With great power comes great responsibility: Revisiting the expectations of a large scale reform

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Premises with regards to (de-)centralisation

- Discussions about deregulation versus regulation in Europe are often **characterized by a lack of sophistication**. In many cases, the discourse is about centralised systems against decentralised ones.
- (1) The reality of deregulation first of all shows a **continuing scale in the degree of centralisation** in policy making bodies at different levels […].
- (2) The focus of control **differs in many aspects and areas**: finances and budgets, the pedagogical organisation, the curricula including their assessment and last but not least human resources policy.
- (3) The interaction between levels of regulation within and between different policy making bodies on the one hand and the areas of control on the others offers, as a result, a **differentiated picture as to the degrees and forms of deregulation**.
- (4) The variety finds it **roots in the particular historical and cultural traditions** of the respective countries and people (Standaert 1998).

(De-)centralisation of education

(1) What is that all about?

- Purpose of (de)centralisation (governance arrangements of patterns of decentralisation and centralisation)?
- Core elements of (de)centralisation ?

(2) Organizing and implementing (de)centralisation

- New functions, roles and players
- New rules and regulations (focus of deregulation and control)
- Capacity building and support systems

(3) Output/outcome of (de)centralisation

- What works ?
- What does not?

(4) Concluding remarks/further implications

What are the rationales behind it?

Mapping the discursive terrain

(1) (De-)centralisation as **a structural adjustment program to global pressures** (Key terms: states must compete for investments and jobs, growth and formation of human capital, high skilled workforces, enlargement of economic demands)

(2) (De-)centralisation as a structural adjustment program for **contributing to social development** (Key terms: equality, participation, social justice, democracy, diversification, tolerance, enlargement of social demands)

(3) (De-)centralisation as a structural adjustment program for **improving quality and efficiency in the delivery of public services** (key terms: effective and efficient educational administration systems)

Ambivalence of concepts ! Hybridisaton of discourses !

# The organising framework by the OECD (2008)

	1. Education and learning output and outcomes	2. Policy levers and contexts shaping educational outcomes	3. Antecedents or constraints that contextualise policy
I. Individual participants in education and learning	1.I The quality and distribution of individual educational outcomes	2.I Individual attitudes, engagement and behaviour	3.I Background characteristics of the individual learners
	1. Education and learning output and outcomes	2. Policy levers and contexts shaping educational outcomes	3. Antecedents or constraints that contextualise policy
III. Providers of educational services	1.III The output of educational institutions and institutional performance	2.III School environment and organisation	3.III Characteristics of the service providers and their communities
IV. The education system at a whole	1.IV The overall performance of the education system	2.IV System-wide institutional settings, resource allocations, and policies	3.IV The national, educational, social, economic, and demographic contexts

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From measuring a system to managing a system? The impact of large scale assessment studies

- Economic theory suggests that strong **education systems will increase the long-run rate of economic growth because education is an investment in human capital that increases labour productivity** and because it is leading input for innovation and technical progress which in turn influences growth rates (e.g., Barro and Sala-i-Martin 2004).

- Understanding the sources of **international variation in student achievement levels** is an important project, all the more because recent research shows that **international differences in student achievement are a key driver of differences in long-run economic rates** (cf. Hanushek and Kimko 2000; Wößmann 2002; Hanushek and Wößmann 2007a, 2007b).

- Within country-studies for the United-States (e.g. Juhn, Murphy, and Pierce 1993) have also concluded that **skill differences have a strong and growing impact on the distribution of income**.
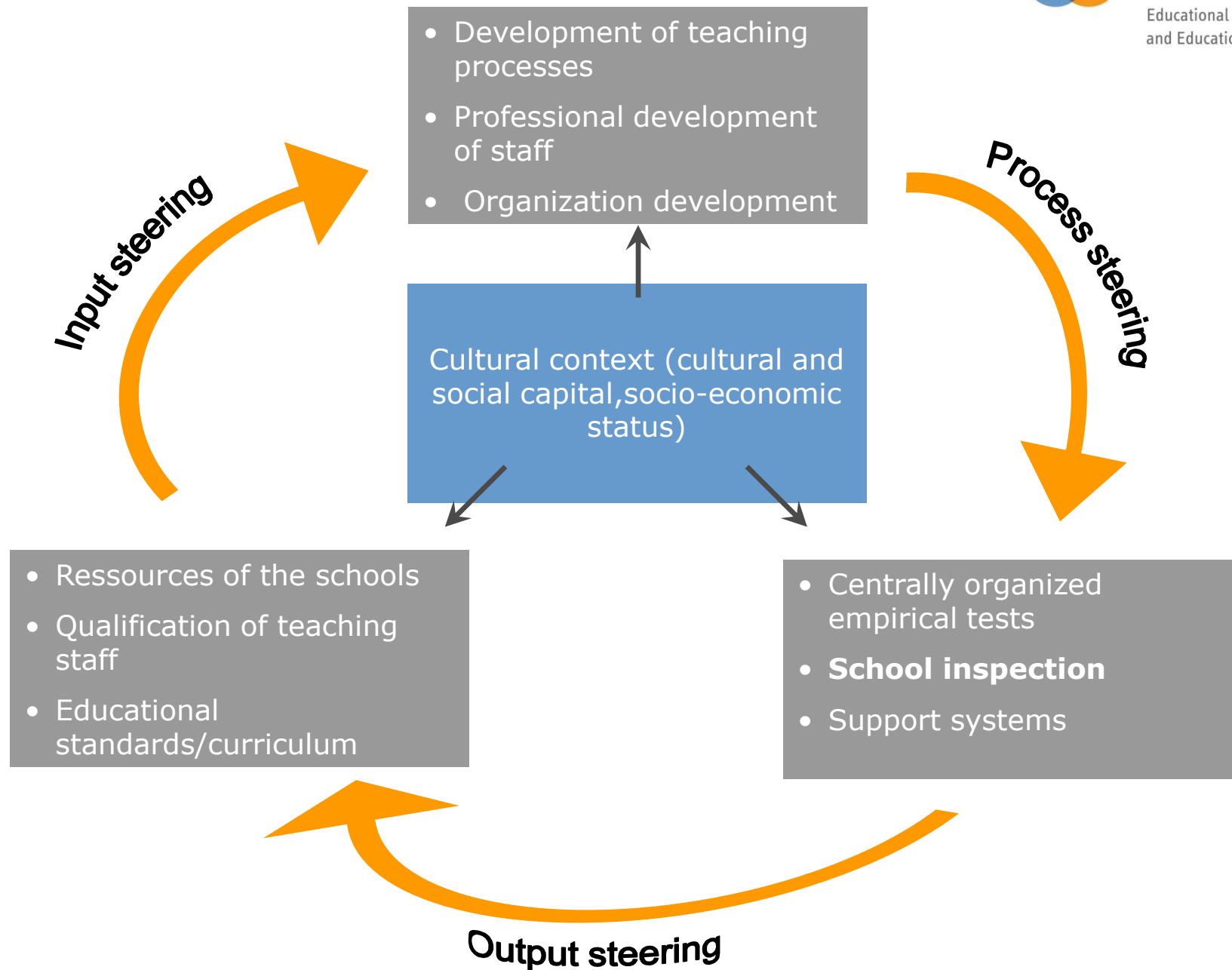
From measurement to management?

Decomposition of Performance Variance at Student, School and System Level in PISA 2006

- Student Level — 47%
- School Level — 27%
- System Level — 26%
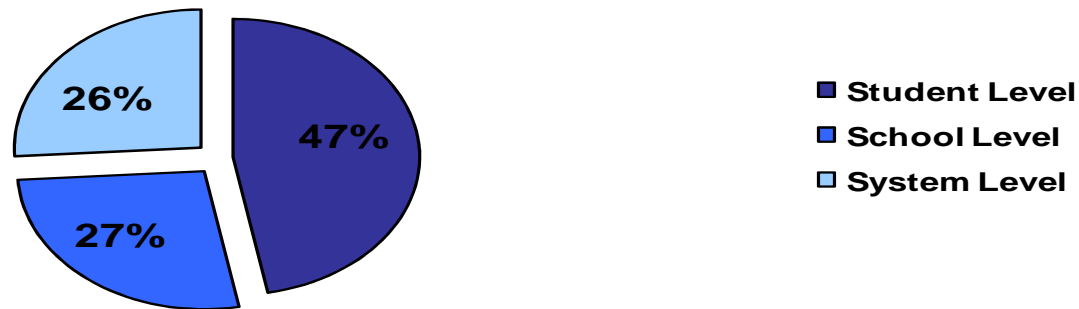
• the comparative analysis of education systems´ performances in the last 15-20 years showed that the macro level has to be seen as well in its systematic relationship with quality assurance processes (e.g. PISA, TIMSS)

• trigger off a broad debate about the strengths and areas of further improvement of the German school system' s structure („PISA 2000 shock")

• institutional reforms should be linked to raising student achievement at the school level
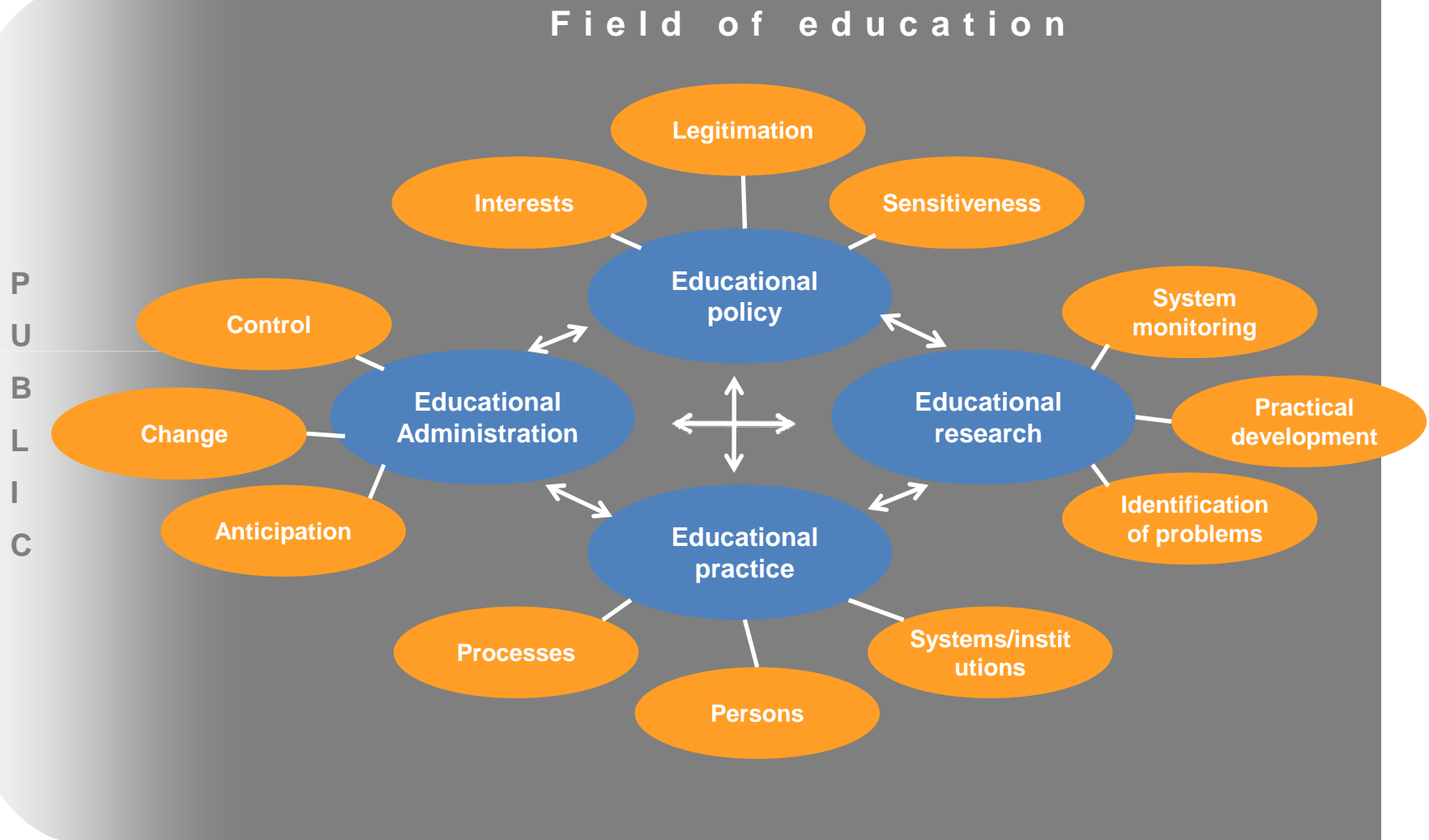
8

From measurement to management?

- However, it is increasingly becoming **clearer that more spending** on its own does not guarantee more learning; in most cases, it does **not** seem to have **any significant effect on student achievement** within existing school systems (e.g., Hanushek 2002; Wößmann 2002, 2007a).

- **As a consequence, policymakers in many countries have begun to focus more on reforming the institutional structure of their school systems (Wößmann et al, 2007, p. 9).**

- **Growing interest** in the conditions, functionality and effects of **new management concepts** in terms of their contribution to safeguarding **and improving the institutional effectiveness of the education system** by reshaping institutional patterns .

- These concepts, developed in the context of modernizing **public management and strongly influenced by Anglo-American economic approaches**, are currently permeating and fundamentally changing the legalistic, **rule-oriented administrative systems in continental Europe** (density of regulations, ex-ante or input steering, tight state control)

- Development of teaching processes
- Professional development of staff
- Organization development

Cultural context (cultural and social capital, socio-economic status)

- Ressources of the schools
- Qualification of teaching staff
- Educational standards/curriculum

- Centrally organized empirical tests
- **School inspection**
- Support systems

Input steering

Process steering

Output steering

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Overview with regards to potential problem fields (Terhart 2002: 129)

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Field of education

Legitimation

Interests

Sensitiveness

Control

System monitoring

Educational policy

Change

Educational Administration

Educational research

Practical development

Anticipation

Identification of problems

Educational practice

Processes

Systems/institutions

Persons

P U B L I C

**Educational Impacts and Policy Responses to Globalization Processes
(Mundy 2005: 10-11) (Berkemeyer S. 126f.)**

	ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION			
Features	Deterritorialized systems of production	Multinational corporation	New volume and speed in international flows of finance	New information economy
Educational Impacts	States must compete for investments and jobs	Rapid expansion of transnational corporate training systems outside state control	**Financial base of the state less stable**	a) New high skills needed (but deskilling too) b) New Transborder flows of knowledge and of educational services
Education Policy Responses	New plans for expanding high level skill formation/or/ provideminimum, low cost education	Government tries to incorporate puplic/private partnerships. Government does not regulate to interfere.	Defensive: cyclical cuts in educational expenditures. **Proactive: seek new forms of educational investment** or new cost efficencies	Reform education for a high skill workforce – introduce new technologies. Liberalize and privatize services – allow some to gain needed skills. Support developement for new export educational service industry. Regulate /restrict transborder commercial flows of education.

Educational Impacts and Policy Responses to Globalization Processes (Mundy 2005: 10-11) (Berkemeyer S. 126f.)

	P O L I T I C A L G L O B A L I Z A T I O N		
Features	Erosion of welfare state compromise (North) erosion of "developemental state" in South	Expanding role of international institutions in national policy making	New social movements/activism linking local and transnational
Educational Impacts	**Ability of governments to use education as a socal steering mechanism threatened.** Dept crisis and structural adjustment in the South limit ability to operate national systems of education.	Deterritorialization of policy control (control shift upwards)	Popular educational reform movements demand policy participation
Education Policy Responses	Finance driven reforms – cut public educational services and expenditure **Competion driven reforms – seek new costs efficiency, and new forms of quality control.** Divestment and decentralization reforms – shift educational responsibility from nation to locality/private sector/individual Seek new policy alliances with other social sectors	Adopt standard policy reform package (decentralization, cost, efficiency measures, standardized assessment, private sources of finance). Engage in large scale Comparison of educational performance Push for reform of international institutions, including new financing for education.	State divestment of responsibility New forms of public participations in education policy

Educational Impacts and Policy Responses to Globalization Processes (Mundy 2005: 10-11) (Berkemeyer S. 126f.)

	CULTURAL GLOBALIZATION		
Features	Technologies encourage transborder communication and mobility	Cultural convergence	Cultural divergence
Educational Impacts	Schools less influential as sources of knowledge and identity **Growing disparity in access to knowledge and learning opportunities**	Positive universal norms link schooling to democratic participation and rights. Westernization, Americanization and Bureaucratization	New fundamentalism, expansion of seperate systems of education New hybridity
Education Policy Responses	Defensive: continue to use schools to produce national citizen. Proactive: **use schools to enhance and equalize individual ability to access new knowledge and to enhance individual mobility, /or/ liberalize education so that at least some learners have optimal access.**	Reinforce rights based educational norms in school curriculum to defend national or cultural identities.	Renationalize education /or/ ignore Modify curriculum - multiculturalism

What is it?

Broadly interpreted decentralisation refers to the way groups of stakeholders negotiate, and also to the way a society distributes power between those who govern and those who are governed, as well as between duty-bearers and rights-holders. More concretely it can take three principal forms:

(1) **Deconcentration**: reallocation of decision making within the education ministry and bureaucracy

(2) **Devolution**: permanent transfer of decision making responsibilities in education from the central government to lower levels of government: provinces, municipalities, or districts.

(3) **Delegation**: the administrative or legal transfer of responsibilities to elected or appointed school governing bodies such as school councils, school management committees, and school governing boards (Winkler 2010).

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Core elements of (de)centralisation

Bottom up (site-based management)

- *School autonomy* (transferring authority, more relevant policies as pedagocial staff on the ground knows the situation and problems better, e.g school self management, shift educational responsibility from nation to locality/private sector/individual)

- *Choice and voice* (shifting developments strategies from `supply-side´ to demand-side`, greater parental involvement, competitive forces will drive school improvement, participation rights and responsibilities)

- Stronger *networking systems* (making decisions that all stakeholders take part in, building dependencies between stakeholders, creating links between areas of policy)

- *Community managed schools* (communities of shared formal as well as informal responsibilities by integrating local and central governments, involving communities to a larger extent in planning, implementing and transparency processes)

Top down (standards based reform)

Systems of accountability and evaluation (demonstrating accountability and transparency, greater emphasis on output control, explicit standards and measures of performance, clear definition of targets and indicators of success, corresponding rewards and sanctions)

17

Degree of decision making		
Greater leeways	**Domain**	**Support systems**
• Selection of textbooks • Instructional organisation • Instructional practices	Instruction	• in-service training, • coaching, mentoring • school network
•Hiring and firing of staff •Terms of employment	Personell management	Advisory councils foundations,
• Budget responsibility (fomulating and allocation)	School ressources	Buying out services (commercial bookkeeping)

Assurance and development of school quality

Accountability/measures (quality control)

(External evaluation, school inspection, centralized testing, indicator based monitoring systems, contracts with guidelines for targets)
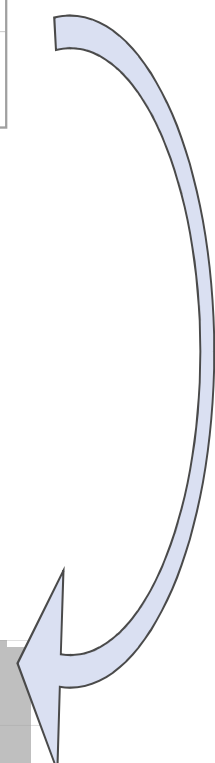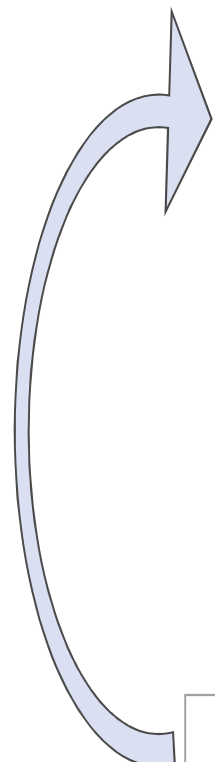
How is it done?

- Do I want to do this?

- Am I allowed to do this?

- Can I do this?

		Implications on school leadership roles and functions	Research evidence base	
System level	autonomy	Establishing budget and accounting systems, choosing and ordering materials, setting up relationships with contractors and vendors, designing recruitment schemes for hiring teachers, student admission criteria, determining course content	Day et al. Pont et al. Mulford Glatter et al.	(2009) (2008) (2003) (2003)
	accountability	Aligning instruction with external standards, setting goals for student performance, integrating external (performance standards) and internal (school program) accountability systems, monitoring of teacher performacne (classroom observation), defining instructional objectives, interpretation of test results, mastery of skills with regards to data based management	Pont et al. Pashiardis & Brauckmann Day & Leithwood Leithwood	(2008) (2008) (2007) (2001)
	school choice/voice	Strengthening collaboration, forming networks, sharing resources, reaching out to their intermidiate environment, coalition building, marketing, fostering parents involvement, develop niches for their school, acquiring rescources (e.g. sponsoring)	Hopkins Hargreaves et al.	(2008) (2008)
School level	schooling level	Significantly moderates the effect of school leadership on pupil achievement, more time for providng classroom observation, more collegial and participative style	Wahlstrom/Louis Leithwood Southworth Heck	(2008) (2007) (2002) (1992)
	diversity of student body	developing sensitive teaching methodes, overcoming skills and languages obstacles, establish links with service providers	Jacobson et al. Leithwood et al.	(2005) (2004)

⚖ Am I allowed to do this?

- Creation of a framework which takes into consideration the different levels of decision making

- Levels of regulation within and between different policy making bodies

- Creation of a framework which clearly states the degree of autonomy with regards to domain of decision making (personnel management, budgeting, instructional content)

- Creation of a framework which clearly states the level of accountability/responsibility with regards to results (rewards and sanctions, at the school level as well as at the individual level)

Can I do this?

- Ineffective structures at the system level (inconsistencies in planning) will not turn out to be advantageous when it comes to the envisaged training and development of effective school leaders if appropriate institutionalized learning opportunities for those leaders are not in place (Lack of institutional capacities, lack of capacity building)

- Unrealistic and inconsistent target-setting is a common problem and there is often a mismatch between goals, strategies and financing commitments when it comes to the planning and provision of school leadership preparation for autonomous schools (clear sense of the educational purpose that fits the particular social context)

- School principals are expected to legitimize their leadership not any longer by basing it on outside authority, but by persuasion and negotiation within the school context. They are expected to be clear and consistent in communicating their explanations, messages and decisions (see Stalhammer 1999)

Does it work?

Ouptut/outcome of (de-)centralisation

- Despite an impressive amount of literature, mainly descriptive in nature, theoretical and empirical debate on whether **decentralisation** leads to **improved student achievements still** lies **unresolved** (Mons 2004).

- Secondary analysis of large scale assessment data showed that **more autonomy in personel management** is related to **higher levels of reading literacy**. Relationship **dissapears** when **differences between school' s student composition** are taken into account (Maslowski et al. 2007).

- Different **facets of accountability, autonomy and choice** are strongly and positively associated with the level of student performance (in place relative to systems that do not) (Wössmann, 2000 Woesmann et al. 2007).

- **Cannot** be **interpreted in a causal sense** as, for example, school autonomy and performance could be **mutually reinforcing or influenced by other factors** (still too much unexplained variance).

- One of the most comprehensive studies, by Leithwood and Menzies examined 83 empirical studies on SBM and arrived at the following conclusion: "There is virtually no firm, research-based knowledge about the direct or indirect effect on students…the little research-based evidence that does exist suggests that the effects on students are just as likely to be negative as positive" (Leithwood and Menzies, 1998, p. 34).

- Most studies, however, say there is simply not enough evidence-based knowledge about the direct or indirect impact of school-based management on learning outcomes (Fullan & Watson, 2000; Caldwell, 1998).

- It is hardly surprising that contrasting opinions exist on the impact of SBM on the quality of schools, considering the variety of contexts, policies and implementation strategies combined with ideological differences.

- These potentially dispiriting findings (see Weiß, 2005) lead naturally to the question of what strategies and actions need to accompany the introduction of school-based management for quality to be improved, or at least not threatened.

So what?

Concluding remarks

(1) With regards to the rationales behind decentralisation efforts

- Patterns of decentralisation and centralisation are not produced in a vaccuum as individual, institutions, and countries make choices about the meaning, the knowledge and skills dispositions acquired, the training gaps that need to be filled, and the acceptability of those New Public Management concepts in another institutional or national context

- The history of an education system, the interaction of education institutions and the current climate of system development all affect how a particular policy can be viewed (OECD 2008)

- Is decentralisation the best government action in order to resolve more or less precisley stated problems?

(2) With regards to the organization and implementation of decentralisation

- Focus on what area(s) of decision making in order to increase school quality

- How to ensure flexibility in governance arrangements as far as balance of centralisation and decentralisation is concerned?

- Creating a framework for evaluating the individual performance of schools in a context of decentralisation, centralisation and available support systems

- Creating more flexible arrangements of decentralisation and centralisation measures for schools in rather challenging contexts (not condemning schools to autonomy). The challenge is to build a capacity to do well in each of the different functions of governance that are either centralized or decentralized

- How to deal with informal decentralisation patterns within a highly centralised system (private educational agencies, autonomy of the classroom), avoiding a clash of autonomy.

28

Concluding remarks

(3) With regards to the outcomes/output of decentralisation

- More elaborated research designs (quasi-experimental studies, multi-level analysis as we are operating within a multiple governance layer system, longitudinal studies)

- More research into the support systems and forms of capacity building accompanying institutional reform efforts

- Role of governance arrangements as being conducive to supportive and productive learning environments

- Describing the impact of governance arrangements on professional transformation processes (complexity of tasks, roles, and functions; prioritization and posteriorization of tasks, how much time do school leaders spend on each task depending on their contextual demands and constraints)

- Investigating into stress related tasks in order to build up targeted and effective support systems (what levels of stress do these tasks place on the school leaders)

- Engage in large scale comparisons of educational performance (e.g.PISA) in order to allow for

  a stringent common definition of decentralisation and cross-country comparisons

Borrowing effective governance systems in an era of globalization

- The issues surrounding new educational governance have universal application. They influence all efforts to improve education, from planning to the way it is administered, and what happens in the classroom.

- Underlying all this work is the assumption that once reforms of Educational Governance are put in place benefits will follow: education will become better, more efficient, more responsive to local demands, and more citizens will participate.

- transnational interconnectedness and the dissemination of ideas, practices, policies aimed to shape conceptions and expectations of local educational actors as well as decision-making processes, seem rather that they need to come to terms with the influence of local historical and cultural factors, and acknowledge the persistence of multiple culture specific worlds.

- Even though the extension and acceptance of NEG might be justified in the name of globalization or best practices and choices, they are nevertheless often deeply negotiated and eventually re-elaborated within that particular local and socio-political context in order to take into account local movements of resistance and/ or opposition organized by groups of concerned citizens (OECD 2008).

Practitioners should care about…

- the expansion and intensification of the principal´s role

- facing more complex challenges as a result of ongoing changes in social and family structures

- conflicts and clash of interests in school and community

- changing the way school leadership is developed and supported

- improving incentives to make headship in particular more attractive for existing heads and for those who will be taking up school leader positions in the future

- strengthening the training and development approaches to help leaders face these new roles

Policymakers should care about…

• requirement of a new legal framework for practice, acknowledging the range of roles and responsibities resulting from the new environment (NEG)

• redefining and broadening school leaders´ roles and responsibilities

• changing the way school leadership is developed and supported

• improving incentives to make headship in particular more attractive for existing heads and for those who will be taking up school leader positions in the future

• strengthening the training and development approaches to help leaders face these new roles

Researchers should care about…

- roles and responsibilities of school leaders under different governance structures

- what kind of New Educational Governance mix requires what kind of leadership styles mix (Situational governance versus situational leadership)

- promising policies and conditions in order to make school leaders most effective in improving school outcomes

- how effective school leadership can be best developed and supported

- policies and practices which are most conductive to these ends

To examine the relationship between the goals or functions, the institutions, and the mechanisms of such governance arrangements, you need to specify the…

What: The first dimension is what needs to be done given the goals for the system. For education, those include structure and organization; finance and business services; human resources/personell; and educational programs

Who: The second important dimension is which agency or organization, at what level, will best perform each of the functions. This includes organizations and stakeholders at the state, country, district, and local school level.

How: The third important dimension is what are the best mechanisms for persuading others to implement policy. This includes a mix of mandates, inducements, capacity building, and changes to the system (Brewer/Smith, 2007):

On which of those three dimensions does your governance system center?

Thank you very much!

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