GOVERNANCE IN EDUCATION

Stocktaking Governance reforms and initiatives over the last two decades

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Johannes Kepler Universität Linz
OVERVIEW

- Governance studies - concepts and analytic strategies
- Modernization policies: Recent governance reforms
  - School autonomy and school based management
  - Evidence-based governance reforms
- Research on governance reforms
GOVERNANCE STUDIES - CONCEPTS AND ANALYTIC STRATEGIES

‘a general analytical framework for studying all kinds of coordination problems among actors’ (de Boer et al. 2007, 138)

- regulation of systems
- production of system-specific performance
TRADITIONAL CONCEPT OF "REGULATION": GOVERN (AND ADMINISTRATE)
DIMENSIONS IN GOVERNANCE STUDIES

(1) Multitude and diversity of actors
   (vs. only politics + administrative staff)
DIMENSIONS IN GOVERNANCE STUDIES

(1) Multitude and diversity of actors

(2) coordination of action (vs. direct „steering“)
COORDINATION OF ACTION

How do actors coordinate their actions?

- *observation*
- *influence*
- *negotiation* (Lange & Schimank)

- ‘*classical macro-models of societal coordination*’: bureaucracy (or hierarchy), market, community, networks
- ‘medium-level’: specific governance regimes
COORDINATION OF ACTION: FORMATION OF STRUCTURES

- „relatively sustainable coordination“
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>rules</th>
<th>(material and immaterial) resources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>actors</strong></td>
<td>motives, readiness, intention, values, worldviews etc. of actors</td>
<td>competence, knowledge, abilities, action procedures, routine</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>„structure“</strong></td>
<td>law, circulars, contracts, explicit instructions, code of conduct, „unwritten law“, informal rights, custom and habits etc.</td>
<td>money, time, competence, space etc.</td>
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</table>
DIMENSIONS IN GOVERNANCE STUDIES

(1) Multitude and diversity of actors
(2) coordination of action
(3) multi-level system:
   re-contextualisation
   (Fend 2006)
MULTI-LEVEL SYSTEMS

■ Crucial problem: cross-border coordination between systems levels
■ Plans and blue-prints for a governance reform are ’structural offers’
  = rules and resources, which are inserted in the transactions of a school system
■ ‘Taking up’ these structural offers → constructive and productive features:
  re-contextualisation (Fend 2006):
  □ translate structural offers into action and structures
  □ appropriate to the specific logic of action and to the work conditions of
    their particular level
DIMENSIONS IN GOVERNANCE STUDIES

In an empirical perspective:

- Are these structural offers taken up at all?
- In what way are they transformed for the purposes of the specific level?
- Are new routinized coordination structures formed and what resources are invested in these structures?
- What results and side-effects are to be observed?
(4) Intentional action and (in parts) trans-intentional results

- Actors hold specific „governing intentions“
- Development processes may lead to results which do not reflect the intentions of any participant
  - *non-intentional action consequences*: trans-intentionality
OVERVIEW

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  - Contemporary governance issues
  - School autonomy and school based management
  - Accountability and evidence-based governance reforms
- Research on governance reforms
**Basic governance features**

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<tr>
<td>&gt; Increase accountability</td>
<td>&gt; Build governmental capacity to support educational governance</td>
<td>&gt; Strengthen educational regulations</td>
<td>&gt; Create effective accountability and support systems</td>
<td>&gt; Place greater focus on capacity-building in planning and policy-making</td>
<td>&gt; Accountability and evidence-based reforms</td>
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**Investments**

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**Relationship between central and decentral actors**

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<td>&gt; Support decentralization</td>
<td>&gt; decentralization → provide support through training and funding</td>
<td>&gt; Adopt a more decentralized governance model for education</td>
<td>&gt; Provide schools with more autonomy</td>
<td>&gt; Develop school leadership capacity</td>
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<td>&gt; Promote participation and decision-making at local levels</td>
<td>&gt; Promote participation and decision-making at local levels</td>
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**Civil society involvement**

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<td>&gt; Include civil society</td>
<td>&gt; Promote participation and decision-making at local levels</td>
<td>&gt; Encourage private participation in education provision and funding</td>
<td>&gt; Develop school leadership capacity</td>
<td>&gt; Promote participation and decision-making at local levels</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt; Increase civil society involvement in education</td>
<td>&gt; Increase civil society involvement in education</td>
<td>&gt; Encourage private participation in education provision and funding</td>
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**Relationship of public and private involvement**

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<tr>
<td>&gt; Fund private education</td>
<td>&gt; privatization → prevent inequity through public subsidy and oversight</td>
<td>&gt; Encourage private participation in education provision and funding</td>
<td>&gt; Encourage private participation in education provision and funding</td>
<td>&gt; Encourage private participation in education provision and funding</td>
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**Address inequities**

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<td>&gt; Address regional inequities in funding for public schools</td>
<td>&gt; Address regional inequities in funding for public schools</td>
<td>&gt; Address regional inequities in funding for public schools</td>
<td>&gt; Address regional inequities in funding for public schools</td>
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**Research and monitoring**

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<td>&gt; Improve research and information-sharing</td>
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<td>&gt; Encourage research and knowledge-sharing</td>
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<td>&gt; Strengthen data collection efforts and monitoring and evaluation systems</td>
<td>&gt; Strengthen data collection efforts and monitoring and evaluation systems</td>
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**International interventions**

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<td>&gt; Effectively coordinate international interventions and donor support</td>
<td>&gt; Effectively coordinate international interventions and donor support</td>
<td>&gt; Effectively coordinate international interventions and donor support</td>
<td>&gt; Effectively coordinate international interventions and donor support</td>
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**Special educational goals**

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<td>&gt; Emphasize consumer education</td>
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CONTEMPORARY GOVERNANCE ISSUES

- Basic governance features: accountability
- Relationship between central and local actors: decentralisation - decision-making at local levels, school autonomy and school based management, more resolute goals and evaluation from the central level
- Civil society involvement - relationship of public and private involvement: responsibility, participation, funds, inequities
- Address inequities
- Monitoring and research
School autonomy policies aim to
- expand the room for manoeuvre on the level of individual schools,
- but also their responsibility for results and development
- by ’decentralisation’ or ’deregulation’

General goals:
- strengthen the ’quality and effectivity of education in schools’ and ’responsiveness to local needs’
- ’polyvalent’ policy

In many countries autonomy policies have been complemented by *school-based management* or *managerialization of individual schools*
SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

- Wide variation in the levels of autonomy different countries and schools systems grant to their schools and individual teachers
- Percentage of relevant decisions taken on school level according to OECD (2008, 531; using expert data):
  - 90% in English and Dutch schools
  - 30% in German and Austrian schools
- Most countries have increased decision rights on school level
SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND SCHOOL BASED MANAGEMENT

- Analytic dimensions for comparing ‘autonomy’
  - Levels of the governance systems
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Central</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Sub-reg</th>
<th>Local</th>
<th>School</th>
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<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>86</td>
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<tr>
<td>England</td>
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<td>Belgium (Fl.)</td>
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<td>Australia</td>
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<td>Portugal</td>
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<td>Luxembourg</td>
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<td>Slovak Republic</td>
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<td>Norway</td>
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<td>Czech Republic</td>
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<td>Korea</td>
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<td>Italy</td>
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<td>France</td>
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<td>Austria</td>
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<td>Japan</td>
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<td>Germany</td>
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<td>OECD average</td>
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(source: Altrichter et al., 2015, using OECD, 2012, Data-Table Chart D6.6)
SCHOOL AUTONOMY AND SCHOOL-BASED MANAGEMENT

- Dominant coordination mechanisms
  - Optimization
  - Competition
  - Participation

- ‘early adopters’ of autonomy -> ‘democratic participation’

- recent reforms of autonomy -> accountability and new public management reforms (Eurydice 2007)
ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE REFORMS

- NPM
- Large-scale student performance assessments
ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE REFORMS

Basic features:

- Explicit and clear *communication of goals*, e.g. measurable performance standards, quality frameworks for inspections
- *Accountability for results*, by evaluating the performance of students and the results (and processes) of schools
- *Feeding back the results* to actors on various levels of the system → stimulate *quality improvement*
- *Involve stakeholders and wider public*
- *Link different levels of the system*: contract management
- *Modernise support systems*
ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE REFORMS

- quality in education is derived from the schools’ capacity to react quickly and in a well-focused way to goals and performance feedback
ACCOUNTABILITY AND EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE REFORMS

- role of professionalism in new governance models
  - evidence-based policies taking the “control of the content and processes of education” out the hands of an ‘uninformed’ teaching profession (Barber 2004, 9)
  - evidence-based instruments are in desperate need of a knowledgeable profession which is willing and able to make efficient and responsible use of its sophisticated instruments
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RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

(1) More autonomy does not necessarily result in better performance.

(2) More school autonomy may result in more competition of schools with adverse effects on educational equity.

- Responsive to local needs and potentials
- Compete with other schools for students and other resources
- More choices → potential ‘hierarchization’ of learning opportunities and increased selection
- Privileged students profit most, students with high need for care and assistance are deposited to ‘residual classes’ characterized by less careful teaching and support
RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

(3) More autonomy of schools is demanding for school leaders.

- The complexity of school management is increasing which calls for new management models and for involving of more organisation members in management duties

(4) More autonomy is an occasion and an impulse for community development.

- Chicago School Reform (Bryk et al. 2010, p. 216): Decentralisation was successful and led to „a genuine empowerment for local action“ when the new autonomous options were used for renewing the social relationships between school management, teachers, parents, and local community leaders.
RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

(5) In summary, the research on the effects of school autonomy is inconclusive.

- methodological variation and difficulties of these studies
- varying national, regional, and local strategies and conditions for autonomy reform
- Different constellations of autonomy measures can have varying effects in specific contexts and different implementations circumstances
- Research findings for evidence-based governance models are not more conclusive, and the most plausible explanation is the same as before
RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

data feedback:

- teachers and schools do not find it easy to derive action consequences from the information fed back to them by comparative standard testing or by school inspections
RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

- Framework of causal mechanisms of school inspections (Ehren et al. 2013):
  - By analysing inspection guidelines and documents, and
  - by interviewing representatives of Inspectorates in six European countries
  - a ‘programme theory of school inspection’ was reconstructed

- Intermediate causal mechanisms for inspection effects
  - setting normative expectations,
  - accepting and using feedback
  - being sensitive to actions of stakeholders
FRAMEWORK OF CAUSAL MECHANISMS OF SCHOOL INSPECTIONS (EHREN ET AL. 2013)
RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

- ISI-TL (Impact of school inspection on teaching and learning)-Project (Ehren et al. 2013)
  - 2200 primary and secondary school principals in Austria, Czech Republic, England, Ireland, Netherlands, and Sweden
  - online survey
  - three year longitudinal project
RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

■ ISI-TL (Impact of school inspection on teaching and learning)-Project (Ehren et al. 2013) – Results:

□ most inspection models promote school development through ‘setting expectations’

□ If they are effective in ‘setting expectation’, the likelihood is reduced that principals ‘pay attention to the inspection feedback’ and derive action strategies for school improvement
“As outlined by neo-institutional theories, the school's quest for legitimacy and the normative pressure created by inspection frameworks seem to be important drivers of schools’ reactions to inspection. The clearer the inspection communicates and the more normative pressure is underlying them, the more school leaders undertake and report self-evaluative and developmental activities. Such activities may similarly make inspection feedback obsolete as schools are already aware of their strengths and weaknesses or find it difficult to use feedback when it implies changes in set (teaching) processes and (school organizational) structures.” (Ehren et al., 2015)
RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

‘performance feedback’ is less effective under high-stakes conditions, since

- ‘good schools’ prepare before the inspection
- ‘schools with problems’ find it difficult to reflect on feedback and to develop sound actions strategies under the pressure created by adverse inspection results
RESEARCH ON GOVERNANCE REFORMS

- Prescriptive rather than evaluative value of inspections and performance testing → their main effect is before rather than after the evaluation (inspection or testing)

- To make evidence-based governance models work in a way that is beneficial to the overall system, improvement of educational quality is better thought of as a culture change rather than the implementation of a set of specific instruments (Brennan and Shah 2000)
Thank you
INDICES OF SCHOOL AUTONOMY

(a) countries ranked according to the amount of decisions on resource allocation on school level

(b) countries ranked according to the amount of curricular decisions on school level

(sources: OECD PISA 2009 Data-Tables, Annex B1, Tab. IV.3.5. und IV.3.6)