

Global new managerial policy developments enacted at local level in England and Switzerland

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Abstract

The paper draws on the findings from my doctoral research 'contextualizing new managerialism in primary schools – teachers' perceptions and experiences of policy change, teamwork and organisational culture'. The comparison between England and Switzerland allows explorations into the interplay between new managerial discourse invoking globalisation and local organisational culture and traditions. England and Switzerland provide an interesting comparison, as their political and education systems differ in terms of the prevalence of state education, the extent of local political accountability and the political cultures of decision-making. Their political cultures represent two extremes, based on an analysis of two factors, the political system of constituting the executive and the degrees of decentralisation: majoritarian for the United Kingdom, consensual for Switzerland, whereas many other European countries are characterised as combinations of the two to various degrees (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000). In relation to new managerial reform of the public sector, England is a fast-mover whilst policy makers in Continental Western Europe have placed different emphasis on new managerial reforms (Ferlie et al., 1996). The paper seeks to explore the processes of interplay between global ideologies such as new managerialism and local interpretations, which are influenced by traditions in the political and educational systems. It is argued that not only details of education policy making, but more so the political culture, political accountability and the traditions of professional culture are crucial to the understanding of differences in the enactment of new managerial policies in the two countries.

Introduction

Comparative research makes it possible to examine the interplay of the ideology of new managerialism, increasingly dominant in many world regions, national policy-making in education and local enactment in primary schools. It is the aim to explore to what extent new managerialism is a global, all encompassing ideology and to what extent local cultural and political traditions and historic forms of the education system shape the objectives of policy changes and their interpretation and enactment at local level. In this research project the two education systems of England within the United Kingdom and the Canton Luzern within Switzerland are examined. The two systems of comparison are very different in terms of size: 150 times more pupils attend

English primary schools as compared to the Canton of Luzern. However, due to federalism, a Swiss Canton is the highest policy making authority for compulsory education in Switzerland. Whereas many cantons are only piloting new managerial reforms, the Canton of Luzern has introduced new legislation so that all schools in the Canton are required to comply with new managerial reforms (Luzern, 1999).

England and Switzerland provide an interesting comparison, as their political and education systems differ in terms of the prevalence of state education, the extent of local political accountability and the political cultures of decision-making. Their political cultures represent two extremes, based on an analysis of two factors, the political system of constituting the executive and the degrees of decentralisation: majoritarian for the United Kingdom, consensual for Switzerland, whereas many other European countries are characterised as combinations of the two to various degrees (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000). Within Europe, Britain is seen as a fast-mover in terms of new managerialism whereas many countries of Continental Europe have only gradually begun to introduce aspects of new managerial changes; there are convergences as well as differences in these changes (Bach, 1999; Ferlie, Ashburner, Fitzgerald, & Pettigrew, 1996; Flynn & Strehl, 1996; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000). Different components of new managerialism are emphasised in the policy change of each country: in England, marketisation, accountability and standardisation of teaching, and in Switzerland, teamwork and organisational development, and the replacement of the former collegial approach to school co-ordination with managerial headteachers. The enactment of new managerialism reveals shared concerns across the countries as well as specific interpretations, which are embedded in the traditions of the education system and the culture of political decision-making.

This paper is based on findings from my research project 'Contextualising new managerialism in primary schools in England and Switzerland: teachers' perceptions and experiences of policy change, organisational culture and teamwork'. The research design is a multi case study, involving four state primary schools. In both countries, a school with around hundred pupils and a school with 250 to 300 pupils have been selected. The schools are referred to as **EI** for English large, **Es** for English small, **SI** for Swiss large and **Ss** for Swiss small. All names have been changed to pseudonyms.

An ethnographic research strategy has been employed in order to capture the micro level of policy change in teachers' daily practices and to explore how organisational culture of a particular school and the traditions of an education system and its professional culture amongst teachers affect the enactment of new managerial policies (Vogt, 2001a; Vogt, 2001b). The ethnographic approach involved a variety of methods, including observation, informal conversations and semi-structured interviews, as well as the collection of field documents such as minutes of staff meetings and the analysis of Cantonal and national policy documents, and other related documents of public debate.

The paper is structured as follows: first, new managerialism is defined and an overview provided on the new managerial reforms in both countries; second, the political culture and structures of policy making and accountability in education are examined; third, the changes in the roles of headteachers are examined and fourth it is asked what powers the headteacher and the team of teachers possess in decision making for a local school; examining the power relations between headteachers and teachers provides an interesting example to highlight the impact of political cultures in the enactment of new managerial policies, which emphasise the managerial role of headteachers as managers.

New managerialism in education

New managerialism has been identified as the dominant discourse in the last two decades, influential in politics and the public sector, as well as private business management (Bottery, 2000; Gay & Salaman, 1992).

New managerialism defined

New managerialism is based on the assumption, that the public sector should learn from the private sector to establish 'best practice', that management techniques used in private business should be transferred to the public services and that the public sector should be re-organised along the model of free market competition and customer orientation (Alford, 1993; Clarke & Newman, 1997; Deem, 1998; Farnham & Horton, 1993a; Flynn, 1999).

New managerialism should not be identified with certain management techniques introduced like 'a box of tricks', but involves a framework of values (Trowler, 1998, p. 93). The keywords expressing the values dominant in this approach are the 'three E's', economy, efficiency and effectiveness (Pollitt, 1993). New managerialism seeks to transform public services by introducing the theories and techniques of business management as well as the ideology and values of private entrepreneurialism. It is "both a delivery system and a vehicle for change" (Ball, 1998, p. 123).

New managerialism in the public sector can be identified through a number of key features:

- emphasis on the manager's right to manage, leadership, entrepreneurialism, management as a generic expertise;
- delegated responsibility and flattened hierarchies, distinction between strategic and operational leadership, decentralisation, outsourcing of non-core activities;
- consumer focus, marketisation, competition, purchaser/provider split;

- new perspectives on financial management and accountability, reduction of public spending, cost centres, devolved budgets, reduction of bureaucratic procedures;
- outcome orientation, benchmarking, quantitative performance indicators;
- accountability, performance management, commitment to organisational mission, culture change from a public sector ethic of professionals to more commercial styles (Bottery, 2000; Clarke & Newman, 1997; Deem, 2001; Dubs, 1996; Farnham & Horton, 1993b; Mahony & Hextall, 1997; Randle & Brady, 1997; Tonge, 1993; Trowler, 1998).

However, these components are not implemented at the same time nor to the same degree (Ferlie et al., 1996). New managerialism in the public sector is an international phenomenon originating in Anglo-Saxon countries (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000). There is no single international model of new managerialism nor are the motivations for new managerial policy change always within a similar ideological framework. New managerialism can be interpreted and implemented in a variety of ways, mediated by historical, cultural and political traditions (Deem, 1994a; Ferlie et al., 1996; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000).

New managerial education reforms in England

New managerial reform of the public sector became a topic in the 1970s and 1980s. New managerialism is closely linked with the political agenda of the New Right, particularly in its emphasis of private enterprise; however, politicians left of centre have also argued within a new managerial ideology, calling for responsiveness to service users and communities (Brown, 1996; Exworthy & Halford, 1999). Within education, the then Labour Prime Minister James Callaghan began public debate on the new managerial agenda in his Ruskin Speech in 1976; education policy and structures were radically changed under the Conservative government of Margaret Thatcher through the introduction of quasi-market systems in education (Lello, 1993). New Labour government policy since 1997 has been seen as a continuation in principle of conservative new managerialism (Sargent & Pennington, 2001), with a shift away from market forces to direct intervention through performance target setting (Simkins, 2000), away from competition and entrepreneurialism to outcomes and standards (Bottery, 2000).

A series of legislative initiatives in education established a far reaching re-structuring of the education system along new managerial ideas, including the introduction of a quasi-market system, with parental preference and per capita funding, decentralisation to the level of schools through local management of schools as well as centralisation through new systems of monitoring and accountability such as standardised tests, inspections, performance management and the introduction of the National Curriculum.

New managerial education reform in Switzerland

In the Canton of Luzern, new managerial reform of public administration started in the form of projects involving parts of public administration, with the aim of reforming the entire public sector in future (Specker, 2000). In the area of education, major changes were introduced through the 1999 Act on compulsory education. The new managerial reform was initiated within a project structure:

Cantonal official: We had first to develop what we really wanted. If we had just transferred [policy] from the Anglo-Saxon regions or even from more progressive German *Länder*, then we would possibly have the problem, that we would know what we want, but that other people around would not follow, or have difficulties ... We said, we first need to prepare the ground ... Because of that we launched the project *Schulen mit Profil* (schools with profile) ... and we chose a special approach: the project committee is not just us, but includes all important partners within compulsory education: teachers, the association of chairs of governors, and us (Cantonal Education Department). In developing these ideas amongst the three partners, a consensus is needed, and then, later on, the legislation will have a chance (interview transcript, trans. FV).

Within this project, documents were published on aspects of the reform, such as formulating mission statements, introducing managerial headteachers, teamwork, parent involvement, performance management of teachers, accountability and governing bodies, service level agreements. At first, new managerial reform was introduced as a voluntary project, where schools could join and determine their own focus; one of the sample schools was amongst the first to start the process of change. The policy documents were developed and negotiated in a partnership between government, teachers and governors. The policy documents and the experiences of schools embarking on the reform process with their own projects informed the legislative process.

In 1999, the new education bill for compulsory education was complete, proposing many new managerial changes:

- schools are managed by a headteacher with managerial responsibilities and powers replacing the system of rotating, administrative and collegial management of schools;
- teachers at schools develop together their teamwork and the profile of their school;
- per capita funding and partial autonomy for schools, similar to local management of schools, which give the schools devolved budgets negotiated in service level agreements;
- performance management for teachers, not related with pay.

The bill was challenged by the green and social democratic party and a public sector union, because of concerns that the smaller and less well off parishes might suffer as a result of per capita funding (Bucher, 1999). 56% of the voters supported the new legislation on 12th September

1999 in a referendum (Bucher, 1999; Trau, 1999). All schools and parishes are given a five year time span to implement the changes and meet the requirements of the Act.

A more detailed comparison of the reforms in England and Switzerland can be found in Table 1 in the Appendix to this paper.

Political culture and education policy making

The two national education systems are compared with particular emphasis on decision-making in education policy and the wider political culture. 'Tradition of education' is a multi-faceted concept - traditions are re-invented in actual policy contexts in order to support an argument and they influence policy change (Halpin, Moore, Edwards, George, & Jones, 2000; McCulloch & McCaig, 2002).

Local political accountabilities and consensus politics in Switzerland

Swiss political culture is characterised through a long tradition of coalition government. At all levels of government, local, cantonal, and national, the executive bodies are composed of representatives of the major parties. The cantonal parliament is elected by proportional representation. At present, the parliament of the Canton of Luzern includes members from five parties. Seven ministers are elected directly by a first-pass-the-post system; the ministers belong to three different parties. The strong federalist tradition fosters decentralisation. Policy making is shaped by an elaborate system of checks and balances, forcing all key players to co-operate and to reach consensus as well as providing political authorisation for education reform (Kussau, 2000). The political culture in Switzerland has been described as consensual in two crucial aspects for new managerial reform, with regard to the range of parties represented in the executive and the high degree of decentralisation; it is argued that the consensual political culture makes it more difficult to implement new managerial reforms (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000).

While the Canton in Switzerland is the highest authority in policy-making for education, the political parishes are responsible for maintaining the schools within the parish. The school finances are provided through the budget of the local political parish, and the canton subsidises compulsory education in parishes depending on their tax income between 0% and 70% (Bucher, 1999). The school governing body works together with the parish council; the parish council has the final say on finances (Bucher, 1999). A school governing body oversees all schools in the local parish, which can vary in number from one primary school (as in both sample schools of this research), to parishes with several primary and secondary schools. The governing body recruits teachers and the headteacher and decides on additional resources, organisation of year groups and special educational needs provision. These are bound by cantonal guidelines on teacher pay, class size, provision and facilities. School governors are lay people elected locally every four years. There are

no regulations about parents being part of the governing body, though in most cases some governors have children currently attending the school

The small Swiss school produced a newsletter outlining the developments at the school, which was then distributed throughout the village. The headteacher wrote in the editorial:

Dear readers, you might be thinking: more paper again, or should our financially stretched parish go in for such a luxury. However, new education legislation, local management of schools, earlier entry into school – these are only a few of the buzzwords in education policy. Education is undergoing large changes. Information is needed, not only for the parents of pupils, but also for all taxpayers who have a right to know what happens with their money (field document, trans. FV, Ss, March00).

The Swiss school addresses the whole local population, addressing them as taxpayers, as the citizens of the local political parish have the final say on the budget of the school.

Central government as policy maker in Britain

In contrast to the Swiss political tradition of coalition and broad political consensus, policy-making in Britain is characterised by the political struggle between the two main parties. The electoral system based on first-pass-the-post rather than proportional representation strengthens the two main parties, and ministers belong to the party winning most parliamentary seats in the election. Governments are in power for a maximum of a five year term, and therefore seek to have an impact on legislation and policy within a relatively short time. If a former opposition party comes into government, they might overthrow policies of the last government. In comparison to other countries, the British political culture is characterised as majoritarian in type of executive and low levels of decentralisation (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2000).

For England, education policy-making is directed by the British Secretary of State for Education and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) (Kogan, 1986). Part of policy implementation is delegated to around 150 Local Education Authorities (LEA) (Mackinnon & Statham, 1999). As with the co-operation between public administration and central government, the Local Education Authority education committees are drawn from elected councillors as well as appointed education officers (Mackinnon & Statham, 1999). Over the last two decades of reform, many responsibilities of Local Education Authorities have been transferred to either central government or the local schools.

In England, each school is overseen by its own governing body. The governing body of the school is recruited from a variety of groups, parents, voluntary body (e. g. Church) and Local Education Authority representatives according to a set formula as laid down in the 1986 Education Act (Deem, Brehony, & Heath, 1995; Mackinnon & Statham, 1999). As a consequence of new managerial reform and the introduction of Local Management of Schools (LMS), the responsibilities

of the governing bodies have increased, and they are responsible for personnel, curriculum, quality assurance, facilities and finances in relation to all aspects of the school (Deem et al., 1995; Levacic, 1995). Governing bodies have been strengthened within a new managerial ideology of consumer power (Deem, 1994b); the culture shifted from loose to a "discourse of control accountability" where some governors seek to control headteachers and teachers more closely (Deem et al., 1995).

English schools are less clearly rooted in the political and administrative structure of the local area. The local population would not be addressed as taxpayers as in the parish of the small Swiss school. There is in general little municipal feeling in England. Concepts of communitarianism would be more important. One of the philosophical strands leading to new managerialism is communitarianism, as adopted by policy makers of the New Left (Bottery, 2000; Exworthy & Halford, 1999). County schools have been required to change their name to Community school:

David: The logo was originally taken from a drawing by a pupil and Donna's (secretary) husband computerised it. Now we have had to change everything, because you can no longer be called County school (fieldnotes, EI, Dec99).

The shift in terminology from County to community school reflects a shift away from the state and its public administration, which is based on political and democratic processes at different layers of parish, County and nation. 'The community' as a group is unidentifiable in bureaucratic and political terms. 'Community' is constituted as a group of shared values and morals, duties and responsibilities (Bottery, 2000). New managerialism and community emphasis are paradoxical. Through the new managerial policy of marketisation, and as a result of parental choice, the link between the local community and the school is weakened. Children attending a school might travel to the school from other local communities, whereas children living next to a school might go somewhere else.

Political or managerial accountability

Mahony and Hextall (2000) differentiate between political accountability concerned with transparency of decision-making and managerial accountability concerned with value for money. Political accountability demands representation and responsibility whereas managerial accountability requires decisive decision-making, implementation and enforcement. "Once political accountability becomes subsumed within a managerialist model, its effects and those of its legitimating rhetoric become all-pervasive as the stress on commercial styles of management replaces the former public-service ethic" (Mahony & Hextall, 2000, p. 134f.). In Switzerland, accountability is framed as political accountability, and new managerial reforms strengthens the local political structures. In contrast, the reform in England includes the establishment of quasi-

markets, which, together with a traditionally weaker position of local political authorities strengthens managerial accountability and renders political accountability less important.

Ball, Vincent and Radnor (1997) provide a distinction between market and political accountability, with each two sub-sets of approaches. Market accountability is interpreted as the survival of a service provider in a market or quasi-market, and accountability is ensured through contracts for service provision or through effective financial management. In contrast, political accountability seeks to ensure that those undertaking work on behalf of the electorate, which public services by definition do, are held responsible for their work towards the electorate in some form. Ball, Vincent and Radnor (1997) discuss two forms, political accountability through elected representatives, such as parliamentarians and councillors, and outward accountability, where a more direct link between electorate and elected extends participation.

In Britain, political accountability rests entirely on elected representatives; elected representatives act on behalf of the people living within their constituency. Outward participation is limited, democracy is usually not extended "'downwards' (to the electorate)" (Ball et al., 1997, p. 148). Once citizens have elected representatives, they are not directly involved in any policy decision-making nor are they examining financial and other outcomes. In contrast, the Swiss electorate not only elects representatives but also regularly decides on new legislation or initiates changes to existing legislation through popular initiatives. At the level of local parishes, the electorate decides on the budget for the schools, as well as electing the school governing body.

Changes in school power relations

Power is constituted through wider societal structures, for example gender, ethnicity and class, through hierarchical positions within organisations and the culture of institutions as well as agency of individuals within specific contexts. Power can be defined as transformative capacity, enacted in interactions, where resources are used to secure a desired outcome (Giddens, 1984). Bureaucratic authority and top down control can be a means of power; however, power is multidirectional, a 'dialectic of control' (Giddens, 1984). Power is an interaction between those seeking to influence and those willing to follow - or not, using their resources and capacities for resistance. "Individuals are continuously tussling for control as they interact to achieve desired outcomes" (Hall, 1996, p. 137). Here the focus lies on power within the organisation, influenced through hierarchies and organisational culture.

New managerial policy change has had considerable impact on the role of headteachers in both countries. Headteachers are seen as the main carrier of new managerial change at school level (Lowe, 1998). Swiss and English schools differ considerably in relation to hierarchy, Switzerland has flat hierarchies and a strong collegial tradition, whereas hierarchical differentiation with a

powerful headteacher was already part of the tradition of English schools before new managerial reforms.

A tradition of English headteachers as powerful authorities

English teachers commented on how the headteachers' roles and their leadership approach have changed. Headteachers were in the past seen as distant authority figures, whereas now headteachers have adopted a more collegial style in their interactions:

Kathleen: The first one was a real gentlemen head. He was absolutely opposed to women wearing trousers. One lady had a hip replacement and after that, asked for permission to wear trousers, because that would be easier with her hip. A man who had skin cancer and had had surgery on his neck had to ask for permission not to have to always wear ties (fieldnotes, EI, Febr00).

The secretary of the small English school describes the shift over the years symbolised in the headteacher's title:

Donna: David is a modern style head. The first one I called Sir, the second one Mister and now with David it is on first name terms (fieldnotes, Es, Dec99).

These excerpts illustrate a tradition of powerful and sometimes authoritarian headteachers in England. The teachers' descriptions of the headteacher's leadership evoke associations of headteachers reigning as monarchs or patriarchs. Some commentators on policy change argue that the headteachers have changed from a collegial to a managerial mode, that they were more like senior professionals than managers (McHugh & McMullan, 1995; McVicar, 1993). Others state that headteachers have traditionally been in a powerful position in England (Kogan, 1986; Mahony & Moos, 1998). I argue that the traditional power relationships in English schools were hierarchical and should not be seen as collegial; headteachers were and continue to be in a powerful position. Headteachers became headteachers through appointment and they expected to stay headteachers for the rest of their careers – as will be seen, a very different tradition to the former, non-managerial and collegial, headteachers in Switzerland. Changes can be made out in what their work entails, for example as a consequence of local management of schools. Their way of interacting with teachers has become more collegial as described by the secretary in the above excerpt.

Policy change also requires new headteachers to undertake training and gain a qualification (DfEE,). The national standards for headteachers reveal how the headteachers' role is understood:

Leadership skills - the ability to lead and manage people to work towards a common goal ... ii) initiate and manage change and improvement in pursuit of strategic objectives; iii) prioritise, plan and organise; iv) direct and co-ordinate the work of others; ... xii) command credibility

through the discharge of their functions and to influence others; ... xv) apply good practice from other sectors and organisations (TTA, 1998, p. 7).

Headteachers lead, direct and manage other people - the existing hierarchy has been re-constituted (Mahony & Hextall, 1998). The policy of headteacher standards reveals "a hierarchical, management model which places others in a largely responsive relationship to the head's vision" (Mahony & Moos, 1998, p. 306). Point xv above links in with the new managerial understanding of management as a generic tool, whereby private business management techniques are to be applied in the public sector.

Changing collegial traditions in Switzerland

In Switzerland, headteachers have traditionally been class teachers who took on the additional responsibilities of a mainly administrative role. The headteachers had no influence in areas of personnel nor did they act as the main school representative towards parents. The teachers proposed a headteacher to the governing body, and in most cases, they elected their nomination. While new leadership models are being suggested in Switzerland, many hold on to the principle that the duties and competence of the new headships should be defined by the team according to local situations and that the team participates in selecting a headteacher (Brägger, 1995; Strittmatter, 1996).

Headteachers received some small additional payments per year as an acknowledgement of their additional workload, but would be expected to teach the full hours of classroom teachers. Usually headteachers did not remain headteachers for the whole of their career. After having fulfilled the duty of headteacher for some years, headteachers often resigned expecting another colleague to take over that role; they stayed at the same school and carried on as classroom teachers. Only quite recently have headteachers tried to present themselves as a different profession by establishing a Swiss Association of Headteachers (VSBS, 1997).

Within Switzerland, the Canton of Luzern is the only canton with legislation requiring all schools to establish managerial headteachers:

The headship is responsible for the educational and organisational management, leadership and development of the school ... the governing body ... elects the headship (Luzern, 1999, trans. FV, § 44, § 47).

In the legislation, the team of teachers is not given any rights of participation in the selection of the headteachers. A public sector union demands more democratic participation:

Schulen mit Profil brought a stronger hierarchisation through headteachers ... The union of public sector employees demands more democratic participation of the teachers: the team should nominate the headteacher, it should have the right of participation in the election of the

parish-wide headteacher and should be involved in defining the duties of headteachers. The time of office for headteachers should be limited (Hug, 2001, trans. FV, p. 31).

At the large Swiss school, managerial headships were developed because it became increasingly difficult to find teachers prepared to become headteachers under the previous conditions:

Christoph (headteacher): The starting point was a school that was not managed, but only administered at a minimal level and this administration happened in personnel rotation; and then nobody wanted to take it on anymore, because of time and also, these new areas ... At the end it was Natalie and a colleague, who has left since ... they have done it for another year with the condition they could do it together. Well this colleague started, it was usually a term of duty for two years ... and after a year she said, I cannot do it anymore, this is too much work (interview transcript, trans. FV, SI).

Christoph: I have to admit, the thing with the headship was my initiative ... And then I was in this working group and we have looked into the development of a new headship (fieldnotes, SI, Nov99).

At this school, Christoph realised early on that policy development will go in the direction of a new managerial headship and initiated the change. His agency might be motivated in his interest to take on a management position. In the piloting study in a different Swiss Canton, I found the same dynamic (Vogt, 2001b). Policies can be hijacked by personal agendas.

The Swiss large school was one of the first schools in the Canton to establish a team of headteachers in 1995. The managerial headteacher position was established with six hours off teaching. By 1999, when I began the fieldwork, the headteacher had been given an equivalent of twelve lessons off teaching for headteacher duties, such had his role increased. The headteacher presents the new role of the managerial headteacher on an open day to the public. He presented the following poster describing the role of the headteacher:

Headship operational leadership "chief executive officer"; governors: strategic leadership ("board of directors") ...

Duties of the headship according to the new education legislation (operational leadership in school)

Organisational/administrative leadership: organisation of school year, chairing conferences, implementing legislation in school organisation

Educational leadership: identify educational focus and yearly objectives – planning of whole school projects ...

Personnel leadership: caring for social climate, advise and assess teachers, foster professional development – participation in recruitment of teachers.

School development: assess and develop school as a whole – in collaboration with governors' plan and implement school development projects (e.g. integrated special educational needs provision)

(field document, trans. FV, SI, May 00)

The headteacher describes his new role in a new managerial way, using terms such as operational and strategic leadership, emphasising leadership and school development - the main topics of the Swiss new managerial reforms.

Many of the teachers at the large Swiss school say that in their view the headteacher, Christoph, is doing well. They often state that they accept the managerial power of the headteacher:

Ignaz: Before the headship, I had the feeling as an individual person, as a teacher, I had much more say at this school, than I do today ... Now, I hold back when things concern the school as a whole, I reflect about things, but I have much less say and I also say much less, I accept management, yes (interview transcript, trans. FV, SI).

The introduction of headteachers requires adjustment for all involved. Both headteachers identified difficulties in their new role. Christoph sought to become solely a headteacher without classroom teacher responsibility:

Christoph: The conflicting roles, I don't want to have that anymore, I cannot be a colleague and headteacher. I cannot advise on personnel and eventually apply sanctions, I cannot have this function and with the same colleague plan teaching. That does not work for me (interview transcript, trans. FV, SI).

The headteacher of the small Swiss school thinks it is problematic that someone has been a colleague for years and then becomes a managerial headteacher:

Andi: I noticed already then, that it is not such a good thing. Because a headteacher, a good one, should really come from outside ... One has to break up the existing structure and that's something I somehow feared (interview transcript, trans. FV, Ss).

Both headteachers prefer more differentiation between headteachers and teachers, suggesting that a headteacher should not be seen as a colleague or should come from outside the school. Whereas the headteachers seek differentiation and a clearer assignment of authority and power to their position, the teachers only gradually modified their view of the headteacher not being a colleague:

FV: Do you perceive ... the headteacher as a colleague or is there a difference? ... Luzia: Well yes, but he is not ... like the boss or something (laughs) ... I think that because Christoph has taught before ... he is, yes, like a colleague. FV: What if the person would come in from the outside? ... Luzia: That would be certainly more difficult, because you don't know the person ... I think that could distance one another a bit (interview transcript, trans. FV, SI).

As a result of new managerial reform, the role of Swiss headteachers has changed from a collegial system to a managerial one. Swiss headteachers can find themselves in a difficult position as colleagues and managers, as their power still needs to be established within the organisational culture. However, new managerial policy change has strongly pushed the introduction of managerial and powerful headteachers. In contrast, English headteachers have traditionally held a powerful position, understood as a hierarchical differentiation between them and teachers. The policy changes in England have affected the work of headteachers in a way of intensification: the role of headteachers involves more managerial and administrative responsibilities, so that even small schools are managed by non-teaching headteachers.

Powerful teams or powerful headteachers

Having reviewed the changes in the power relationships between headteachers and teachers, I will now examine to what extent teams or headteachers are powerful in the decision-making of Swiss and English primary schools.

Team of teachers maintaining democratic participation

At the small school, a detailed diagram of the different functions has been developed when the new role of headteacher was introduced. The function diagram states a task and a letter indicates which key player (team, class teacher, headteacher, special needs teacher, and governors) needs to be informed, has the right to participate or the right to decide a particular issue:

Andi: These letters here have been fought about, different people had their claims and tried to get participation in decision-making ... As a tendency, we increased participation of the team of teachers ... From the governors' [competencies] a lot was given to the headteacher and therefore viewed from below it wasn't such a big difference whether the governors decided or whether the headteacher decides now (interview transcript, trans. FV, Ss).

At the Swiss small school, the influence of the team of teachers has not been substantially reduced with the introduction of the headteacher. The governors delegated some of their duties and decision-making powers to the headteacher. The staff meeting very much has a sovereign role within the school (Strittmatter, 1996) – only the governors and parish councillors are perceived as hierarchically above, but not necessarily the headteacher. The policy changes have resulted in limited structural change and even less change in the organisational culture of the school.

Swiss political culture has always emphasised bottom up democratic election processes for all levels; there are, for example, no procedures for co-opting members onto a governing body. Although headteachers have been given 'personnel leadership' as part of their role, teachers assume that working groups best elect their leaders themselves without the involvement of the headteacher:

Meeting of the special needs provision support group: It is discussed who would nominate the leader of a phase group, where the present leader had resigned her post ... Christoph brings up whether it is in the remit of the headship to ask somebody. Iwan thinks the phase group should decide this at their next meeting. Nora supports that ... the consensus emerges ... that the phase group should decide its future leader (fieldnotes, SI, May00).

In contrast, it is for English headteachers to assign any leadership positions such as subject coordinator or phase group leader.

In both Swiss schools, the teams claimed back some influence in the relationship with the governing body. In principle, as laid out in the new headship models, the communication between governing body and teachers is managed entirely by the headteacher. The teachers at the large Swiss school however demanded a meeting between a delegation of teachers with a delegation of governors. At a staff meeting, a teacher informs the other teachers about the meeting:

Therese informs about the meeting with the governors: a list of defects in the rooms will be passed on via the headteacher and governors to [name]; we have received written information about the sharing out of tasks of the governors. In August, after the governors retreat the governors will inform us; the [internal bulletin] will be passed on to [the chair of governors] ... Next meeting with the governors 13th September (please bring issues for the meeting to our attention in advance) (field document staff meeting, trans. FV, SI, May00).

Analysing the items discussed between the delegation of teachers and governors, which excluded the headteacher, it is apparent that these issues would normally be the remit of the headteacher. From the perspective of English teachers it would be unusual that teachers would seek to meet the governors as an official representation of the team without the headteacher present and discuss general management issues with them.

The examples reveal that the collegial culture in Switzerland continues, even though headteachers have been invested with more managerial power through the reform. The culture prevents headteachers from exerting power on the basis of hierarchical authority. The staff meeting of all teachers is perceived as sovereign, although such a position is not envisaged in the policy documents. Policy change has led to new guidelines and legislation, placing the headteacher in a powerful position but the culture has not yet changed.

Challenging the headteachers' leadership style

Due to the strong collegial rather than hierarchical leadership tradition in Swiss schools, the headteacher of the large Swiss school develops a seemingly collegial, but slightly manipulative leadership style. The team is consulted on every major decision, but the headteacher leads discussions in such a way that the outcome reflects his aims. Several teachers at a staff meeting challenged this lack of clarity:

Nella: Christoph, I think, has the problem, that ... he leads in some sort of a mixture ... he says, we now discuss this and by the end, you realise, that the outcome is exactly what he would have wanted ... We had this meeting today with him, there were three of us and we had a brief to talk with him about it (interview transcript, trans. FV, SI).

Nella presents the result of that talk with the headteacher at the next staff meeting:

Conversation teacher delegation / Christoph. Nella informs about the issues discussed in the meeting: Clarification about right of participation/information, what is envisaged – ... As headteacher one cannot expect the team to always agree. Should be seen as factual and not as personal. Christoph spells the conclusions he draws from this:

1. headteacher presents concept – general assembly involved in hearing – headteacher adapts accordingly – headteacher decides;
2. headteacher presents concept – general assembly discusses and questions – general assembly supports/doesn't support [in vote];
3. headteacher presents two concepts – general assembly discusses – general assembly votes, qualified majority of two thirds;
4. concepts developed in team – tasks as preparation in groups – general assembly votes, qualified majority of two thirds.

Principle: Hearing, vote, decision (field document, staff meeting minutes, trans. FV, SI, May00).

The different modes of consultation and decision-making demonstrate that the team remains in a powerful position of governance in the culture of the Swiss schools.

Comparing headteacher's power in the allocation of classes

To compare power relationships between English and Swiss headteachers and teachers, I used a critical organisational process - the allocation of hours and classes to teachers - for comparison across all four sample schools (Vogt, 2002). Here, it suffices to focus on the two large schools.

At the large English school, a fortnight before the end of the school year, several teachers did not know, which class they will be teaching after the summer holidays:

Beatrice: Unless the same thing happens again (the headteacher made two teachers swap classes against their wishes), I shall go back to my class, as far as I know. If it has to be changed, it is the head's prerogative to put you somewhere else, she has that prerogative ... Last year some teachers changed ... the year 1 teacher went to reception and the reception teachers to year 1 and 2, the decision was with Tina. The head has made the decision I don't know what was behind it (fieldnotes, EI, July00).

Here, the headteacher of the large English school is seen as exercising her authority without much consultation with the teachers involved. Teachers are aware that it is the headteacher's right to decide the class they will teach.

At the large Swiss school, the allocation of classes led to conflicts. Two teams of job-sharing teachers both wished to teach year 5, but one team had to change to years 3 and 4.

Christoph (headteacher) shows the form he gave to the teachers in December, where each teacher had to indicate whether they intend to stay at the school or are thinking of leaving. The allocation of classes posed great difficulties this year, because nobody was prepared to change and to take on a mixed age class ... Christoph set up a meeting with these four teachers ... At the meeting, no solution was found. However, Jacqueline had indicated, that she would be prepared to change ... Bettina was shocked and she felt Jacqueline had stabbed her in the back and that led to difficult discussions between the two of them. No consensus was found and it was agreed that the headteacher should decide ... The meeting finished at 17.10 and he announced that he would ring everybody at 18.00 to communicate the decision. FV: You knew what you wanted to decide. Christoph: Yes, but I had to think how to formulate the explanation. The reasons were that Felicitas and Claudia had worked here longer ... FV: Did it leave bad feelings? Christoph: Not between Bettina and me, but between the two of them, Jacqueline and Bettina ... Later it also came back to me, that many in the team would not have understood any other decision (fieldnotes, SI, March00).

The headteacher of the large Swiss school asked all teachers to declare their intentions and preferences by filling in a confidential form well in advance. With his approach, the headteacher expressed not only that everybody has the same chance to state their preferences in a fair process, but also, that dealing with personnel issues is now within his remit. Solving the problem of conflicting interests amongst a group of teachers, the headteacher first acted as a mediator and co-ordinator and only after the teachers involved realised that they were unable to reach a consensus, did the headteacher used his prerogative to make the decision. In his decision, he is sensitive to the unwritten rules in the team of 'give and take' and seniority.

Comparing the two different ways of allocating classes reveals differences in the headteachers' and teams' power in English and Swiss schools respectively. Whilst in both large schools the headteachers finally made the decisions themselves, as that power is assigned to them ex officio, the process of decision-making was very different. The headteacher at the large English school is seen as having the prerogative to make changes as she pleases and the resigned acceptance of her staff reveals that they did not expect to be able to participate in the decision-making. In contrast, the Swiss teachers give the power of decision-making to the headteacher as a last resort in cases where the consensus process in the team does not bring any solution.

The introduction of clearly defined headteachers in Switzerland has required detailed new diagrams of functions and roles to define the new power relationships within the schools. Swiss headteachers negotiate their level of power with their team of teachers, against the background of a culture of the team of teachers being the body of governance below the politically elected

governors. Whilst headteachers could assume a more powerful position according to the new legislation, they have not been inclined to exert that power in an authoritarian way. In England, headteachers held a powerful position before new managerial policy change, and this hierarchical culture is maintained, while the work of the headteacher and their style has changed. A comparison of the process of allocation of classes in cases of disagreement has been used to analyse the underlying power structure: whereas the English headteacher took that decision as she saw fit, exercising her prerogative, the Swiss headteacher engaged in facilitating a consensus; only when no solution was found amongst the teachers was he asked to decide.

Conclusion

In my conclusion, I wish to outline theoretical propositions to both, the understanding of new managerialism as a globally proposed ideology enacted in different local situations and the role of political culture within an education system for policy enactment.

New managerial features combined and transformed, different emphasis but common direction

The comparison between English and Swiss new managerial education reforms shows that different combinations can be distinguished. It is argued that these combinations generally do not differ in their components, but in the varying importance they are given. In England, marketisation has been the main force of new managerialism, introducing quasi-market mechanisms, resulting in customer-orientation and competition. Similarly, external accountability understood as monitoring specific performance indicators has been important. In Switzerland, the emphasis lies on more decentralised, team-oriented school development as well as an emphasis on managers and management techniques through the establishment of managerial headteachers replacing collegial structures.

The components prominent in one country are not completely absent in the other, so for example:

- in England, local management of schools has brought decentralisation and wider responsibility for headteachers - the change is less marked, because headteachers were traditionally powerful and because decentralisation through local management of schools is offset by a simultaneous strong centralisation of power in central government;
- accountability and the resulting standardisation of teaching have not been at the forefront of the reforms in Switzerland. This is related to the features of the system, which existed before reforms: first, local political accountabilities were influential traditionally and continue to be important; second, teaching was already framed through a Cantonal curriculum before the implementation of reforms. Nevertheless, accountability has only recently assumed attention

and might become more significant in the future, as strategies of benchmarking, using performance indicators within devolved budgets and service level agreements, have only comparatively recently been proposed.

The different time scales of implementing and interpreting policies in the two countries make conclusions difficult as to whether these are different forms of new managerialism, different cultural enactment of a common ideology or just different stages in an ongoing development towards the same goals. I tend to frame it as enactment with differences mediated through cultural, political and organisational influences but developing towards similar goals, as new managerial beliefs of modelling the provision of education as private businesses, using management discourse and techniques, are dominant in both countries.

This analysis cannot, however, be conclusive. The pace of change is a complex factor in both countries: teachers in both countries perceive a too quick a pace of reforms, although rates of implementation are different and fragmented. On the legislative side, Swiss reforms allow for more time, as the new legislation was prepared with a general statement of aims in 1994 (Luzern, 1994) and yet provide for five years of implementation of the Education Act until 2005. England has been seen as a fast-mover in new managerial reform (Fergie et al., 1996). The research field of policy analysis is complex and fast moving - new approaches to similar questions are needed within a short space of time, to re-frame and set into perspective the findings of this research. Due to the limitation of generalisation from an ethnographic multi-case study approach, this research can only contribute with one perspective, which needs to be juxtaposed with other research.

Political culture matters

The different political cultures of England and Switzerland explain various aspects and differences of new managerial policy enactment. First, the political culture influences the process of policy formation resulting in varying emphasis on elements of new managerialism. Second, political culture influences the enactment of policies within the school, as teachers and headteachers use such traditions to support or resist such policies.

Political structures and traditions influence policy formation, as the comparison between England and Switzerland demonstrates. Swiss Cantonal governments need to present a consensus as policy change can only succeed in achieving a consensus on policy change through coalitions in parliament and in obtaining a majority in a referendum. Central government in England is constantly under pressure to produce results in a short time, but can count on larger majorities for the party in power. Consequently, new managerial reform in the Canton Luzern has been built on a partnership between central Cantonal government, local governing bodies and the teachers' association. The reform process included making important compromises, such as not introducing performance related pay or marketisation. In contrast, English Central Government is under

electoral pressure to bring about change within a few years, and, therefore more typically reverts to top-down command and control strategies. Consequently, the pace and scope of new managerial reform in both countries is very different: whilst Swiss changes have been comparatively slow and moderate, the English system has changed far more radically and within a far shorter time.

Second, political culture is of importance also in relation to organisational culture and teamwork. The hierarchical tradition of leadership in English schools permeates organisational culture, with participation being granted by the headteacher. New managerial change has been built on existing hierarchical power relations and has increased differentiation between the roles of headteachers as managers and teachers as their staff. Swiss teachers perceive the team of teachers as the supreme forum or sovereign for school-based decision making, which can only be over-ruled by the governing body and the parish council of the political parish rather than a headteacher. Teachers do not hesitate to use local political structures to ensure they are involved in decision-making. Here the culture - at least at this stage of the reform - overrides the policy foundations: the team is not in anyway legally sovereign, and the new managerial headteachers are given substantial managerial power. Nevertheless, headteachers would feel unable to get their way against the will of the majority of the teachers. Although managerial headteachers are now becoming integrated to Swiss school culture, the collegial traditions and the understanding of bottom-up and collective democracy in schools remains influential.

Political culture matters - yet more research is needed to explore the interaction between political culture of a country and organisational culture and teamwork at schools. Theories of political decision-making processes and comparative analysis between countries would be very useful in order to take organisational culture research in schools and analysis of policy enactment further.

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Contact details

Franziska Vogt, Department of Educational Research, Lancaster University, Lancaster LA1 4YW

From October 2002: Forschungsstelle der Pädagogischen Hochschule St. Gallen, Notkerstrasse 27, CH-9000 St. Gallen, Switzerland.

E-mail: franziskavogt@swissinfo.org

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Appendix

| <i>New managerial features</i> | <i>Previous English system</i> | <i>English policy after reform</i> | <i>Previous Luzern system</i> | <i>Luzern system after reform</i> |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <i>Consumer orientation, governance</i> | Little regulation on governing bodies | Fixed membership formula, parents represented; increased strategic and operational powers | School governors elected in local election | School governors elected in local election; increased strategic powers |
| <i>Decentralisation to the level of schools</i> | Little | Local management of schools, devolved budget, per capita funding | Little | Partial autonomy for schools (= local management of schools), devolved budget, per capita funding |
| <i>Marketisation, competition, consumer choice</i> | Little | Parental preference; competition between schools | None | None |
| <i>Quantitative performance indicators, benchmarking</i> | None | Standardised tests, publication of school results in league tables | None | Service level agreements between school, governing body and local parish; no standardised tests |
| <i>Accountability, monitoring</i> | Local Education Authority advisors, inspectorate | Privatised Office for Standards in Education OFSTED, whole school inspections with publication of reports and 'value for money' verdict | Cantonal inspectors monitoring individual teachers | Self-evaluation of the school; external evaluation as quality assurance |
| <i>Performance management for teachers and headteachers</i> | Headteachers as line-managers | Performance management procedures for teachers and headteachers; accountability for pupils' progress as measured in national tests ('value added') | None | Annual review with headteacher as line-manager; peer observation and quality groups, self evaluation |
| <i>Performance-related pay</i> | None | Threshold pay for experienced teachers, linked with pupils' test results; pay awards at the discretion of the school | None | None |
| <i>Managerial role of headteacher</i> | Powerful position of the headteacher | Strengthening of managerial role | Collegial headteachers, administrative and co-ordinating role | Managerial headteacher, leadership in personnel, school development, administration |
| <i>Emphasis on management as generic skill</i> | None | Qualification for new headteachers | None | Qualification for all headteachers |
| <i>Teamwork, flexible roles, flat hierarchies</i> | Hierarchical structure | Emphasis on teamwork (joint planning); hierarchical differentiation (senior management teams) | No hierarchy, teacher autonomy | Emphasis on teamwork, school development, mission statement; introduction of hierarchical leadership structure |

Table 1: Comparison of new managerial reforms in England and the Canton of Luzern, Switzerland