

Changes in Teachers' Work and Professionalism in England: Impressions from the "shop floor"

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ABSTRACT

Teachers' work together with the education systems has experienced many changes in most of the western countries since 1980s. England has played a leading role in the application of educational reforms which has been accelerated in recent years. This article aims to analyse the changes in teachers' work and professionalism in England based on teachers' professional experiences. For this aim, firstly, it focuses on the main debates on teacher professionalism followed by an analysis of the educational reforms of English education system that have impacts on teachers' work directly. Then, it presents findings from a qualitative research based on the narratives of sixteen teachers to explore their roles in decision-making process and professional experiences by focusing on the inside of the school. Despite the discourse that there is an increasing professional autonomy of teachers with the local management of schools, the increasing control mechanisms based on standardized testing, national curriculum and inspections are eliminating their voices in decision-making processes. However, they sometimes experience these processes in different ways in different schools and this is important to understand the agencies of teachers in particular contexts.

Keywords: *Teachers' work • Professionalism • Educational Reforms • Autonomy • Decision-making*

INTRODUCTION

For more than thirty years a lot of countries in the world have experienced global educational 'reforms'. The general features of these reforms can be listed as the use of standardized testing, increasing centralized control on curriculum, the use of market mechanisms, accountability measures and privatisation policies (Robertson, 2012; Stevenson and Little, 2015; Verger, Altinyelken and Koning, 2013). These 'reforms' are presented as a means of improving education and they have gained great momentum parallel with the commodification of educational services. The advancements in information technology and global competition have increased the importance of the education that provides qualified knowledge and workforce equipped with that knowledge. One of the major arguments which have been highlighted recently is that the increase in quality of education depends on the improvements in teacher qualification. For that

reason, the discussions about the 'quality' of teachers have been increasing over their knowledge base and pedagogical practices (Connell, 2009; Robertson, 2012). Teachers are expected to keep pace with the educational 'reforms' to have a role in the creation of skilled workforce and to be even active agents of the changing process. With the statement claiming that teachers' work and teacher education have problems which have been widespread in many countries in recent years, it is emphasized that teaching should be 'professionalized' and developed (Ginsburg and Yeom, 2007). Thus, social and professional roles, employment and working conditions, functions of teachers are being redefined with the implemented reforms.

Looking at the history of the reforms around the world in the field of education, we can say that England has a leading role in their implementation. Parallel with the educational reforms which have been put into practice to solve the educational problems since 1980s, the scholarly debates about teachers' work and professionalism have also gained momentum. These debates have revealed that there are many changes in teachers' work and professionalism through different employment forms, career systems, a new organization and management structure, even a new professional life, culture and practices (Acker, 1999; Ball and Goodson, 1985; Day, Fernandez, Hauge and Moller, 2000; Goodson and Hargreaves, 1996; Helsby, 1999). Most of the studies have claimed that teachers have lost their autonomy within the school system due to increasing centralized control as a result of educational reforms on the one hand and the regulations via market such as school choice and competition on the other (see Ball, 1998; Gewirtz, 1997; Gray and Whitty, 2010; Mahony and Hextall, 2000; Robertson, 2007). The roles and duties expected from teachers have changed in the same period of a school day and teaching has become a more intensified work with the increasing workload (Easthope and Easthope, 2000; Hargreaves, 1994; Merson, 2000; Williamson and Myhill, 2008).

A considerable proportion of the literature focusing on teachers' work is largely based on the analysis of structural processes in which macro level dimensions are highlighted. In this context, the changes in education and teaching are read as a manifestation of macro level political approaches whose effects are felt increasingly in most of the countries all over the world with globalization and the role of agent is often neglected. However, education and teachers' work are considered as technical processes and discussed outside the political sphere in the studies focusing on in-school processes, experiences of teachers and students; the connection of education and teaching with the structural transformations is generally ignored. So, the issue should be dealt with in a framework of the changing historical and social circumstances with a relation to the overall process to reveal how and under which conditions the change in teachers' work take place. Teachers' working conditions, everyday practices, experiences should be included in the analysis to understand the nature of teaching that is different from many other jobs in terms of depending on intersubjective relationship and reveal its changes shaped depending on the local dynamics. In this way, a link can be established between structure and agency to reveal the changes in teachers' work that have similar aspects due to global changes but differentiate according to the local dynamics. Globalization is impacting on education systems across the world. However, it unfolds in quite distinctive ways in different contexts. It is important to reveal the impacts of change process on teachers' work and their experiences in England that is one of the countries implementing the educational reforms for a long time and creating new ones recently. In this context, I draw on the core concepts of teacher professionalism followed by an analysis of the educational reforms of English education system that has impacts on teachers' work directly. Then, I present findings from a qualitative research based on the experiences of English teachers by focusing on the inside of the school.

Professionalism and Changing Conceptions of Teachers' Work

Despite the increase in discussions about the quality of teachers in the last decade, teacher professionalism has been the subject of scholarly debates for decades (Connell, 2009). Within the framework of traditional professionalization thesis, professions are distinguished from other occupations with respect to traits they have. The fundamental characteristics defining a profession can be listed as high level of systematic knowledge gained through education, having a central professional organization and autonomy in the execution of the profession (Barber, 1963; Freidson, 1988; Hughes, 1963). Teaching is defined as a semi-profession that progresses in the way of professionalization in the studies that follow professionalization thesis departing from traditional professions like law and medicine (Etzioni, 1969; Hoyle, 1982; Lortie, 1975).

Hargreaves (2000), who analyses the historical development of teacher professionalism in Anglo-Saxon world in four periods, defines the end of 19th century and beginning of 20th century when teaching emerged as a job as “pre-professional age”, the “welfare state” years after 1960 when the status of teachers improved as “the age of autonomous professional”, the post-1980 years when individual autonomy became unsustainable and many reforms were experienced as “the age of collegial autonomy” and the last period as “postmodern” or “post professionalization period. It would be the teachers who would decide how this flexible period will be and how the professionalization process of teachers will continue.

One of the most important features that define a profession is the control that the employees have over their work. Undoubtedly professionals hold this control in their hands through professional organizations they have established over the years and have certain autonomy against the other forces. As autonomy requires the professionals to act within a certain understanding of professional ethics, it also supplies social power and status and allows them to create individual autonomous spaces (Friedson, 1988). The autonomy of teachers refers to a situation that teachers have a voice in shaping of educational policies at the school, local and more general central level, play a role in the preparation of the curriculum and use their discretion over their work that they do in general. Thus, they can have professional independence in schools in order to make autonomous decisions about what and how they teach. The scope of autonomy is determined depending on the social changes, expectations of various actors in the educational process and power relations, and changes historically.

The scholarly debates related with the professionalization of teachers and the meanings attributed to the 'teacher professionalism' contain differences and show a complex view. The thesis on the identification of occupations in terms of features they have takes several criticisms in the direction of being failed to grasp the dynamic nature of the professionalization process (Whitty, 2006). Because teacher professionalism is being redefined with the changing historical and social conditions and its content and format are also changing. For example, the changes experienced in teaching in recent years have been defined professionalization in the framework of 'new professionalism' approach that is different from the traditional one and has features such as standardization in practice and measurable performance (Hargreaves, 1994; Robertson, 1996; Ünal, 2005). This situation offers opportunities for the reconstruction of 'teacher professionalism' that can have different meanings. Like professionalism, autonomy and some other concepts which are used to define it can also be redefined in different ways according to historical process and power relationships and these concepts can have different meanings. Thus, debates on the axis of defining professionalism, as Lawn (1996) noted, is closely related with the political struggles in order to position teaching in the system of new social relationships. While 'professionalization' can bring autonomy that allows teachers to use their discretion over the work, it can also be used to control teachers' work and define it outside politics. For instance, governments are using Continuous Professional Development (CPD) as a new way of achieving broader educational reforms (Day and Sachs, 2004). Lawn (1996) who points out the historicity of professionalism concept by indicating its different usage in different periods states that teachers' work was defined in the framework of features that train the active citizens of welfare state and stimulate the economy in the framework of professionalism in the period after World War II, but at the end of the century this definition has changed and closed to 'privileged worker' in order to meet the changing productivity targets.

Contrary to the rhetoric of the reforms about professionalizing teachers being central to improving the quality of education and teaching, the studies show that these reforms made them deskilled, intensified and alienated within the bureaucratic structure of the school system (Apple, 1986; Gewirtz, 1997; Lawn and Grace, 2011; Ozga and Lawn, 1988). Within the framework of this labour process approach, education is seen as a work, teachers are as workers and schools are as workplaces, and the changes in the profession have been called proletarianization (Carter and Stevenson, 2012; Connell, 1995; Reid, 2003). Teachers have lost their autonomy and control over their own labour processes with the separation of planning and application as a result of developing new management strategies, advancements in technology, growing curriculum packages, standardization and tests (Apple, 1986; Smyth, 2001). This process looks like other proletarianization processes that blue and white collar workers live. According to Giroux (1988), the intellectual role of teachers who play a critical role in educating active and critical citizens has been neglected and reduced to high-level technicians' status who implements the decisions of experts who are away from

the classroom environment. However, the first studies about proletarianization of teachers, taking the teachers as passive carriers of the structure have become subject matter of critiques. More emphasis was given to structural conditions and the teachers were tackled as the ones who were caught up in inevitable process of deskilling in these studies (Ozga and Lawn, 1988). Therefore, everyday practices and the subjective experiences of the teachers should be included in the analysis (Helsby, 1999; Seddon and Palmieri, 2009). Because, teachers are the active agents of the education process showing resistance and compliance in various ways through their experiences.

As a result, while it is possible to define the teacher professionalism in various forms, it can be said that the meaning loaded to professionalism has a dynamic nature determined by the power relations, historical and social conditions. For that reason, teacher professionalism which can have different meanings is able to gain content and form parallel to the changes in education. The professionalism approach is now being used to legitimize the changes in teachers' work. While the changes experienced in teachers' work in recent periods can be called professionalization, on the other hand they can be defined as proletarianization by paying attention to loss of autonomy and control in the profession. Therefore, the focus should be on how the teachers' work is controlled and what kind of changes this control process leads to. But it is necessary and important to move from the teachers' experiences to understand the change process.

Historical and National Context

By the mid-20th century education was seen as an important mechanism for economic prosperity and social welfare in England¹ which has a highly decentralized educational tradition. State-funded education system through local authorities can be called locally administered national education (Ball, 2008; Chitty, 2002; West and Bailey, 2013). In these years there were a lot of school types in English education system but the Local Education Authorities (LEAs) started to be very important in functioning of this system. Education was seen as a basic element of a welfare society and some reforms were carried out to provide quality education for every citizen (Chitty, 2009). 1944 Education Act was an important step for ensuring this aim (West, 2014). On the one hand a national policy was developed for providing a varied and comprehensive educational service in every area, professionalism for teachers increased and they had a high degree of autonomy in their work on the other. With the Act, the control of the curriculum was given to the LEAs, teachers had an important role in curriculum preparation process and the roles of inspectors declined. So, as Hargreaves (2000) emphasized, these years can be called for teachers as 'the age of autonomous professionalism'.

The economic crisis of capitalism that began in the 1970s has caused significant changes in all social structures and processes all over the world. Educational processes are increasingly restructured on an axis of reproduction of competitive, flexible labour power equipped with the necessary qualifications to meet the needs of local and global economy. The regulations introduced to accelerate the transformation of education in many regions of the world are now widely recognized as a process of neoliberal restructuring. Under this heading of restructuring it is possible to include policies of privatization, cuts in public funding, new public management, restructuring of the curriculum, changes in working conditions of teachers (Ball, 2008; Hursh, 2005; Hill, 2007). Although the reforms implemented with the support of global actors to achieve the desired basic objectives have similarities at the global level, they can also vary depending on the local dynamics.

In England, Keynesian welfare policies weakened with the changing policies. The recession provided a rationale for the economic cutbacks in education not only in England but also in most of the western countries (Hursh, 2005). With the new policies, the school system as a public service was started to be converted into market and the power was transferred from local authorities to the central government (Chitty, 2009). Actually more power has been devolved to schools and taken away from LEAs but at the same time, the power of central government has been strengthened. Ainley (2001) defines this change as a

¹ At the end of the 20th century, the formation of education policies in the United Kingdom is devolved to individual nations in which the structure and functioning of the education system have some differences. England which is the subject of this paper is the most populous of the four countries constituting the UK.

transition from a locally administered national system to a nationally administered national system. Important changes consisting of teachers and local education authorities took place with the introduction of market principles into school-based education along with the introduction of a national curriculum and a new assessment program (West and Bailey, 2013). The control of central government started to increase over schools and teachers especially via the inspections of Ofsted (Office for Standards in Education). The School Council, in which teachers had played a significant role, was abolished to reduce the influence of teachers in curriculum development (Gilliard, 2011). The professional autonomy of English teachers was altered with the introduction of a highly prescriptive curriculum and a tight regime of accountability. 1988 Education Reform Act introduced a number of market measures into the education system, including 'choice' and 'competition', local management of schools, per-capita funding, standardized testing and the introduction of new types of schools (Hursh, 2005; Gewirtz, 1997; Stevenson and Little, 2015). Highly decentralized structure of the English education system began to change with the educational reforms. The role of the LEAs in the employment of teachers has been weakened with the local management of the schools and the direct budget transfers to them. Schools are put in order through the league tables created by standardized testing regime; this process has been a key control mechanism over teachers with the parental choice mechanisms (Stevenson and Wood, 2013). Schools started to play a direct role in teacher employment and wage levels determined on a national scale has been removed. Performance criteria began to be used in determining wages. Eliminating collective bargaining has weakened the power of trade unions, contracts were started to be done at the school level, even individual level. This process has brought significant changes in teachers' work.

One of the most important changes in English education system was the opening of academies which constitute 61 % of all secondary schools and 14 % of all primary schools. They are independent, state-funded schools, which receive their funding directly from central government, rather than through a local authority. Although day-to-day running of the school remains in the hands of the head teacher, they are overseen by individual charitable bodies called academy trusts and can be part of an academy chain. These trusts provide advice, support and expertise for the school. Businesses, churches and voluntary groups can build and manage them, and they can stay outside the control of local authorities. They may choose their own head teacher and staff and appoint the majority of governors. Sponsors of academies have the power to rename the school, control the board of governors and school workforce and influence the curriculum (Gunter, 2011). They have more freedom than other state schools over their finances and curriculum, and do not need to follow national pay and working conditions for teachers (DfES, www.standards.dfes.gov.uk). So, it can be said that these schools actually run like private schools but they receive funding directly from the government. The employment and the pay of the teachers are decided by the individual schools.

To summarize, there are two important educational reforms that have led to profound changes in the English education system. First of these is the 1944 Education Reform Act that increased teacher professionalism and enabled LEAs to be in an important position in the functioning of the system. The second one is the 1988 Education Reform Act, which introduced the national curriculum into practice, brought a new assessment system and led to the domination of the market. While this reform, which is an extension of the transformation period that began in the 1970s, led to the localization with the school-based management approach on the one side, on the other side the control of the central government over the school system increased over time and new school types, like private schools, were introduced. The control over teachers increased due to competition, accountability targets and performance monitoring. Hence, in England it is possible to say that in the last thirty years, there has been a lot of change both in education system and teachers' work.

METHODOLOGY

This research aims to analyse the changes in teachers' work and professionalism in England based on their own experiences. It tries to describe how teachers have experienced the changes in an environment where structural regulations take place and to fill the inside of the frame in a sense. Hence, it adopts a qualitative approach using a phenomenological research design. The phenomenological approach focuses on the description of how people experience the phenomenon methodologically, elaborate and in depth

(Patton, 2002). In other words, how people perceive and understand the phenomenon is depicted based on their experiences. In this research the focus is on the professional experiences of teachers.

Participants

The aim of the research requires access to the experiences of teachers from different generations. Therefore, interviews were carried out with teachers chosen via the 'purposive sampling' technique. Teachers determined according to their professional seniority and different features are included in the scope of the interviews. In this way they have provided the sufficient diversity in terms of features such as career, trade union membership, employment type, school type, grade etc. When the sufficient diversity was achieved, the interviews were ended. The total number of teachers interviewed is sixteen. The information about the participants is given in detail in Table 1. They are working at different grade levels in primary and secondary schools which have different features. All of the schools that teachers work are public schools which can be an academy or a local maintained school.

Table 1.

	Nickname	Gender	Professional Experience (Years)	Grade Level
1	Alfred	M	13	Secondary school
2	Adel	F	27	Secondary school
3	Baily	M	14	Primary school
4	Barbara	F	20	Primary school
5	Hana	F	4	Primary school
6	Lara	F	12	Primary school
7	Nina	F	25	Secondary school
8	Farah	F	8	Primary school
9	Rachel	F	2	Primary school
10	Valencia	F	4	Primary school
11	Carl	M	5	Secondary school
12	Tammy	F	20	Secondary school
13	Rapunzel	F	6	Secondary school
14	Darlene	F	1	Primary school
15	Edward	M	7	Secondary school
16	Angela	F	17	Primary school

Data Collection Techniques and Instruments

The basic technique used for the collection of qualitative data is interview. In-depth interviews were conducted by using a 'semi-structured interview form to ensure the active participation of teachers interviewed, to give flexibility to the research and in order to get in-depth information. The reason for the choice of in-depth interviews is that it is a data collection tool that makes possible to get to the core of many 'visible' cases, processes and relationships, comprehending the details of them and understanding them in a holistic way (Kümbetoğlu 2005, 72). In this way we can discover the changes in teachers' work that can be shaped according to local dynamics in different parts of the world. So, this research design explicitly seeks to give voice to teachers 'on the shop floor' (Stevenson, 2003).

A draft interview form which focuses on teachers' professional experiences and working conditions was created. Then, it was shared with the experts of the field in order to ensure the reliability of the interview form. It was reviewed according to the opinions of experts. Then preliminary interviews were carried out with two teachers who have different professional experiences in order to test the operability of the form and it was revised accordingly.

Data Collection and Analysis

A literature review relating to the experienced transformation of teaching has been carried out due to the fact that the research covers a certain historical period in England. The changes in the English school system and education has resulted in many changes in teachers' work in the last thirty years. While focusing

on the teachers' narratives and daily practices, the documents which belong to related period provided important background to the research.

Interviews were conducted in February-June, 2016. The participants were informed about the research via an info-sheet which defines the anonymity of the identities and the data to express themselves freely. Subject to consent, the interviews were audio-recorded.

The interviews were analysed by using a common process of qualitative data analysis (Cresswell, 2007). After coding and categorizing the data, they were collected under various thematic headings considering the similarities and differences between them (Table 2). The data of the research haven't been digitized because of there is no generalization concern in qualitative research approaches. Quantitative statistical analyses are not needed in qualitative researches conducted to get in-depth insight about a subject with a limited participation. For that reason, findings about working conditions, professional experiences and daily practices of teachers were interpreted in accordance with the relevant social conditions by taking direct excerpts from their narratives. In this way, changes in teachers' work in England were presented. All the data and the identities were kept strictly anonymous, pseudonyms were used when it was necessary in data analysis and interpretation process.

Table 2. Main Themes and Codes

Themes	Codes
Management (Decision-making)	Decision-making Governing body Head teacher Authoritative approach Democratic approach Autonomy LEAs Academies
Curriculum	National Centralized control Autonomy Role of teachers Academies
Standardized testing	Accountability League tables School choice Inspections Observations Pressure Workload
Challenge to the Control	Negative feelings Trade unions Being organized

Validity and Reliability

While the issue of validity and reliability in qualitative researches is controversial, various measures have been taken to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. One of the factors increasing the credibility of a qualitative research is achieving accurate information about the experienced reality via the establishment of a prolonged engagement with the participants. For that reason, detailed information about the research process was shared with the participants before the interviews and a trust-based relationship was tried to develop. The comments and reactions were avoided during the interviews so that the participants were not adversely affected. Peer debriefing was used as another strategy (Creswell, 2007). In

order to ensure the credibility of the research the analyses obtained from the interviews and comments were shared with a colleague from the field.

In order to ensure the transferability of the study, participants were selected to reach maximum diversity via purposive sampling and direct excerpts were made in the presentation of findings. Patton (2002) suggests that the researchers should think deeply about the possible bias situation, struggle with it and report all the process. In this context, the research phases such as the development of interview forms, selection of participants, data collection and analysis have been described in detail to ensure the trustworthiness of the research. Some parts of the voice recordings were written at different times to reduce the mistakes and differences that might occur. Likewise, possible biased evaluations have been avoided by coding certain parts of the data by another researcher again other than the researcher.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of the changes in teachers' work requires focusing on the experiences of those living this process as well as structural changes. Such an approach allows us to understand how teachers are affected by the change process and how they get involved in parallel with the intention of the state and other forces controlling and shaping the education along with the changing structural conditions. Therefore, this study evaluates what kind of changes teachers live in their professional practices in a changing political context of England by focusing on their experiences. How are the autonomy of the teachers and their relationships at the school shaped, and how teachers' work changes in the overall and how they experience this change process with the new management model, national curriculum, performance evaluation and standardized testing.

One of the main changes in English education system with the post-1988 reform was leaving the school management and the control of finance to the hands of head teachers to start the local management of schools. The power has been taken away from LEAs and devolved to individual schools, but at the same time, the power of central government has been strengthened (Muller at all, 2009). In this sense, individual school began to evolve a business structure that can manage its own resources. So, the change process on the one hand has been implemented with the regulations done by the government centrally such as management model, national curriculum and standardized testing, on the other hand the practices specific to market operates in educational processes such as school choice and performance related evaluation and pay. These processes should be addressed separately to make visible all the changes which are related with each other and how they are implemented in schools, and to clarify the issues via teachers' experiences.

Management of the School: The Role of Teachers in Decision-making Process

I asked teachers if they took part in the organization of educational processes and how they joined to these processes in order to understand how the management works at school and if they have a voice in decision-making process or not. To put it in general, schools are managed by governing bodies technically and the teachers are represented in these bodies. Teachers who want to join the governing body are elected among aspiring teachers for that position if there is a gap in it for them. It's possible to list the reasons why teachers want to join to governing body under various headings. One of them is to have a voice in school management and achieve a stronger position by developing a close relationship with the senior management team. On the other hand, this request can be considered as an idealistic effort in the improvement of the school. Besides this, teachers who are the active members of various teacher trade unions want to join governing bodies to get involved in the organization of the educational processes at school. However, some teachers don't want to take part in these bodies on the grounds that their workload will increase, and some others think that governing bodies functioning technically are actually not active in the management of work.

You can be involved in the running of the schools. Because you are elected as a teacher governor by the colleagues. (...) But teacher governors can be told they may not attend the governing body meeting. For example, in my school we are currently going through a process of restructuring and redundancy. So teacher governors were told they were not allowed to attend governing body meeting. So when you are elected as a teacher governor doesn't mean that you will have an opportunity to join in decision making process (Nina).

The governing body is technically employer. Everything in the school goes with the scope of the governing body. I mean big decisions are made in it. (...) As a representative staff I have a voice in decisions. For instance, we have discussions on holiday patterns last year. So you have some influence. But DfE (Department for Education) decides primarily what is going to happen in the school. (Adel)

The involvement of teachers in decision-making processes may differ from school to school. Particularly in academy schools, the sponsor institution plays an active role in the management process, which can adversely affect the functioning of the governing body. This leads teachers to stay out of the decision-making process. For instance, Alfred stated this issue as follows:

The governing body doesn't really exist in the school. They are not real power in the school. Because academies are sponsored by the companies. They have a pressure on the head but they are not visible in the school. I don't think that the governing body is working in academies.

Another important factor in the participation of teachers in decision-making processes is the attitude of the school administration. While in some schools there is a much more democratic structure depending on the approaches of the head teacher and senior management team, authoritarian management approach is dominant in some others. While decisions are made from top down in authoritarian schools, teachers' voices are not heard much in decision-making mechanisms.

In terms of decision making, it is usually top to bottom. The decisions come from head teacher or deputy head to teachers. In my school they say there is an open door policy. We are encouraged to go and speak with the head teacher if we have any concerns. In all honesty I don't feel that confidence because that could be quite political. You could be in a difficult situation. I don't think it is very democratic. (Rachel)

This situation can also negatively affect communication channels in the school. For instance, Lara defined the relationships in her old school as follows: "They dictated everything. The head teacher always said: 'Ofsted is coming, we have to do these'. It was really horrible. The policy was very unfair (...) there was no way to communicate." and she also stated that the school she is currently employed has a democratic management policy: "Our senior management team supports us. When I need time etc., they help me. The attitude of the senior management team is very important. (...) We can join to school management. We can talk with them." Therefore, to act as an individual business to achieve the goals might bring the differentiation of management approaches between schools.

It can be said that the socio-economic environment of the school and its position in the league tables affect the school management. If the school is successful and in the front in league tables, it can be stated that there is a more comfortable and democratic management process in the school and the teachers are more relaxed. Because, it is possible to say that the pressure on head teacher and senior leadership team is less in successful schools.

If you are not successful in these tests, everybody knows you will be criticized. So, you have to take some precautions to be successful. This leads to the suppression of teachers most of the time. (Barbara)

I think the relationships vary from school to school. But the approach of the head teacher is very important. When the school is outstanding, she will have a positive approach. Because it means that Ofsted inspections will not take place very often. The atmosphere in the school will be positive. (Angela)

Besides this, the attitudes of teachers and their solidarity level also have important impacts on the management of the school. If the members of trade unions behave together, they can have a voice and make some changes in the school culture. But it is not an easy process for teachers.

It depends on the trade union activities. As a collective group you can express your concerns about governing body, what they do and you may change something. To raise things at the school and to have a voice in the governing body, you have to move as a collective group. (Tammy)

In my school, I think there is a level of solidarity. Because we are well organized in trade union terms. Only operates in some level. If there is strike action, we have high response rate in my school. (Alfred)

Although running of the school and the participation of teachers to the decision-making processes show some differences partially depending on the attitude of the head teacher and organization level of teachers, there are some structural factors that over determine this. This is the subject of later discussion in this research. But if I say briefly, the head teacher and the governing body are under pressure because of the school has to be successful in the league tables and achieve the standards. Therefore, the running of the school is controlled centrally on the one hand and expectations of market form this process on the other. So,

decision making does not take place at the school as it seems and the role of school governors is not effective enough in this process.

As a governing body you could change the holiday patterns, school years and days and the times of the school day. So the things that you can do are actually technical things. You do have an impact on governors as a member; you do have an impact on curriculum also. You can change the order of subjects in the curriculum. That has to go to governors. They have to agree with it. So you can have some impacts on decisions. But overall the academy sponsor and DfE decide most of the things at the school. (Adel)

Although there is a decentralized structure in England, as Ball (1994) stated, the decisions are taken at the central level and the implementation of these decisions is kept under control via several mechanisms and the responsibility of the implementation relating to the achievement of the expected targets is belong to the individual schools.

Impacts of National Curriculum

One of the most important structural mechanisms that control teachers' work is centralized national curriculum. In some countries, the curriculum has been created by teachers, has gained content and format according to the environment where the school is located and the abilities of students. This traditional role of teachers was taken from their hands with the reforms implemented in recent years, curriculum was centralized and the teachers have been excluded from the curriculum creation process. Thus, the design and implementation which are the parts of a holistic process were separated from each other, the creation of the curriculum has been carried out by the central authority and the teachers have been expected just only to apply it. England is one of these countries. Teachers have been excluded from the curriculum preparation process which they were part of in cooperation with the local authorities previously. They are obliged to follow the basic objectives stated in the curriculum. Most of the teachers stated that the national curriculum is highly prescriptive and doesn't let them be creative in the lessons.

We have to follow the national curriculum. So, we have to meet the criteria in the national curriculum. Because it will be feed in to the end of key stage test which is called as SAT. For example, I have to follow the objectives for year 4; I have to teach all these things in the national curriculum. You have to integrate all the needs of your children in to lessons. (Rachel)

But the teachers can choose the textbooks and resources used in the classroom and decide the applications to reach the targets.

We teach the students those issues that are part of the national curriculum. (...) You can make different activities. (...) You can change the outline of the lesson but not the objectives. You have to meet the simple structure. It is up to you as a teacher how you teach. (Rapunzel)

It is difficult to change the lessons. But you don't need to follow any text books. We are quite free to choose the materials that we'll use in our lessons. But in terms of the objectives of the national curriculum, we have to teach those objectives (Rachel).

Some teachers noted the curriculum change in 2014 as follows: "The new curriculum is very open to interpretation. The last that we had was very prescriptive. Teach this, this at this point, this at this at this point. Here are some resources that you can use. The new national curriculum, here is an objective, teach it. It is very open ended. Many teachers struggle with it because there was no way to go, no one had anything. (Hana)" As the above statement indicates, teachers have experienced some difficulties without sample applications. But the same teacher said that she had overcome these difficulties in time and stated how the situation changed:

At the beginning it was very difficult. But I think now while I don't agree with some of it, I think having an objective and being approach writing in different ways is quite liberating. But at the same time I do think the level of challenge is mismatched to potential of the children. (Hana)

So, choosing the course materials, resource books and using different kinds of methodologies in the courses can make positive effects on teachers' professional lives.

In England, the information that academy schools have more freedom in the application of national curriculum is particularly located in the texts published by the government. Therefore, I can say that to be able to make some changes in curriculum and the increase in teachers' role in this process has been associated with the turning of local maintained schools into academies. However, teachers both working in

academy schools and the others stated that the functioning of this process is not like that it is said although technically there is such a situation.

You can change the curriculum but you still have to meet the floor targets. There are limits to your freedom. You are be able to meet the DfE targets. You can choose not to do but you will be stupid to do that. Technically there are a lot of things you could change. But if you cannot the floor targets, your sponsor can change and DfE can give a different one. So, there is not really any independence. In reality if you are a normal school, you have very little control on your work. Because the funder has also control what you are doing in the school. For instance, we wanted start an engineering program at this school. But you can't have a good degree in the league tables with that program. So the league tables and the demanding of DfE influence the curriculum. So the subject you want to apply will not meet the expectations and it will be under pressure. (Adel)

So although it seems that there is some space for teachers to change curriculum, other mechanisms such as standardized testing prevent relative freedom of teachers.

Accountability Measures: Expanding Control with Standardized Testing

Standardized testing which is applied in various levels from primary school to the end of secondary school in England plays an important role in the transformation of educational services and the control of teachers' work to reach "accountability" targets. The effort to achieve success in standardized tests lead to the embodiment of not only curriculum but also all of the practices at school in order to be successful in these exams.

They are very restrictive. Schools have to change their methods and teaching according to testing regime. These tests are connected school league tables and target settings. There is a requirement for schools to be successful. Preparing children for the tests is an obligatory situation. It diminishes the curriculum. There is a big pressure on children. (Nina)

The testing regime functions as an important mechanism for the expansion of competitive and enterprising culture. In addition to this, it leads to increased control over teachers by providing measurement of their performance. As it is indicated in the above statement, in England schools and teachers organize their teaching style and methods, and limit the curriculum in order to be successful in the standardized tests. Both schools and teachers focus on the subjects that will bring success in the exams. For instance, Barbara referred to the narrowing of the curriculum as follows: "Some schools focus on only English and maths to be successful in these tests". Angela also stated the increased focus on maths and English lessons: "Especially maths and English student books have to be checked regularly. These core subjects are important in national tests. There is a little space for other subjects such as history, music, art. They are less taught."

The success of the schools is published through league tables in England and various sanctions are applied to them according to their level of achievement. In case of failure of the school, Ofsted inspectors come to failing school and implement various sanctions according to success of the schools. One of these sanctions is turning of the school into a sponsored academy.

At a certain level of failure Ofsted inspection will take place. An Ofsted team come in to your school. If there is a particular deep in your statistics or your school is performing below a certain national standard, you may be given special measures for your school which means that Ofsted is coming into your school, inspecting, making recommendations coming back on a regular basis. You might be on school day notice to improve which is another level of imposition that you have to improve your performance within a certain period of time. (Nina)

For that reason, the head teacher and senior management team are under pressure because of the school has to be successful in league tables and achieve the standards, and the teachers feel that pressure. Therefore, the running of the school is controlled centrally via inspections on the one hand and expectations of market via school choice form this process on the other. So the control on the schools and therefore over the teachers are felt clearly.

Everyone is quite worried about inspections. Everyone has to check their works. Markings, paperwork need to be done. They must be ready. The issues that Ofsted want must be outstanding. All of these processes have negative impacts on staff. (Valencia)

When the school has a successful position in league tables, the relationships in schools are shaped in a more positive atmosphere. In parallel with the decreasing number of inspections carried out by Ofsted, the

control and pressure on staff decrease relatively. But this time the teachers are forced to work at the same pace to maintain the achievement of the school. These schools become a model that teachers of failing schools can visit and take advice.

Parents are really interested in league tables. Key stage 1 and 2 are defined in Ofsted reports. So this report shows your school's performance. If your school is outstanding, it means you are not inspected by Ofsted for a long time, it means it's a celebration in the school. We have special day and time. It means staff from other school will come to see your practice, what you are doing. It means that you achieved a high goal. If you are a good school, it is great. But you have to keep that, you got to maintain that. So you have some pressure to maintain your status. (Farah)

The mechanism functioning through league tables increases the competition between schools and puts them in order through standardized tests. Test results provide information to the actors in the field of education on the one hand; they allow the central structure to intervene to the schools based on this information on the other. So, the testing regime plays an important function in controlling and shaping the everyday practices at school. The school board takes various measures to increase the success and these measures constitute an important mechanism for monitoring and suppressing teachers.

Teachers' work is monitored by the senior management team and some obligations are expected from teachers so that the school can get a high level of success at the standardized tests. One of these is marking the student books in order to control their studies. Teachers are expected to write comments and reports about this process. In this way, some precautions are taken to increase the success and standardization is tried to be established. These operations done by teachers are also monitored by senior management team or head teacher via controlling the students' books. Teachers working in academies feel that pressure much more than maintained schools. Because, in academies, the success in league tables is accepted as the basic aim and the senior management team takes some precautions to meet the targets. Edward who has worked in both of the school types referred to this issue as follows:

I worked in an academy previously. It was very punitive in terms of observations etc. There were lots of pressures on performance and meeting targets. (...) I think the intention in academies is fault. Now as working in a community based school in that minute means that the focus is on more on the students and unity of learning.

Another control mechanism on teachers is observations to make teachers work in line with the accountability requirements. Although the frequency of observations changes from school to school and according to teachers' subjective position, they are done with a frequency of between two and six times in a year. The week of the observation that can be done by the head teacher or a person from senior management team is known but the time and class are not known by the teacher. Therefore, this process works as a panopticon mechanism on teachers.

There are observations twice a year. Head teacher or somebody from the senior management team observe you. You know the week that they come but you do not know the lesson or the time. They all come in for 20 minutes to half an hour. They look through your books, children's books. They take any book and have a look out. They check what you are doing in the classroom. They watch your teaching. They talk with children what they are doing. They check the developments and give feedbacks to you. We also have the governors walk around. They might come in. They come just for five minutes and go another class, then another class. A parent governor also can come and watch you. (Farah)

Keeping the teachers under surveillance in this way on the axis of accountability, measurement of their success in order to determine their positions according to the set targets constitute performance evaluation and pay process. Book scrutiny, the data obtained from assessments and observations allow the determination of teachers' performance and their salary. Teachers try to present some measurable things to prove their work. This subjective assessment process is highly unfair according to a significant proportion of teachers who we interviewed.

We are observed six times a year. We are observed by the head teacher and the school improvement officer. It could be with two people. They are done half termly, which goes through performance management. We have a triangular system which includes the book marking check, book scrutiny, data and lesson observations. We have to meet to criterias for all those sections before we can get our pay rise. Observations in my opinion are quite subjective because that would depend on who is observing you. They

are looking at the behaviour of the class, learning environment, learning objectives that the children engaged. We are evaluated and graded according to these criterias. There are four levels for our observations. (Rachel)

In particular, the head teacher and the senior management team of the school which has failed in the league tables are under pressure due to inspections. This is reflected in the relationships within the school hierarchically and teachers feel this pressure. Although the evidences about the work of teachers aren't requested by the inspectors officially, the head teacher wants to see these evidences as they are indicated in the above statements.

The regulations related with NPM and the accountability approach created through standardized testing regime have increased the control on teachers and also resulted in a large increase in workload. Teachers in England indicate that they work very intensive due to excessive data collection. For instance, Alfred referred to the issue as follows:

This September in my school they instituted new skills work, all year marking and assessment policy for key stage 3 and 4. In a couple of weeks, teachers realized that there is a huge amount of mental work to do. So everybody started to count the hours. So, marking books by using different club pens, setting certain homework that everybody has to do every week in this year. The head of the department wanted to see the results of assessments; which classes performing in which ways. The classes are 22 hours but with these works teachers are working more than sixty hours. (...) I reduced my work voluntarily because I was physically and mentally exhausted. It affected my life. When I was teaching full time, one of the reasons of reducing my working hours is this. Because there is too much intensification and lack of autonomy. (Alfred)

So another important mechanism that increases the workload is expanding assessment process due to standardized testing and paperwork. It can be mentioned that the technological developments have reduced the increasing workload relatively due to standardized testing. It both allows course preparation process, plans, programs to be made in less time and also facilitates classroom activities and control of students' works. But at the same time it increases the workload with regular data input process.

Every classroom has a smart board. Every teacher is given a laptop and iPad. iPads are for tracking children. You can access the learning objectives and you can easily see who achieved and when they achieved as well. You can take photographs their work as well to support assessments at the end of the year. (...) It's difficult when you sit down to plan something you've never talked about before. I'm just trying to find something about them. It's always very useful to see something the people have done before. So, I use a lot of internet resources. (...) Showing something is much easier on smart board. It's really helpful for the teaching process. You can change something on it, you can show diagrams much simpler. It is not the answer to everything. (Hana)

Technology usage strengthens the team work by providing commonization of school activities. But on the other hand, emerging technologies and team work rising together with technologies harm the individual autonomy of teachers and limit the use of their authorization on the work. Hence, some teachers have also pointed out that the technology should be used consciously.

I always plan on the computer. We use smart boards in the classroom. I prepare smart board resources on the computer. So there is a big change in courses with the technology. Some of my colleagues have difficulty to do this. I feel more competent by using technology but sometimes it directs you. I think we have to know what we are doing. (Farah)

It should be noted that standardized testing, academisation, national curriculum, increasing workload and NPM have changed school culture and the relationships between teachers. Measuring and comparing the school performances to meet the accountability targets have increased the pressure on teachers and damaged the relationships greatly between them.

The Challenge to the Surveillance and Market Mechanism

Most of the teachers have negative feelings against the reforms causing an increase in surveillance, deskilling and the loss of autonomy. However, this often does not go beyond compliance and grumbling. They have been adapting to new working conditions in time, but not easily and while doing this they use their own ways individually. Teachers follow some strategies due to more powerful sanctions and centralized control on teachers via league tables and inspections. Many teachers feel themselves under pressure and live powerful stress due to heavy workload that appear on the axis of standardized testing. Some of them

change their schools; some change working hours as it is stated in the previous statements and sometimes some of them are able to resign due to huge pressure.

You have to work hard to go well. So there is a lot of pressure. If students don't go well, what happens? What can you do to get them better? One of the teachers in my department is off the work because of the stress. He hasn't got very good grades. There was a lot of pressure on him. He hasn't improved as expected. (Rapunzel)

Teachers see teacher trade unions as the only way of protecting and improving their rights and education. They are conscious about the changes taking place through activities of teacher trade unions. They are important tools for teachers to gain power at the school and obtain their rights.

If you are in trouble, they give you good advice and legal help. In terms of the difficulties from the government they do good job. But in general they are not good enough if we think the recent developments in education. There are different unions. These unions unite I think to bring a standard in education. (...) Personally after the developments I'll try to join all the activities, protests of the union in the future and be more active to stand for education. (Rachel)

Teacher trade unions do certainly very good job defending teachers' rights. I think the unions across the country are weak under the conservative government. I think they do less than they have done in the past. The opinions of unions are quite low amongst the general population. And the lack of understanding what they do and what they want is critical. If you ask people what unions for, they will say so that the teachers can strike. I think there must be more than that to represent the people at school. In my experience unions are to fight to detrimental things. There are different political views. To come together for unions sometimes is really difficult situation (Hana).

Because of the teachers are employed on a contractual basis in England, teacher trade unions generally have followed economic strategies and their function has always been important to win teachers' pay and conditions. But they are not effective enough to empower teachers as the above statements indicate. Alfred also stated this as follows:

If they were effective, we wouldn't live these changes in education now, we wouldn't be an academy, and we wouldn't have performance related pay. Increasing the school representatives is really important. If we know we need to do, we can do something.

Teachers who join to the unions as a formality after starting to work expect the unions to be more active. Because they see the radical changes in education and experience the disadvantaged working conditions that have negative impacts on their life. For example, Valencia stated this as follows:

There are quite negative changes. (...) When I first started, I haven't got very much information about unions. I don't know which one I choose. But I know that I have to choose one. My current union is a little bit cheaper. They are also quite passive. So I thought that I could continue with this one. They don't tend to strike. I was happy with this. But now I'm considering leaving. Because the more I'm teaching the more I understand the changes happening in education and how they are affecting me. I don't want to be a member of a passive union (Valencia).

Although the teachers have some negative feelings, almost all of them pointed out that being organized in unions is very important to improve education and teaching. They believe that they can change the marketized and controlled school culture that affects the working conditions negatively when they are organised.

CONCLUSION AND COMMENTS

Global educational changes have been experienced in many parts of the world from management processes of education to the implementation of the curriculum, from teachers' working conditions to the employment types. However, all these changes can take different forms depending on the local dynamics, country-specific economic and social conditions. Despite the various changes in education in England, the effect of decentralized tradition continues and this provides teachers to participate to the decision-making process technically more. But with the increasing control on teachers with testing regime, national curriculum and inspections, they cannot participate in to the decision-making process sufficiently.

One of the basic mechanisms that enable teachers to participate in decision-making processes at school is governing bodies. But the problems in the functioning of the governing bodies prevent teachers from being sufficiently active in school management. The attitude of the school management team is important in the participation of teachers in to the management process. However, the education process is controlled by the central government or market beyond the school management (Ball, 1998; Gray and Whitty, 2010). So the role of staff relationships inside the school in shaping the educational process has been declining. As Ball and Youdell (2007) stated, professional-ethical systems of decision-making in schools have been weakened, broken-down and at the end replaced with the entrepreneurial-competitive ones. With the rise of New Public Management, the head teachers started to play a key role in the organization of educational processes. Of course, there are some structural conditions that require the head teacher to act in accordance with the defined objectives. However, it is possible to say that teachers can act more actively with the democratic attitude of the head teachers and the management model they apply at the school. Teachers want to join decision making process and play a role in shaping of the education in the change process. For that reason, they want to work with a head teacher and senior management team allowing their voices to be heard.

Although running of the school and the participation of teachers to the decision-making processes show some differences partially depending on the attitude of the senior management team, there are some structural factors that over determine this. It can be mentioned that there is an increasing centralized control on curriculum (Ball, 2008; Muller at all, 2009). Teachers stated that the national curriculum is highly prescriptive and doesn't let them be creative in the lessons. However, they can act freely in the selection and the use of course resources to one degree. But other mechanisms such as standardized testing prevent their relative autonomy on the application of the curriculum. It plays an important role in shaping the educational activities. Au (2008) argues that standardized testing influences curricular structures negatively. Because standardized tests define what is regarded as legitimate knowledge. In addition to this, in many studies it has been shown that the standardized testing narrows the curriculum and teachers act according to the content of standardized tests in their curricular practices (Au, 2007; Jones, 2007; Reay and William, 1999). The results of this study also suggest that the standardized tests set the practices of the teachers and narrow the curriculum.

Standardized tests are used as an important mechanism to achieve accountability targets. Schools are subjected to sorting through official league tables in England; this plays an important role in determining how the school will be structured in future. Schools that are not successful in the tests are converted into academies. Before the conversion, there is an increasing pressure on schools through inspections, leading to the changes of educational practises. According to the results of this study, measuring and comparing the school performances to meet the accountability targets increases the pressure on the head teacher and senior management team. This leads to increased pressure on teachers to increase students' test scores. The school board takes various measures to increase the success and these measures constitute an important mechanism for monitoring and suppressing teachers. Teachers' work is monitored by the senior management team and some obligations are expected from teachers so that the school can get a high level of success at the standardized tests. So, direct observations done by the head teacher or senior management team are important pressure mechanisms on English teachers. Besides, the main source of this pressure is Ofsted whose inspections create control on all staff on the axis of school success.

Teachers have experienced a significant increase in their workload along with the standardized testing and centralized inspections (Easthope and Easthope, 2000; Williamson and Myhill, 2008). Standardized testing, book scrutiny, data entry on the axis of accountability targets based on measurement and standardization are basic mechanisms that increase the teachers' workload in England. Increasing workload is one of the most important issues that teachers complain about and some of them resign due to huge pressure. I can say that teachers working in academies feel more pressure due to competition between these business types of schools. In this sense, it should be emphasized that there is a radical transformation in the meaning of accountability in the last decades. The accountability based on measurement stands out much more than the democratic one based on community involvement. The running of the schools based on the accountability targets has also changed the relationships between school components. Increasing

workload, hierarchical relationships and the introversion of the departments negatively affect the professional solidarity relationships in schools and lead to the atomization.

All of the mechanisms including increased regulation and surveillance of teaching have been eliminating teachers' relative autonomy. On the one hand the acting of teachers as a collective agent in school has been declining; on the other hand they have lost their power to make decisions on curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. So, there is a need for regulations that create new opportunities for teachers to reflect their ideas on their work and join decision-making mechanisms in the field of education. Therefore, the only way for the improvement of teaching is to provide the power and responsibility for teachers to think on education, investigate and participate in decision-making processes. This can be possible via their organizations.

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