable proposals and can afford to have a permanent presence to attend formal and informal meetings and to take whatever lobbying action with any stakeholders that is deemed necessary (Robertson et al. 2006, pp. 233–234). According to Robertson et al., this could have serious cultural implications for national education systems, in particular among weaker nations in the South: building national identity, supporting social mobility and cohesion, retaining control over curriculum and textbook content, and so forth (Robertson et al. 2006).

Concluding Discussion: How European Inbound Integration Expands into Outbound Soft Power to Global Settings

European education policy discourse represents a specific evolution of ideo- and ethnoscapes referring to a number of different nation states with particular histories, identities, and animosities toward each other, including their attempts at increasing mutual integration by way of transnational bodies whose legitimacy and authority are opaque at best. It is a narrative about how collaboration among independent nation states gradually institutionalized transnational bodies such as the OECD, the EU, and the Bologna Process (Brunn 2004; Henry et al. 2001; Telhaug et al. 2006). It started out as a US-led and -dominated economic collaboration between war-torn countries after World War II, but gradually spread to cover more

portfolios, including school and education. It was always an uneasy process with continuous backlashes. 'The Open Method of Coordination' (the EU and the Bologna Process) and 'Multilateral Surveillance' (the OECD's similar method) have come to signify master templates for how a consensus-advancing truth regime is run, with mutual peer pressure and the demand for comparability ensuring that different nation states gradually learn to integrate even their education systems increasingly according to transnational formats. The transnational turn in European education policy becomes manifest in discursive processes and political technologies that integrate nation states according to the demands of the global knowledge economy discourse. This European experience represents a narrative about moving ahead in the struggle between transnational and national power, toward shared truth regimes, by engaging in voluntary but nonetheless compelling processes, which, over time, sediment in the form of increasing collaboration and, consequently, transform education and educational research regimes.

These developments are apparently all voluntary and done in the spirit of unity in diversity. Unsurprisingly, however, many reactions can be observed from the nation states to the European Union in particular concerning what is often perceived as encroachment upon national sovereignty and identity and the desire to evade democratic control in the national public. In recent years, these reactions are growing rapidly and range from the British Brexit to Hungarian and Polish discourse about illiberal democracy, and to Greek (and to a lesser extent French) resentment over austerity policy. With the Trump administration, we even see cracks in the transatlantic alliance between the United States and Europe, which has been, since the end of World War II, so fundamental to ensuring the establishment and consolidation of transnational collaboration in Europe (Judis 2018). The concepts of 'free markets' and 'liberal democracies' that constitute the core of the credo of the OECD as well as the European Union are questioned as well as the future of NATO. In addition, we have witnessed at national levels counter-discourses and reactions from professionals, educational researchers, and in public debate against school and teacher education policy initiatives that are perceived to become too aligned with economy discourse at the expense of broader educational purpose. In the same vein, it is questioned whether aligning with comparable templates like PISA and TIMSS, or the Bologna Process, and the 'evidence' and 'what works' templates that accompany them, may unduly narrow the purpose of school and education (Biesta 2010;

Hopmann 2008; Krejsler 2017). Whether this increasing contestation just represents bumps in the road toward transnational collaboration, or whether a more fundamental reversal toward the national is emerging, remains to be seen.

However, the complexities of this narrative of internal struggle tend to overshadow the diffusion of largely European groomed templates and truth regimes beyond Europe and to the South as well. This happens in a number of ways as originally European regimes become imperceptibly transformed into transnational regimes that travel in ways in which explicitly European signs disappear and supposedly become universal as the homogeneous is translated to fit heterogeneous contexts locally in the global. In a concrete sense, this takes place in a myriad of collaborations in formal and informal meetings and settings, by the uptake of standards and templates, as gradual consensus-building processes advance that are—most often—opaque and evade democratic control. In summary, it therefore becomes increasingly difficult to distinguish between European influences and transnational influences that have turned increasingly global as they adapt to new contexts.

Nonetheless, as this chapter argues, one can see a clear direction in the development of key dominant transnational agencies that start out as distinctly transatlantic and mostly European-based institutions (often initiated as US-led with a focus on rebuilding Western Europe), but gradually expand and become increasingly global. In addition, these institutions are increasingly collaborating and integrating their efforts to develop statistics, standards, and indicators that make European—and increasingly non-European—countries comparable. We have seen how the European Union and the Bologna Process increasingly converged. We have seen how the OECD drew on IEA TIMSS methodology when creating PISA. And we know that the European Commission has an important seat in the OECD. It is true that the Commission does not have a vote, but it does have a coordinating function in relation to the European Union (Grek 2014). Likewise, the European Commission has increasingly become the coordinating office for administrating the Bologna Process, albeit without formal powers.

And in 1999 the so-called PARIS21 initiative was launched in order to gather the statistical forces of dominant transnational agencies and spread their message to developing countries as well. PARIS21 is an acronym for 'The Partnerships in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century'. It was established by the United Nations, the European Commission, the OECD, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, and has

its secretariat placed within the OECD's Statistics Directorate in Paris. PARIS21 creates a consensus-advancing regime that is hard to trump, being backed by statistical giants like Eurostat, OECD.stat, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, and others (e.g. Rizvi and Lingard 2006). It constitutes a truth-producing regime that aims to spread the message worldwide, and to developing countries and the South in particular, as is evident from its mission statement:

> Since its establishment in 1999, PARIS21 has successfully developed a worldwide network of statisticians, policy makers, analysts, and development practitioners committed to evidence-based decision making. With the main objective to achieve national and international development goals and reduce poverty in low and middle income countries, PARIS21 facilitates statistical capacity development, advocates for the integration of reliable data in decision making, and co-ordinates donor support to statistics.[6]

Altogether, this panoply of initiatives represents a formidable soft power base for European-grown imaginaries and subsequent influence upon national identities around the world that is often misrecognized and forgotten. Interpreted through the Foucauldian concept of 'political technologies', one could talk about a network of interrelated procedures that "advance by taking what is essentially a political problem, removing it from the realm of political discourse, and recasting it in the neutral language of science" (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1982). What is involved here is an often opaque but nonetheless pervasive network of discourse, political technologies, and organizational patterns that are deeply imbued with European and transatlantic-dominated ideas and solutions, albeit in local translations that differ widely to suit local contexts that matter. This discourse and these procedures could have serious cultural implications for national education systems and efforts to build national identities, as stated by Robertson et al. (2006).

Notes

1. https://www.iea.nl/about/members.
2. www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/.
3. www.tuningal.org/.
4. tuningafrica.org/en/.
5. tuningacademy.org/.
6. http://www.paris21.org/about-paris21.

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Historicizing New Spaces and Relations of the OECD's Global Educational Governance: PISA for Schools and PISA4U

Steven Lewis

Fig. 13.1 Members of the PISA4U winning teams have arrived at the OECD headquarters in Paris to discuss their work in the Programme and receive their certificates from Andreas Schleicher, Director for Education and Skills at the OECD, October 2017. (Copyright: ©OECD)

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Introduction: Respatializing the Study of 'Foreign Systems of Education'

Sir Michael Sadler, the renowned British historian and educationalist, rather famously asked in 1900 whether 'there is anything of practical value to be got from studying foreign systems of Education' (Sadler 1964: 307). Today, this inclination to examine 'foreign systems of Education' has arguably become something of a fetish, an overarching schooling meta-policy that affects curriculum, pedagogy and assessment, as well as the experiences of teachers and students alike (Lingard et al. 2016). Far from merely providing a benign means to learn from others, comparisons of schooling policy, practice and performance are increasingly central to contemporary modes of educational governance, in which schooling is subjected to the withering glare of national *and* global eyes (Nóvoa and Yariv-Mashal 2003). It is this current *milieu* of schools, schooling systems, educators and policymakers looking around to others—to the national, the international and the global—that prompts the research presented here. However, rather than more traditional forms of comparison that often emphasize the *schooling systems* of nation-states, I focus here on two recent instruments that enable international benchmarking and policy learning for decidedly more local schooling spaces and actors. Specifically, these programs, both developed by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), are the (1) school-focused *PISA for Schools* and (2) teacher-focused *PISA4U*.

In contrast to the triennial Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) undertaken by schooling systems, in which the nation-state is the usual unit of analysis, PISA for Schools assesses school performance in reading, mathematics and science against the national (and subnational) schooling systems assessed by the main PISA test. In a similar fashion, this shift toward the 'local' has also led to the development of the teacher-focused PISA4U, an online professional learning platform designed to improve teacher practice through structured learning modules and collaborative activities informed by the evidence derived from PISA. In the context of an emergent global governance of education (see Lewis and Lingard 2015; Meyer and Benavot 2013), these distinctive functions enable PISA for Schools and PISA4U to open up new local schooling spaces and actors to the direct influence of the OECD, but without, or at least with reduced, mediation by the nation-state. In this

unique development, the global eye of PISA observes the national and the local, while the local eye of the school and teacher can now look around to international schooling systems once considered far distant and largely irrelevant.

Given this foregrounding of connections between actors and organizations, I employ here a relational, or 'topological', framework to respatialize processes of global educational governance. After introducing these theoretical resources, I next outline the evolution of the OECD and the PISA 'brand', before turning specifically to a consideration of PISA for Schools and PISA4U to understand how new concerns and priorities are being discursively mobilized through these two instruments, helping to constitute new forms of digital educational governance (Gulson and Sellar 2019; Williamson 2016). Finally, I close by suggesting how we might recognize the *seductive powers* of PISA for Schools and PISA4U, and the problems that such new 'products' and modes of expertise pose to how we understand teacher professionalism, performance and practice.

Theoretical Resources: Rethinking Space and Governance Topologically

The rise of relational, or 'topological', thinking in the social sciences (Allen 2016; Gulson and Sellar 2019; Lewis and Hardy 2017; Lewis et al. 2016), often in concert with the so-called 'mobility' turn (Cochrane and Ward 2012; Cresswell 2006; Gulson et al. 2017), is particularly relevant if we are to consider how performance data and evidence-informed policy are increasingly embedded within schools and schooling systems. These approaches foreground *relations between* actors, organizations, data and the social spaces they occupy, and consider space-time to be co-constituted through relations between entities, rather than existing a priori as a passive stage upon which actions unfold. Such a 'becoming topological' of culture (Lury et al. 2012), evident through 'practices of ordering, modelling, networking and mapping that co-constitute culture, technology and science' (p. 5), helps to produce a continuity and commensurability across social spaces and agents. Of particular importance here, especially in relation to new forms of digital educational governance, is that these emergent continuities 'dismantle the view that technology and society occupy different domains' (Lury 2013: 128). For example, the generation of large data sets relating to the comparative performance of schools and schooling systems

globally, most obviously via PISA and its derivatives, enables topological modes of reasoning by emphasizing the relationships between schooling systems, policy settings, places and practices.

In the context of this new relational framing, topological modes of culture can be seen to emerge through processes of continuity and ordering, and significant advances in our computational capacities to collect, calculate and compare data help enable new kinds of 'connectivity' (Lury et al. 2012). At the same time, the creation of such continuities (e.g., between participants in various modes of standardized testing) facilitates the emergence of discontinuities, enabling differences (e.g., between performance, policy settings, local contexts) to be identified and marked so as to produce new possibilities for local action. We can thus see how comparative assessments such as PISA help create commensurate spaces of connectedness between schools/systems, as well as the means to differentiate between successful and unsuccessful school/system performance by way of a common reference, irrespective of their specific location or context.

Such processes of measurement and comparison also move beyond traditional conceptions of space as defined solely by scalar spatial entities like the nation-state, and instead recognize spaces that emerge contingently and in-context, via relations that exist and function despite territorial boundaries. This is especially relevant insofar as PISA, or variations thereof (e.g., PISA for Schools), is increasingly used to measure the relative performance of subnational schooling systems, including states/provinces in federal political systems (Engel and Rutkowski 2018) and, with PISA for Schools, individual schools themselves (Lingard and Lewis 2017), all while comparing participants to universalsalized understandings of performance and schooling. Measurements using PISA-informed benchmarks are also often undertaken in tandem with other national and subnational standardized assessments, leading to the collection of vast quantities of digital data and, in turn, the construction of complex data infrastructures at various levels of schooling to store, analyze and access these data (Sellar 2015, 2017). These processes of intense datafication can enable ever greater aspects of schooling to be rendered as seemingly 'objective' measures via digital technologies, which themselves have the effect of encouraging policymakers, schools and teachers toward particular kinds of problems for intervention, despite the often-precarious links drawn between data, policy and practice (e.g., Williamson and Piattoeva 2019).

The Evolution of the OECD and the Global PISA Brand

Since transitioning in September 1961 from the Organisation for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), a US Marshall Plan-funded intergovernmental body that sought to facilitate economic reconstruction in post-war Europe, the OECD has adopted many different forms and functions (see Bürgi, this volume; Elfert, this volume). Indeed, it has been variously described as 'a geographic entity, an organisational structure, a policymaking forum, a network of policymakers, researchers and consultants, and a sphere of influence' (Henry et al. 2001: 7). Despite these shifting attributions, the self-declared *raison d'être* of the OECD—formally an intergovernmental organization of the world's most developed nation-states—has always retained a decidedly economic orientation, helping governments to 'foster prosperity and fight poverty through economic growth and financial stability' (OECD 2018d, np).

Despite its ostensive economic focus, the OECD has also embraced education as a significant contributor to national, and indeed global, social and economic development. However, education has only more recently emerged as having a clearly defined location and purpose within the OECD. Originally accorded an 'inferred role' (Papadopoulos 1994) that derived from the 'human capital' linking of educational investment and economic productivity, a separate Directorate of Education was established only in 2002, but which acknowledged that education was now markedly more important to the policy agendas of the OECD and its member nations. In 2012, the Directorate was renamed the Directorate for Education and Skills in the context of launching a new cross-committee organizational strategy, the OECD Skills Strategy (OECD 2012). This pivot represented a new way of working across policy areas in which education played a central role, and was an attempt to ensure coherence across otherwise disparate policy domains. Significantly, the Skills Strategy's explicit focus on enhancing workforce participation, and improving one's readiness (at the level of government *and* the individual) to respond to the vagaries of a globalized labor market, arguably gestures toward a particularly economistic understanding of education policy, or what has been termed the 'economisation' of education (Sellar and Lingard 2014; Spring 2015). However, this 'new' strategy drew on a much longer lineage of the OECD perceiving education as the means to enhance economic productivity; indeed, the very first OECD conference on education, held in

Washington, DC, in October 1961 and entitled 'Economic Growth and Investment in Education', speaks precisely to this point.

This linking of education with economic outcomes, and a presumed absence of 'valid' cross-national educational data (McGaw 2008), led OECD members, and particularly the US in the wake of *A Nation at Risk*, to increasingly call for objective or scientific measures of their national schooling systems. Although preceded by earlier initiatives, such as the *Indicators of Educational Systems* (INES) and its publication as the annual *Education at a Glance* report, a watershed moment came with the OECD's creation of PISA, which enabled the direct measurement of national student performance within a framework of international comparison. First administered in 2000, and then every three years thereafter, PISA focuses on the abilities of 15-year-olds, the age at which students notionally complete their final year of compulsory schooling, across the domains of reading, mathematics and science, thereby serving as a proxy marker for schooling system 'effectiveness' and the production of 'human capital'. PISA testing instruments are designed to avoid any alignment with national curricula, concentrating instead on competencies that reflect the 'important knowledge and skills needed in adult life' (OECD 1999: 8). The rationale for such a framework is twofold: first, to emphasize the 'real-life' application of the specific knowledge and general skills acquired in formal schooling; and second, so that the resulting data can be compared across participating nations. More recently, PISA has also included optional assessments of 'applied skills', including creative problem solving (2012), financial literacy (2012 and 2015) and collaborative problem solving (2015), which demonstrates the continuing evolution of the PISA 'product'.

Since its inception, PISA has gone from strength to strength over the course of seven triennial surveys (2000–2018); some 79 countries and economies were surveyed in PISA 2018, with fewer OECD members (36) than non-members (43) participating, reflecting the expanding scope, scale and explanatory power of PISA assessments and data (Sellar and Lingard 2014). PISA has also been successful in gaining extensive, if admittedly varied, global media coverage (see Andrews et al. 2015; Grey and Morris 2018; Waldow et al. 2014). This capacity to influence national educational discourses has in turn helped ensure PISA's prominence as a source of 'objective' evidence in policymaking processes globally (Fischman et al. 2018; Lewis and Hogan 2019; Rautalin et al. 2018), even if participants in such discussions are potentially limited by the discursive constraints of 'seeing like PISA' (Gorur 2016). Importantly, the success of PISA has

seen it become a prototype for the OECD's development of a range of related educational testing initiatives. These include assessments of system-level performance, such as PISA for Development, the Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO), the Programme for International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC); as well as more recent iterations that address school- (PISA for Schools) and teacher-level (PISA4U) performance and practice. Through this long, if admittedly contingent, trajectory, we can nonetheless see the clear evolution of the OECD and its education work, until the Organisation has become, arguably, the world's leading 'centre of calculation' (Latour 1987) of comparative schooling performance and policy expertise.

New People, New Places, New Products: PISA for Schools and PISA4U

Given the global ascendance of the PISA brand, and the OECD more generally, over the past decades, I now address two instances where PISA has provided the 'blueprint' for new innovative policy products: (1) the school-focused *PISA for Schools* and (2) the teacher-focused *PISA4U*. Although distinctive in their respective designs and functions, both initiatives arguably help to expand the availability of PISA to an unprecedented number and variety of people and places, thereby enhancing the reach, relevance and potential impact of the OECD's education policy work.

PISA for Schools

PISA for Schools is similar in format and design to main PISA, comprising a two-hour written test that assesses students' ability to apply their acquired knowledge in reading, mathematics and science to 'real-world' situations. Unlike the triennial PISA test undertaken by national and subnational schooling systems, PISA for Schools is conducted on-demand by individual schools (up to a maximum of once per year) to assess their performance and compare themselves against schooling systems assessed by main PISA.[1] Furthermore, schools volunteer (and pay) to participate in the PISA for Schools assessment, whereas the relevant national (or subnational) educational authorities may mandate a school's inclusion in the national sample for main PISA. In addition to assessing student performance, the test contains student and principal questionnaires to generate contextual information about particular 'in-school'

and 'out-of-school' factors that influence student learning. These are construed in terms of the student population, such as the socio-economic background of students, parental occupations and student attitudes toward their learning of reading, mathematics and science; and the school environment, including school funding and resourcing, student enrolment, school type (e.g., public, private, charter) and the organization of school governance structures.

When conducting PISA for Schools, eligible 15-year-old students at each participating school are randomly sampled to obtain an ideal testing cohort of between 45 and 85 students, although the test can be implemented in smaller schools with as few as 35 students if necessary (OECD 2017c: 30).[2] All schools within a given national or subnational jurisdiction are eligible to undertake the PISA for Schools test, provided that they meet the minimum sampling requirements in terms of student population size. The pool of eligible students is further stratified by gender (male, female) and school grade to ensure an adequately representative sample participate in PISA for Schools testing. However, individual schools are permitted to conduct within-school exclusions of certain students at their discretion, including students who have 'a mental or emotional disability'; 'functionally disabled students' who are 'permanently physically disabled' and 'students with insufficient assessment language experience' (OECD 2017c: 29). Initially administered as a pencil-and-paper test, the OECD issued a call for tender in June 2015 that invited proposals for prospective accredited providers to develop an online version of PISA for Schools, which followed similar moves to develop an ICT delivery platform for main PISA.

Development of the program began in 2010, with schools and districts invited by the OECD in late 2011 to participate in a pilot study. This was designed to equate the new school-based test with main PISA so that direct comparisons could be made between school (PISA for Schools) and schooling system (main PISA) performance. PISA for Schools test items were developed according to the relevant PISA assessment frameworks for reading, mathematics and science (see OECD 2013), and equated to the existing PISA scales (Level 1 to Level 6) by simultaneously anchoring them with main PISA 'link items' against a common PISA metric.[3] This process enables PISA for Schools scores for reading, mathematics and science to be reported against the established PISA proficiency scales, and against the performance of schooling systems as measured by main PISA. Following a successful field trial, PISA for Schools was officially

launched in the US in April 2013, and made available to all eligible schools and districts throughout the country. Since this time, PISA for Schools has experienced a significant expansion in terms of its availability and administration. As of January 2019, PISA for Schools is available in ten languages across 11 countries, and it has been cumulatively administered in more than 2200 schools globally (OECD 2018c, np).[4]

A key governing modality of PISA for Schools is thus its ability to facilitate international school-to-system (and school-to-school) comparisons, situating participating schools and schooling systems within a common 'global education policy field' (Lingard and Rawolle 2011). Importantly, this also allows their local performance to be evaluated against notionally 'high-performing' or 'fast improving' schooling systems, as determined by the results of main PISA (e.g., Shanghai-China, Singapore, Finland). While certainly not the first time that transnational data have helped to produce commensurate global or regional education policy spaces (see Grek et al. 2013; Lingard et al. 2016), the inclusion of *individual schools* within this data-driven panopticism marks what is arguably a significant development. Here, international comparisons between schools and schooling systems are situated as the means for schools to gauge how well they prepare their students to participate in the global economy, with the benchmark for success now 'the best performing education systems internationally' (OECD 2013, np). In this sense, the OECD presents PISA for Schools as a logical 'next step' for local policymakers and educators, being a voluntary and efficient means to obtain knowledge on school performance in the same way that main PISA purportedly 'evaluates' national systems. Participating schools can thus receive the *imprimatur* of the OECD, demonstrating to local, national and international stakeholders that they are a 'world-class' institution that adequately prepares its students for 'educational success' in the global economy. The ability of PISA for Schools to produce legitimate and internationally recognized 'proof' of a school's performance may thus make such evidence a valued commodity for local communities, and especially so for schools that are doing well in relation to national 'under-performance' on main PISA, such as in the US and the UK.

We can also see clear evidence in PISA for Schools of the 'becoming topological' (Lury et al. 2012), insofar as diverse schools and schooling systems are assumed, and even actively constituted, to be isomorphic units of analysis within a commensurate space of measurement, in which the common PISA frameworks enable comparisons (and rankings) between

participating schools and systems. This production of similarity allows, at the same time, the marking of difference between a school's performance and that of other 'performing' systems assessed by PISA (e.g., Singapore, Finland), including the presence of 'effective' policies and practices—that is, 'what works' (Auld and Morris 2016; Lewis 2017a)—that might account for such differences. Facilitating this search for 'what works', another significant aspect of PISA for Schools is the report received by all participating schools. In addition to the analyses of their unique school-level student performance and contextual data, these reports cite multiple examples of the 'best practices' present in so-called 'world-class' international schooling systems, as well as the broader education policy work of the OECD. The inclusion of these policies and practices is notionally to present 'examples of relevant school policies and practices from around the world to stimulate reflection and discussions amongst local educators' (OECD 2017a: 142). Although the OECD has more recently sought to discourage teachers from identifying and importing 'pre-fabricated solutions',[5] I would still argue that the very inclusion of these practices, let alone the encouragement to compare oneself against high-performing systems via PISA for Schools, incentivizes schools to look around for, and presumably borrow, examples of effective policies. Indeed, as Kamens (2013: 124) usefully notes, '[i]f one can compare school systems [and schools] in terms of their characteristics and outcomes, the idea of borrowing features from the "best" systems is a natural corollary', which can produce problematic consequences for the teachers and school leaders who attempt to uncritically borrow examples of 'what works'.

PISA4U

Whereas PISA for Schools sought to increase the relevance and potential impact of the PISA instrument and data via testing school-level performance, the more recent PISA4U, launched in December 2016, is decidedly more focused on shaping individual teacher practice through PISA-informed professional learning. PISA4U is a free, online professional development course and professional learning community available to teachers, school leaders and policymakers. Broadly speaking, PISA4U consists of two distinct components: (1) an online learning platform, in which small teams of teachers completed assignment tasks and developed teaching resources over 14 weeks in a series of five online modules (the *PISA4U Programme*)[6]; and (2) a peer-to-peer network for professional

collaboration and resource sharing (the *PISA4U Network*), including the resources developed by the teacher groups during the PISA4U Programme online modules and, importantly, selected publications and resources produced by the OECD. For instance, during the time of the PISA4U Programme pilot between March and August of 2017, more than 6000 active participants (from 172 countries) produced approximately 100 teaching resources for sharing via the public repository of the PISA4U Network.[7] Participants who completed and submitted the five assessments of the PISA4U Programme were also eligible to receive a 'PISA Certificate', which is intended to 'mark your participation in the programme and enable you to stand out as a leader in school improvement in your school environment' (OECD 2018a, np).

Since the completion of the learning modules in August 2017, the PISA4U Network has transitioned from largely supporting the delivery of the PISA4U Programme to become instead a more structured and ongoing professional collaboration forum, including monthly webinars, one-on-one coaching with education experts, and exclusive 'members-only' access to content and resources curated by the OECD. The PISA4U Network thus represents 'a global professional development community for educators which activates the wealth of existing [PISA] data in a new way—*bringing it directly into classrooms*' (OECD 2018a, np; emphasis added). Here, we can see the attempted extension of PISA's relevance beyond national schooling systems and schools to now encompass individual teachers themselves, and the active cultivation of new potential audiences, or *consumers*, of PISA data. As noted in a post-pilot evaluation of PISA4U conducted by Candena, a German for-profit corporation that developed the online platform through which PISA4U is administered,

> members of the PISA4U community come from 172 countries, producing a diverse and global community.[8] This not only creates value for participants, but likewise allows for a *broad extension of the reach of the work of PISA.* (Dreyer et al. 2018: 14; emphasis added)

This demonstrates both the policy agenda of the OECD in terms of its attempt to bring PISA 'directly into classrooms' and extend the 'reach of the work of PISA', and, significantly, the topological foregrounding of relations between actors and organizations, in which participating teachers, irrespective of their geographic location, are repositioned within a global space brought into being through the OECD's measurements and expertise.

Similar to the diversification of actors within the education policy cycle more generally, and mirroring processes associated with other innovative PISA-based instruments (e.g., PISA for Schools, PISA for Development—see Lewis 2017b), the development, funding and administration of PISA4U were fostered by relations between the OECD and a variety of its 'partner organizations'. These include the US not-for-profits America Achieves and Teach for All; the US National Board for Professional Teaching Standards; two philanthropic foundations (the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, and Deutsche Telekom Stiftung) who funded the development and maintenance of the platform; the German for-profit Candena, a provider of online platforms and learning resources; and, of course, the individual teacher participants themselves. This networked development and administration of PISA4U, combined with the connecting together of thousands of otherwise distant educators globally, affords new opportunities and spaces with which edu-businesses, not-for-profits and philanthropies can influence local education policy and practice, while also providing the material and discursive infrastructures through which to disseminate the OECD's particular image of schooling.[9]

Given the construction of these literal and epistemic infrastructures, and the encouragement of teachers to voluntarily collaborate via an OECD-endorsed platform, it is perhaps useful at this point to detail some specific examples of the discourses promoted via the PISA4U Network. Significantly, the PISA4U Network is positioned as a global forum for developing 'solutions' and 'best practices', not for policymakers or school leaders but, rather, for teachers in their efforts to effect positive and practical changes to their classrooms:

> PISA4U is a unique online learning programme which provides a space for educators around the world to connect over the goal of developing *meaningful and relevant solutions* to challenges in education, to learn from and with each other about *best practices*, and to develop a crowd-sourced repository of teaching resources and *solutions* that can help teachers facilitate *practical changes in their classrooms*. (Dreyer et al. 2018: 7; emphasis added)

Whereas earlier iterations of PISA were focused more on providing strategic policy advice for schooling systems, here we can see the much more practitioner-focused intent of PISA4U, in which teachers are encouraged to use PISA-based data to inform their classroom practice. Such a shift in intended audience creates what I consider to be two profound changes with PISA4U. First, the emphasis on identifying and promoting 'relevant

solutions' and 'best practices' that can 'facilitate practical changes' in class-rooms reflects how the advice proffered via PISA4U is more concrete, readily implementable and classroom-focused in nature, rather than the (generally) more abstract and system-level advice derived from the main PISA survey (see also Lewis 2017a). Second, extending the policy messaging of PISA directly to teachers removes the intervening levels of mediation between the OECD and classrooms, such as educational authorities or even school leaders, who could potentially inflect how PISA-based policy messages are being presented to, and interpreted by, teachers, especially during formal professional learning activities. These two features of PISA4U (i.e., more prescriptive, classroom-level 'solutions' and direct communication with classroom teachers) combine to enable the OECD to potentially exert an unprecedented level of influence over how PISA-informed 'evidence' can shape teacher practice.

I would also note here that although the 'relevant solutions' and 'best practices' emphasized in PISA4U are promoted as being the collaborative efforts of participating teachers, these solutions are far from created in isolation, or informed solely through teachers' own professional knowledge and experience. Accompanying participants through all five modules of the PISA4U Programme is an extensive library of OECD-produced publications, videos and other learning resources to help participants gain 'fresh insights':

> At all times, you will be able to access a unique library (https://app.pisa4u.org/library) of resources, videos, and case studies, as well as a vibrant community (https://app.pisa4u.org/discovery/explore) of education professionals and experts to help you gain fresh insight, as well as develop and share your best practices. (OECD 2018a, np)

Importantly, many of these resources are designated as 'mandatory viewing' for the completion of each learning module and, in turn, the attainment of a PISA Certificate, leading to a vast over-representation and valuing of OECD publications, and very few instances where non-OECD resources are included. Throughout the entire 14-week PISA4U Programme, 38 out of 47 included written documents, and 27 out of 27 mandatory videos, made available to participants were produced and/or authored by the OECD. Despite the rationale of PISA4U being to 'address a need for teacher empowerment and to support a bottom-up approach to improvement in education' (Dreyer et al. 2018: 9), this 'empowerment' of teacher voice is one that is thoroughly infused with

the language of PISA, which helps position the OECD as the global arbiter of 'what works' in schooling policy.

This speaks to a central tension within the PISA4U Programme, and especially the apparent encouragement of teachers to produce 'best practice' solutions to their own educational problems. Even though teachers are seemingly positioned as the 'bottom-up' agents of change who are researching and designing solutions to real-world educational problems, it is very much the OECD, and its suite of educational evidence, that inform and direct this work. In this sense, we can see a clear discursive link between the OECD's presumed authority to assess and determine 'high-performing' schooling systems and, relatedly, schooling policies and practices via PISA, and its expert status to package this evidence into a 'unique library of resources … and experts' to teachers via PISA4U. Rather than being solely focused on empowering participating teachers, the relational spaces and networks constituted through PISA4U appear equally concerned with improving the utility and relevance of PISA as a policy instrument, a feature noted by Andreas Schleicher himself in a PISA4U Programme video entitled, somewhat suggestively, 'the eyes and ears of PISA':

> I'm really excited by this programme. It's about developing *the eyes and ears of PISA*, to listen to what happens in classrooms, to listen to the good ideas and how we can help students learn better, teachers teach better, and schools to become more effective. And I'm confident that this will *feedback into making PISA a more useful, more relevant instrument* to actually improve our education systems. (OECD 2017b, np; emphasis added)

Here, one can see what is arguably the OECD co-opting and drawing local educators within its global policymaking apparatus, insofar as it is teachers who create the examples of best practice *for* the OECD by drawing on the evidence provided by PISA data. Moreover, a central logic with PISA4U appears to be engaging with teachers as a means to determine not only what happens in classrooms and to 'listen to good ideas', but also to find ways that PISA can be made more useful and relevant to teachers, in terms of directly informing their thinking and practice. There is thus an illusion of 'bottom-up' buy-in, participation and creation by teachers, whereas PISA4U reflects more of an attempt by the OECD to further draw individual educators and school leaders into the legitimization and dissemination of its policy work, including the extension of its reach to new audiences (i.e., teachers and new national contexts).

Concluding Discussion: Eluding the 'Eyes and Ears of PISA'

We have seen here how two new(er) variations of the main PISA survey—PISA for Schools and PISA4U—represent a thorough respatialization of PISA, insofar as they make PISA data, and the education work and 'evidence' of the OECD more generally accessible, relevant and usable to previously inaccessible audiences of local schooling spaces and educators. Rather than focus solely on national policymakers and educational leaders for the purpose of informing schooling policy, PISA for Schools and PISA4U enable the OECD to directly 'reach into' classrooms and help shape teacher practice and local reform agendas. In addition to enhancing what Sellar and Lingard (2014) have referred to as the scope and scale of PISA (i.e., *what* is measured and *where* it is measured), we can also see in these school- and teacher-level instruments a significant expansion of PISA's explanatory power, that is, as 'strengthening the OECD's *ideas production function* in education' (p. 929; emphasis added). However, whereas previous efforts of the OECD have sought to use PISA data to make new claims about the relationships between policy settings and performance outcomes at a system level, the focus on teachers, and the provision of practice-oriented 'what works' solutions, suggests that PISA for Schools and PISA4U collectively reflect a shift toward the classroom as the site of possible impact and relevance for the OECD.

Both instruments also reflect the extensive geographic shift of PISA away from the traditional heartland of the OECD and its Member countries and, instead, a more substantive foray into new policy spaces. Despite long being the preserve of the US (and, more recently, the UK and Spain), PISA for Schools is now available in ten languages across 11 separate jurisdictions, and the ICT-based provision of the test has considerably reduced the cost of delivering the assessment. It is also significant to note that there has been very little additional take-up of PISA for Schools in the existing European and North American theaters (with the exception of Moscow and Andorra), but an extensive expansion into new jurisdictions based in Latin America and Asia, so that non-OECD members now greatly outnumber the original OECD-based participants.

Relatedly, the specific features of the newer PISA4U professional learning platform—being free-of-charge and open to participation from all countries—present a theoretically limitless expansion of the teachers who are possible (captive) audiences for the OECD. In particular, the no-cost

nature of the program, combined with the availability of free learning resources and PISA certification, makes PISA4U an especially attractive prospect to educators who would otherwise struggle to access such professional development, including those based in developing countries or lower socio-economic communities. This is especially significant if we consider that the majority of 'high-uptake' countries (i.e., countries with large numbers of participating teachers) were neither members of the OECD nor previous system-level participants in PISA, and thus may have had limited exposure to the messages and evidence associated with the OECD's education policy work. Given that PISA for Schools and PISA4U present opportunities for the OECD not just to connect with classroom teachers globally, but also to help determine how to make PISA 'a more useful, more relevant policy instrument', it is thus conceivable that these 'eyes and ears of PISA' provide ideal vehicles by which to suffuse the OECD throughout the teaching profession globally.

If we consider the Sadler quote that prefaced this chapter, what has also become patently clear through instruments such as PISA for Schools and PISA4U is that we have witnessed a complete upending of what constitutes the act of 'studying foreign systems of Education'. Within the topological spaces brought into being by the globally networked relations of the OECD, participating schools and teachers, and the diverse array of associated partner organizations, it is evident that schooling spaces are now no longer solely defined by the territorial boundaries established via nation-states. Rather, we can see new spaces emerge through the relational connections forged by participation in comparative assessments of schooling performance, as well as the new spatial terrains enabled by the use of these data in processes of evidence-informed policymaking, schooling reform and professional learning. I would argue that these new relational empirical realities suggest our analytical approaches for understanding these practices must similarly embrace such a relational, or topological, underpinning.

At the same time, such a rethinking of how we seek to understand and problematize global policy processes highlights how the OECD, through instruments such as PISA for Schools and PISA4U, has enabled a whole series of new relations with a diverse array of local schooling spaces and actors. Despite an unprecedented number of teaching professionals within the epistemic networks constituted through the policy work of the OECD, it is still arguably the OECD (and not schools or the teaching profession) that ultimately controls decisions around *who* is high performing and *what* (if any) are the best practices responsible for such performance. Even if there is a possible discursive shift in the OECD's rhetoric around notions

of best practice, and how professional learning and schooling reform should ideally occur (i.e., peer-to-peer, 'ground-up', 'bottom-up'), this still positions the OECD as *the* expert and arbiter of what works for these very same teachers, which cedes little, if any, actual space for teaching professionals who might propose alternative, non-PISA solutions. Indeed, for both PISA for Schools and PISA4U, it is the OECD which is seemingly positioned with the actor with the most agency and authority, despite the apparent focus upon 'empower[ing] teachers to become educational leaders in their classrooms … and foster[ing] systemic changes in education systems from the ground up' (Dreyer et al.: 20). Rather than providing a mere forum within which so-inclined teachers and schooling leaders can come together to share ideas and collaborate, there is instead a very real danger that the learning spaces constructed around PISA for Schools and PISA4U become places primarily concerned with unleashing the seductive powers of PISA and consolidating the authoritative status of the OECD.

Notes

1. For instance, a US school that participates in PISA for Schools will have their performance benchmarked against the 16 schooling systems: Australia, Brazil, B-S-J-G [Beijing, Shanghai, Jiangsu, Guangdong] (China), Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong (China), Ireland, Japan, Korea, the Netherlands, Russia, Singapore, the UK and the US.
2. For the purpose of PISA for Schools, '15-year-old students' are considered to be those aged from 15 years and 3 completed months to 16 years and 2 completed months at the time of the assessment being administered, with a maximum permissible variance of 1 month (OECD 2017c, p. 28).
3. The three domains of reading, mathematics and science are assessed in main PISA and PISA for Schools via an ascending six-level PISA proficiency scale (Level 1 to Level 6), with Level 2 considered to be equivalent to a baseline level of student proficiency in the given subject, whereas students at Levels 5 and 6 are notionally 'top performers' when compared with their global peers. Given the equating between PISA and PISA for Schools, these PISA proficiency levels and scores putatively provide a common framework for comparing student performance at the local (school) and international (schooling system) levels.
4. PISA for Schools is now available in the following jurisdictions: Andorra, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, China (PRC), Colombia, Mexico, Moscow (Russia), Spain, the United Arab Emirates, the UK and the US. It is also deliverable in the following languages: Arabic, Basque, Castilian Spanish, Catalan, Chinese (Mandarin), English, Galician, Portuguese, Russian and Welsh.

5. For instance, a statement by Andreas Schleicher of the OECD in a 2018 brochure advertising the PISA for Schools notes that '*this is not about copying prefabricated solutions from other places*; it is about looking seriously and dispassionately at good practice in our own environment and elsewhere to become more knowledgeable about *what works* and in which contexts' (OECD 2018b, p. 1; emphasis added).

6. The five distinct phases and assessable elements of the PISA4U Programme are (1) identify your specific challenge; (2) understand the problem; (3) design a teaching resource; (4) put your resource to the test and (5) finalize your resource. The resources developed by PISA4U participants were then submitted to the OECD for overall assessment, and the two teams with the 'best projects' were invited to present their work to the OECD in Paris in August 2017.

7. See https://www.pisa4u.org for access to the public resources.

8. It is interesting to note precisely which countries are most represented in the PISA4U Network. As of March 2018, the top six countries by numbers of participants were: Romania (with 416 registered users), the US (346), the Philippines (334), India (294), Pakistan (161) and Nigeria (159). Of these six countries, five (i.e., excluding the US) are neither members of the OECD nor regular participants in the main PISA survey. This reflects a quite significant reach by the OECD into new markets for its PISA-based products.

9. For instance, teachers who are interested in the PISA4U Network are also encouraged on the PISA4U website to consider several 'companion products'. As noted by the OECD, participants in PISA4U 'might benefit by also looking into' the PISA for Schools test and the Global Learning Network, a professional learning community based on PISA for Schools that is jointly supported by the OECD and the US not-for-profit America Achieves.

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The Formation and Workings of a Global Education Governing Complex

Christian Ydesen

Introduction

In keeping with the tracks laid out in Chap. 1, this chapter aims to review the arguments and findings of the preceding chapters in terms of adding to our understanding of the workings, mechanisms, range, and impact of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) work in education from a historical, international, and global perspective across member and non-member states. The chapter will thus produce new perspectives, nuances, and additions to the research in the fields of history of education and education policy.

This book's analytical journey has taken us in many directions, both historically and geographically, and it establishes an empirical platform that provides some fairly generalized and recurring observations and findings concerning the workings of a global education governing complex revolving around the role and agency of the OECD.

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As an initial observation about nomenclature arising from the chapters' multifaceted analyses, the term *governing complex* appears to be very fitting, because a complex signifies 'a whole comprehending in its compass a number of parts, *esp.* (in later use) of interconnected parts or involved particulars; a complex or complicated whole' (*Oxford English Dictionary* Online). This means that the term allows for the interconnectedness and complexities of an organized structure made up of parts—that is, organizations, agents, technologies, discourses, and materialities—as we have seen in different shades and forms across the chapters. Although this meaning of the term *complex* has a strictly empirical–analytical orientation, the term also encompasses a more critical–analytical perspective gathered from the meaning ascribed to the term in the field of psychoanalysis. Here, the term *complex* is defined as 'a related group of repressed or partly repressed emotionally significant ideas which cause psychic conflict leading to abnormal mental states or behaviour' (*Oxford English Dictionary* Online). This understanding of *complex* feeds our understanding of the sometimes paradoxical and even perverse workings and outcomes of the global governing complex in education. Such workings and outcomes result from the competing agendas associated with different stakeholders, political priorities, and discursive struggles often characteristic of education policies, especially when critically studied across local, regional, national, transnational, and global perspectives.

Starting from this somewhat theoretical point, this chapter aims to delve into this governing complex and reveal its constitution, mechanisms, and trajectories as well as explicate the book's connections with and contributions to the fields of history of education and policy research. The chapter largely follows a bifurcated structure, looking first at the formation and trajectories of a global education governing complex emerging from the chapters, before moving on to the workings of the complex.

FORMATION AND TRAJECTORIES OF THE GLOBAL EDUCATION GOVERNING COMPLEX

Opening up the historical files of the OECD clearly leaves the impression of a highly complex organization that was even sometimes at odds with itself. In other words, the archival sources of the different branches, committees, offices, members, and partners display both strong and powerful

agendas, as well as ambiguities and sometimes even contradictions in terms of agendas, aims, and understandings of the OECD's purpose.

For instance, in 1960, the then Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC) director Alexander King described the development of indicators as an 'essential prerequisite to the elaboration of *sound* educational programmes'. To secure *soundness* in educational programs, 'the work should be based on quantitative measurements and relationship between the main "inputs" into the educational system' (OEEC 1960: 7, my emphasis). If anything, King's statement reminds us of the application of input-/output-focused systems analysis to the field of education (Elfert, this volume; Bürgi 2015, 2016). As demonstrated by Centeno, the Committee for Scientific and Technical Personnel has largely subscribed to such a quantitative and descriptive approach to education. However, the formation of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI)—following ideological and philosophical debates concerning the nature of its educational activities (Grek and Ydesen 2021)—expanded the OECD's work in education to also include qualitative policy studies. Such shifts and debates seem to be a recurring feature in the governing complex revolving around the OECD.

In the 1970s, in an entirely different branch of the OECD-centered governing complex, Robert Harris, then head of the Australian Education Research and Development Committee (ERDC)—which was providing input for Australia's work with the OECD in education in general and US education policies in particular—expressed serious concerns about the use of National Assessment for Educational Progress-type assessments in Australia (cited in Ydesen and Bomholt 2019; see also Ørskov, this volume):

> Forms of accountability which are limited to the consideration of quantitative measures are particularly damaging when attempts are made to incorporate those quantitative measures in 'cost-effectiveness analyses', in which outcomes based on pupils' test scores in specific skill areas are compared with financial inputs. One cannot quantify and thereby include in a cost-effectiveness balance sheet a school's success in developing amongst its pupils the spark of creativity, a sense of determination, the motivation to make a contribution to life, or concern and compassion for their fellows.

This brief historical example shows considerable differences over time and in different organizational settings in relation to how to approach and handle education. It is therefore not an exaggeration to say that the for-

mation of the contemporary governing complex in education has been the subject of both collaboration and struggles between various agents.

However, to understand the trajectory to the launch of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)—the contemporary hallmark of quantitative indicators in education—it is necessary to draw attention to the Social Indicator Development Programme, in the 1970s, for which the Education Committee established the Working Group on Educational Statistics and Indicators (Centeno 2017). This program laid the groundwork for the International Indicators and Evaluation of Educational Systems program established in 1988 (Andreasen, this volume; Grek and Ydesen 2021; Lewis, this volume), which, in turn, served as a precursor of PISA.

It is therefore possible, despite the ambiguities and contradictions, to connect the dots and establish valid historical narratives. As demonstrated in the chapters, there are salient aspects that allow us to draw a consistent picture of the formation and trajectories of a global education governing complex.

One way to start is to look at the underlying assumptions, that is, the inherent values, of an OECD-centered governing complex. The first point that emerges from the chapters is the ideological component in the OECD's work in education. Bürgi describes the early formative stages as an 'enculturation' process, with education serving as a dissemination mechanism rooted in a 'US endeavour that aimed at maintaining Europe within the ideology and epistemology of the capitalist West' (19). Elfert also finds evidence of such a diffusion of American hegemony leading to the 'primacy of economics over politics' (54). Drawing on her remarkable interview with Ron Gass, the first director of CERI, Elfert makes the connection with the contemporary situation in which a neo-conservative movement occupied by a focus on 'what works' has risen to prominence in education policy. Bürgi's and Elfert's arguments also resonate with Chap. 7, in which the author finds an 'instrumental relationship between the education system and the labour market' (137), meaning a marked reductionism in terms of education. In other words, a picture can be drawn of the OECD's historical trajectory in education as a distinct rationalistic approach hinging on the economization of education, devoid of concerns about pedagogy, didactics, or even invoking in students a 'spark of creativity, a sense of determination, the motivation to make a contribution to life, or concern and compassion for their fellows', as pointed out by Harris above.[1] As demonstrated by Ørskov, such discussions about the

social and economic roles of education have been amply present in the Australian context.

In this sense, Chap. 11 also emphasizes a strong normative dimension in the OECD's policy work. The picture is further sustained by indications such as the New Dialogue between Education and the Economy leading to precisely the launch of the *Education at a Glance* reports from 1992 and the development of outcome indicators for education as a basis for international comparisons and increased accountability (OECD 1989).

In making this point about ideology, values, and underlying assumptions in the OECD's approach to education, it is perhaps prudent to remember that the *D* in OECD stands for *development*. A notion of development is necessarily based on the premise that something is better or more advanced than something else. This kind of judgment requires values and normativity by default. In this sense, the OECD's work in education can be viewed as an ideology establishing a Western hierarchical understanding of development stages categorizing the world into developed countries, developing countries, and even wrongly developed countries. In congruence with this point, both Krejsler and Acosta argue that countries in the global South aspire to join the OECD as a sign of their 'level of development'. Further, as also demonstrated in Chap. 12, there is a distinct Eurocentric—or Western-centric—component in the historical conception of development very similar to that found in classical modernization theory (e.g. Rostow 1960; see also Ydesen and Verschaeve 2019).[2]

From a critical perspective, however, one could claim that these findings about ideology, values, and underlying assumptions are not surprising. The OEEC/OECD was—and remains—in essence an economic intergovernmental organization and, therefore, the OECD is only expected to pursue an economic perspective on education. However, the importance of the finding lies in the implications and repercussions for education globally.

The ideological components and the historical trajectories behind these implications and repercussions most commonly remain hidden and tacitly shrouded in conceptions and prejudices about what is rational, necessary, and wise in terms of education policy. OECD policies, recommendations, programs, and technologies therefore permeate and colonize education globally. In other words, as pointed out by Krejsler, soft power strategies such as partnerships, joint ownership, attractiveness projects, and shared

values have global effects through various collaborations, organizations, agents, technologies, discourses, and materialities promoting a one-dimensional perception of education. Demonstrating an empirical unfolding of the economic paradigm in education, Zou shows the connection between preschool children's competences and economic competition in the Chinese case, which leads the author to write about 'a reductionist chain in education policy' (171). While Andreasen emphasizes the general influence of educational assessment practice, such as PISA, on education systems at all levels, from ministries to classrooms, and how it could compromise and challenge democratic ideals. Holloway's analysis of OECD-promoted distributed leadership reforms relates to the same point, in that it critiques the accountability-based promotion of distributed leadership as missing an opportunity to advance democratic ideals that could otherwise be achieved by including more participants in decision making processes in schools. Perhaps the tension here can be summarized as a struggle between an economistic versus a humanistic approach to education.

Another important point in relation to the formation and trajectories of a governing complex is the transformation of education in the OEEC/OECD organization from a peripheral issue into one of the organization's core activities, culminating with PISA and its offspring product developments (Lewis, this volume). Centeno's historical analysis demonstrates that 'education moved from a peripheral position in the OECD to become the focus of a specialised autonomous centre (CERI) and of a policy committee' (65). And the fact that the OECD, from its very inception, was envisaged as a global organization—and, even more powerfully, remains one today—opens a window and even a necessary condition for the OECD to take on a central role in the formation of a contemporary global governing complex in education. The global organization, powerful dissemination tools, and soft governance mechanisms simply turn OECD policies, recommendations, targets, and ambitions in education into a global endeavor.

On the other hand, it is important to remember that the OECD is not a monolith wielding unlimited power and authority. Using the OECD as an instrument, other powerful agents also work through it and/or take up and promote agendas, sometimes even alternative or competing agendas. For instance, the United Nations system—and, in the field of education, UNESCO, with Sustainable Development Goal 4—has launched an extremely powerful agenda, and the OECD has had to adopt and connect with this agenda in its own work (OECD n.d.). In this sense, the OECD

is not alone in forming a governing complex. In the next section, we take a closer look at the workings of the global education governing complex revolving around the OECD, including its limitations.

Workings of a Global Education Governing Complex

Attempting to understand the workings of the contemporary governing complex in education in light of the analyses of the chapters in this volume makes it clear that research questions hinging on the assumption of the OECD as the originator and principal organizer of the contemporary governance regime in global education are much too simplistic. There are simply too many interactions between contexts and agents in different positions, with different outlooks and meaning-making agendas, resulting in a complex picture of discursive struggles, promotions, resistances, inertias, modifications, and transformations. As an extra layer of complexity, Silva, in an analysis of the Brazilian case, finds a marked difference between what was planned in terms of education policy and the changes that were later described.

If anything, one of the book's main findings is that the directions, developments, and workings of the global governing complex in education arise from the resultant forces of complex interactions. Therefore, any attempt to understand the workings of the contemporary governing complex in education requires meticulous empirical analyses of the specific contexts, technologies, and agents involved.

However, as a particular category of agents in the global governing complex, international organizations (IOs) generally wield considerable authority and influence (e.g. Finnemore 1993; Finnemore and Sikkink 1998; Ydesen, this volume). As argued in Chap. 1, the OECD in particular plays the role of key arbiter and promoter in the creation of a governance-by-comparison, reference-based, and benchmarking-setting regime featuring powerful naming and shaming mechanisms and inciting paths for best practice. In a recently edited volume, Waldow and Steiner-Khamsi (2019) demonstrate how the ideology of reference societies profoundly permeates education policies today. As pointed out by Zou, 'once the path has been taken, it would be difficult to opt out as the expectations and inertia set their place' (170). The governing mechanism can be colloquially summed up in the German saying *so ein Ding muss ich auch haben* [I should also have one of those things]. In this respect, Krejsler even

emphasizes the role of fear of falling behind as a driver in the workings of the governing complex.

Zooming in on the governing mechanisms at play in these relational global education policy formation processes, Verger, Fontdevila, and Parcerisa, in their analysis of OECD-promoted school autonomy with accountability reforms, emphasize that the 'OECD activates three main mechanisms of soft governance, namely, data gathering, policy evaluation, and idea generation' (234), thus creating windows to advance policy change. An important point is that these windows are inherently transnational and, therefore, it is necessary to see beyond the state (Sluga 2011). In this sense, Verger, Fontdevila, and Parcerisa's analysis connects with Lewis' argument that new governing spaces transcending national borders are emerging, because education programs, such as PISA for Schools and PISA4U, are being promoted as universal products with ubiquitous applicability. According to the findings of Verger, Fontdevila, and Parcerisa, this claim to universality rests on the OECD's ability to theorize policy solutions, subsequently matching them to a wide range of problems, and by framing them in a way they can accommodate different political agendas. Their arguments find support in the findings of the major research project Policy Knowledge and Lesson Drawing in Nordic School Reform in an Era of International Comparison, led by Kirsten Sivesind, of Oslo University, Norway. Here the OECD unequivocally appears as the most frequently referenced IO in education policy reform processes (Karseth et al. 2020).[3]

These findings are key to understanding the workings of the contemporary governing complex in education. However, they must also be understood in relation to another key feature of the workings of a governing complex, namely, what a recent article has called the struggle for survival perspective (Ydesen and Grek 2019). This perspective draws our attention to the fact that a number of powerful agents in the field besides the OECD are working to influence and shape education, such as UNESCO, the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, the European Union, the World Bank, MERCOSUR, and edu-businesses, to mention just a few key players. Historically, the positions of these agents have shifted over time. This means that the OECD must 'act strategically and secure its organisational survival by providing member-states, partners, and decision-makers with sought-after solutions to various sociocultural issues' (Ydesen and Grek 2019: 3). Similarly, in research into the development of PISA-related products, Lewis (2017: 527) points out that

the 'OECD's sway' over education can 'only be maintained by continually producing new and relevant policy tools'. In other words, IOs must work with their external environment, and historical analyses can identify and explain changes in configurations across eras.

In this volume, Bürgi, Elfert, and Centeno, in their respective chapters, demonstrate how the OECD has undergone an organizational adaptation to changing external conditions. Adding to this insight, Trine Juul Reder (2018) shows how the OECD has gradually devoted increasing strategic focus to emerging economies and has taken on a very collaborative and service-minded approach, working with local authorities and agencies and offering expertise to countries for the development of statistical indicators. This implies that the indicators are being enacted in local practices, producing data for the OECD's statistical indicators. The building of expertise inevitably creates shared mindsets and even epistemic communities. Verger, Fontdevila, and Parcerisa describe the OECD as an 'instrument constituency' (236), indicating the crucial role of numbers, data, and indicators in facilitating travel and how these metrics thereby become a constitutive factor of the global education governing complex because they create common meaning-making agendas. Additionally, as pointed out by Andreasen, politicians have an imperative to act on output data.

The concrete implications of these workings can only be teased out from empirical analyses. However, some of the key questions about how metrics are produced, what they mean for relations between IOs, and even how metrics transform IOs are currently being investigated in a new research project, International Organisations and the Rise of a Global Metrological Field, headed by Sotiria Grek at the University of Edinburgh, UK. As already suggested, the role of agency must not be overlooked, however. Chapter 2 describes a 'network of change agents' (29) that makes a point about a transnationally acting group of intellectuals, or public intellectuals as, for instance, Goodson (1999) labels people acting in this capacity. The professional outlook of such public intellectuals, such as Andreas Schleicher, makes a big difference in terms of how global education is shaped; whether the leading public intellectuals of the global education governing complex are economists, statisticians, sociologists, educators, or people with a teaching background does make a difference. This became obvious in the example of the Australian ERDC mentioned above.

From the perspective of a national context, the struggle for survival perspective reminds us that certain agents and groups could collaborate

with the OECD to promote certain agendas. For instance, Zou argues that the OECD's ideas have mainly been used for new approaches to accountability and mechanisms to legitimate policies in the Chinese educational field. In the Australian case, Ørskov has demonstrated 'a shift of authority towards the national level in educational policy making' (97) in the 1970s following interactions with the OECD. Within this dynamic of knowledge bases and interests, the importance of the role of experts and professionals and their preferences, agendas, and outlooks cannot be overestimated.

A final point following the historical perspectives adopted in this volume is the increasingly blurred lines between education and other societal domains. Today, education has a role to play in the solution of all sorts of social problems. Every challenge facing contemporary society—such as economic growth, social cohesion, integration, inequality, attainments gaps, minority rights, climate changes, and hate crimes—has an unmistakable educational component. Chapter 6 describes a widespread perception of education playing the strategic role as a booster of virtuous cycles in society. Historians of education have used the term *educationalization* to describe this phenomenon, tracing its emergence back to the Enlightenment and the formation of European nation states after 1800 (Depaepe and Smeyers 2008; Tröhler 2017). In this regard, Acosta argues the presence of a new kind of educationalization advanced by the systematic assessment of education systems by an independent organization such as the OECD. The implication is that the OECD's policy shaping work in education spills over into a whole range of other societal domains—directly and indirectly—creating new and expanding windows, channels, and spaces for governance.

Although the points above have been presented separately for the sake of clarity, none of them exists in splendid isolation. They are, in fact, closely interwoven, and some even condition each other. Drawing on the point in Chap. 1 about historical sequences containing the seeds of a merger between education, governance, and economics, we find that the resultant forces of the complex interactions treated provide a picture of a global education governing complex characterized by (1) a historical trajectory going back to World War II and shaped during the bipolar world order of the Cold War; (2) distinct ideological components of capitalist economics pursuing economic growth based on human resources and the establishment of a well-functioning labor market; (3) underlying assumptions about the universality and general applicability of education pro-

grams and practices; and (4) inherent values about education being a utilitarian endeavor. All of these aspects are all too often overlooked in political discourse about education, and they need to be critically studied across local, regional, national, transnational, and global perspectives. The findings in this volume suggest that we need to research policies, practices, programs, and instruments as well as looking at organizations, agents, technologies, discourses, and materialities to (1) determine the trajectories springing from them and their combinability with other governing complexes and political agendas; (2) reflect on their implications in terms of the human condition; and (3) not least, to reflect on the very future of education as an institution in society.

Notes

1. It should be duly mentioned that the latest PISA developments have sought to include more creative and social competences (Lewis, this volume). Even so, these dimensions still seem to hinge on a basically economic idea about measuring the allegedly appropriate kinds of competences for performing well in the future labor market.
2. Interestingly, in his recent book, director of the OECD Directorate of Education and Skills, Andreas Schleicher (2018: 126), seems to emphasize a clear inspiration from Asian education systems: 'The fact that students in most East Asian countries consistently believe that achievement is mainly a product of hard work, rather than inherited intelligence as Western children would often say, suggests that education and its social context can make a difference in instilling values that foster success in education'. If anything, this observation raises the question of what happens to historically Western organizations when they go global.
3. Although, in some European contexts, the European Union rates higher because of a distinct European frame of reference (e.g. Lawn and Grek 2012).

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

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