Global Pathways to Education

Cultural Spheres, Networks, and International Organizations

Edited by
Kerstin Martens
Michael Windzio

**Global Dynamics
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Global Dynamics of Social Policy

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This open access series welcomes studies on the waves, ruptures and transformative periods of welfare state expansion and retrenchment globally, that is, across nation states and the world as well as across history since the inception of the modern Western welfare state in the nineteenth century. It takes a comprehensive and globalized perspective on social policy, and the approach will help to locate and explain episodes of retrenchment, austerity, and tendencies toward de-welfarization in particular countries, policy areas and/or social risk-groups by reference to prior, simultaneous or anticipated episodes of expansion or contraction in other countries, areas, and risks. One of the aims of this series is to address the different constellations that emerge between political and economic actors including international and intergovernmental organizations, political actors and bodies, and business enterprises. A better understanding of these dynamics improves the reader's grasp of social policy making, social policy outputs, and ultimately the outcomes of social policy.

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On This Series

The intervention of states in fields such as health, social security, and work, dates back to the nineteenth century, and became more dynamic over time. Imperial Prussia, a social policy pioneer, first showcased its progress at the Paris World Fair in 1900: the Prussian exhibit drew large crowds eager to find out more about state pensions. Clearly, social policy had become a matter of great interest to states and citizens alike.

Other nations soon embarked on implementing discrete social policies, thus turning the twentieth century into a time of remarkable welfare state expansion. The end of World War II marked a new departure, as an increasing number of countries outside the Western hemisphere began to introduce social policy measures. States not only copied established forms of welfare, but often developed measures *sui generis* to meet their specific needs. While episodes of policy retrenchment and ruptures can be observed over time, recent developments point to an expansion of social policies in low-to-upper-middle-income countries of the Global South. Social policy has thus become a global phenomenon.

It is generally accepted that the state is responsible for welfare and that domestic politics and ideas have been a primary driver of its expansion. However, in an increasingly interconnected world, social policy is implemented at the national level but influenced by international developments and relations. It is shaped by trade, migration, war, and colonialism.

Just as people travel, policy ideas follow. These factors merit scholarly attention and demand interdisciplinary collaboration to generate new insights into the global dimension of social policy.

This is what the Global Dynamics of Social Policy book series sets out to accomplish. In doing so, it also contributes to the mission of the Collaborative Research Center 1342 (CRC) "Global Dynamics of Social Policy" at the University of Bremen, Germany. Funded by the German Research Foundation, the CRC leaves behind the traditionally OECD-focused analysis of social policy to stress the transnational interconnect-edness of developments.

The book series showcases scholarship by colleagues worldwide who are interested in the global dynamics of social policy. Studies can range from in-depth case studies, comparative work and large quantitative research. Moreover, the promotion of scholarship by young researchers is of great importance to the series.

The series is published in memory of Stephan Leibfried to whom our research on state and social policy at the CRC is indebted in countless ways.

Series Editors:
Lorraine Frisina Doetter, Delia González de Reufels, Kerstin Martens, Marianne S. Ulriksen

Acknowledgments

Praise for *Global Pathways to Education*

"A central problematic for education policy scholars has been to understand the relationships between path-dependent national factors and the global diffusion of ideas, particularly Western rationalism, in constituting education policy. This collection proffers an empirically-based account that accepts to some extent the isomorphism argument of neo-institutionalists, but argues that this is mediated by specific cultural orientations across and within nations, as well as by other national features. As such, this provocative collection offers challenges to all education policy scholars and to future research agendas."

—Bob Lingard, Professorial Fellow, *Australian Catholic University and Professor Emeritus, University of Queensland, Australia*

"This bold new book, edited by Kerstin Martens and Michael Windzio, investigates how Western ideas and institutional practices have diffused globally—and why their uptake varies across culturally distinct groups of countries. Early chapters focus on patterns of isomorphism across nations while later chapters provide important new evidence on the roles played by international organizations in the transmission of Western educational ideas and models. Later chapters provide important new research on familiar international organizations such as the OECD, the World Bank, and UNESCO—while introducing us to the roles played by two educational IOs that are less frequently studied, SEAMEO (the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organization) and ICESCO (Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). In a rich dialogue with the work of John Meyer the book shows convincingly how both isomorphic diffusion and cultural variation shape global governance in education."

—Karen Mundy, Professor, *University of Toronto, Canada*

"This is a highly important and timely edited collection on a topic of remarkable and growing significance. The book brings together the work of a dynamic research team, whose writing and influence in the field of transnational education governance cannot be over-stated. Well-theorised and featuring a plethora of empirical analyses from a range of policy actors and contexts, this book is thoroughly recommended for students and scholars interested in the field of education policy and governance in Europe and globally."

—Sotiria Grek, Professor, *University of Edinburgh, UK*

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Abbreviations

ABEGS	Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ALECSO	Arab League Cultural, Educational and Scientific Organization
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
BIOTROP	SEAMEO Tropical Biology
CEPII	Centre d'Études Prospectives et d'Informations Internationales
CERI	Centre for Educational Research and Innovation
CPE	Cultural Political Economy
EFA	Education for All
EU	European Union
ERGM	Exponential Random Graph Model
ESCS	Economic, Social and Cultural Status
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
FTA-WTO	WTO Free Trade Agreements
FMI	Fowlkes-Mallows Index
GAP	UNESCO Global Action Programme
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
IBRD	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ICESCO	Islamic World Education, Science and Culture Organization
ICSID	International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes
IDA	International Development Association

IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IGOs	Intergovernmental Organization
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ILSAs	International Large-Scale Assessments
IOs	International Organizations
ISESCO	Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIGA	Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency
MOI	Medium of Instruction
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NIH	National Institutes of Health
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OEEC	Organisation for European Economic Co-operation
OIC	Organization of Islamic Cooperation
OM	Optimal Matching
PAM	Partitioning around medoids
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
SAOMs	stochastic actor-based models
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAMEO	Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
SEAMES	SEAMEO Secretariat
SEAMOLEC	SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Centre
SEARCA	Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture
SQA	Sequence Analysis
STM	Structural topic models
UIA	Union of International Associations
UIS	UNESCO Institute for Statistics
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank

WDI   World Development Indicators
WEIRD   Western, educated, industrialized, resourceful, democratic
WTO   World Trade Organization
WWII   Second World War

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The Global Development, Diffusion, and Transformation of Education Systems: Transnational Isomorphism and 'Cultural Spheres'

Michael Windzio and Kerstin Martens

Introduction[1]

The purpose of the research presented in this volume is a wide-ranging analysis and explanation of the dynamics of emergence, diffusion, and change in relation to state education systems. Countries learn from each other due to traveling experts and the exchange of personnel. This is an essential characteristic of modernity, despite the tradition having a long history dating back to Medieval and Ancient times (Weymann 2014). In many respects, globalization and corresponding mobility have gained

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considerable momentum since World War II (WWII) and sped up even more from the 1990s onward and after the end of the Cold War. This was not only due to new techniques of global communication and the available traveling infrastructure of the time, but rather it was also attributed to the increased importance of transnational interlinkages, multinational companies, and international organizations (IOs). Today, economic transactions have become progressively organized at a global scale but also political claims for human and social rights, as well as ideas about the objectives of education and education policies are distributed globally (Martens et al. 2014). In this volume, we identify the global pathways to education and investigate the causes of change of education systems from a global and historical perspective. We argue that the emergence and development of education systems can be traced back not only to inherent national factors but also to the international diffusion of ideas.

In essence, we investigate empirically how the global diffusion of Western-rational educational content and organizational forms proceeds, as expected by neo-institutionalist theory (Meyer et al. 1997) and whether culturally specific developmental pathways dominate in different parts of the world. Taken together, the chapters in this book aim at three different goals: Firstly, by gathering event and network data, the global horizontal diffusion of state-organized education systems is investigated for most countries in the world. In particular, we analyze the timing when state regulation of compulsory schooling and state financing of the education system were introduced. Secondly, we map the extent of vertical interdependencies between IOs active in the field of education. IOs develop and spread educational models and standards globally, and these reach member states as well as non-member countries. By means of qualitative documentary analyses, expert interviews, and topic modeling, we investigate the educational models propagated by selected IOs. Thirdly, historical

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macro-data is employed to identify the national and international factors which determine the introduction of and changes to education policy. It is postulated that in addition to a country's affiliation with consolidated regional and cultural networks, state-internal demands on education policy originating from other subsystems or policy fields are also significant for both the development and the transformation of educational statehood.

In the following section, we present a short overview of existing research in this field concerning our work. We then present the theoretical framework of our study, which focuses on the tension between the global institutionalization of Western rationality, on the one hand, and culturally specific rationales for the development of education, on the other hand. In essence, we argue that the interplay between horizontal and vertical interdependencies, as well as the moderating effects of national factors are still neglected research topics when it comes to the global development of education policy. The final section provides an outline of the book structure and our empirical implementation.

Recapturing Research: Education Policy from a Global Perspective

In the context of the advancing globalization of economies and transnational interdependencies arising through migration (Castles et al. 2014), education systems are expected to maintain national economic competitiveness in world markets while also preparing their graduates for global competition in labor markets. Education is viewed as a 'social investment' as it creates an economically productive population stratum that can finance social policy while offering protection against the risks of unemployment and poverty (Allmendinger and Leibfried 2003). Furthermore, state education systems fulfill the fundamental task of socializing the population and inculcating literacy, thus producing well-integrated citizens (Nagel et al. 2010). Obviously, education is fundamental to T. H. Marshall's (1964 [1949]) "social citizenship". Consequently, state education systems are required to fulfill disparate

demands (Windzio 2013) and are simultaneously influenced by national and international factors. A country's economic performance, for example, influences the configuration of its national education system (Hanushek et al. 2013). Similarly, party-political ideologies (Ansell 2010) or religious actors (Yakhyaeva 2013; Brock and Alexiadou 2013)—especially in Central Asia and some African countries—influence the objectives of education policy. As we know from existing research, the performance of education systems also varies considerably between countries and their institutional structures (Teltemann and Windzio 2011, 2019; Hanushek et al. 2013).

Since the late 1970s, the emergence, development, and global diffusion of different types of education systems have become an object of inquiry in the social sciences (overviews include: Gift and Webbel 2014; Busemeyer and Trampusch 2011; Jakobi et al. 2010). In the context of mass inclusion, studies focus primarily on the structural changes to national education systems, the changing syllabuses for general education (Meyer 1977; Benavot and Riddle 1988), and expenditure on the public as well as private education (Wolf and Zohlnhöfer 2009). The influence of international organizations on national education policy has also been outlined, although mainly in case studies on single IOs (examples include Ydesen 2019; Finnemore 1993 and the contributions in Martens et al. 2007, Grek 2010; Mundy 2007; Bieber and Martens 2011). Various studies, for example, have demonstrated the influence of the World Bank's (WB) funds on the development and direction of national education systems in low-income countries (e.g. Mundy and Verger 2015). In contrast, international interdependencies that have grown historically over a long period of time, such as colonialism, may be significant, for example, for African countries south of the Sahara (Brock and Alexiadou 2013) and have received relatively little attention in studies on global diffusion of education.

Inspired by the neo-institutionalist thesis of the diffusion of modern forms of rationality and social order, some studies postulate that an analogous expansion of modern state educational establishments has occurred and that there is a long-term tendency toward global convergence in education systems (Meyer et al. 1992; Jakobi and Teltemann 2011). From the neo-institutionalist perspective, cultural patterns, rationality criteria, and institutional structures that emerged in the Occident are spreading

globally, partly due to the influence of IOs and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) (McNeely and Cha 1994; Finnemore 1993). Furthermore, formal organizations and bureaucratically organized states constitute an ideal basis for instrumental action and are likely to spread globally due to their efficiency (Meyer et al. 1997, 153). However, the global diffusion of guiding models for state organization can only occur if the structural precondition of suitable channels for relationships and exchanges is satisfied. Thus, it is not surprising that recent studies in international relations increasingly employ methods of network analysis that can, among other things, describe the linkages between countries constituted by membership in IOs or through migration (Maoz 2011; Vögtle and Windzio 2019; Windzio 2018; Windzio et al. 2019).

New approaches in diffusion research emphasize that peculiarities in network topologies, such as communities that are highly integrated internally yet isolated externally, can strongly influence the spread of innovation (Centola 2015). Cross-national relationships of exchange can be highly consolidated regionally, as seen in world regions or cultural spheres such as those formed among Islamic, Western, Central European, or West Asian countries. In contrast to Huntington's tension-laden "fault lines" (Huntington 1993, 29), cultures can merge or overlap margins while still pursuing their own developmental paths at the core (Knöbl 2007). In the field of education, the geographical and cultural dimensions of cultural spheres have not been sufficiently investigated as a potential moderator of isomorphism.

We assume that cultural spheres or regionally consolidated network topologies structure the diffusion of state education systems. In taking this approach, neo-institutionalism remains open to the diversity of cultures, and to resistance to the diffusion of Western rationalism (Finnemore 1996, 342). Possible consequences of heterogeneity are creative responses, recreations, and enrichments of the rationalist framework (Knöbl 2007, 43). However, previous work on the diffusion of state education has often been restricted to the realm of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 'world' (Meyer et al. 1992). Only recently, have scholars extended their perspectives to include more countries in the world than just the industrialized North (Barro and Lee 2013). Only with such a global perspective can regionally and culturally specific pathways to education and education policy be detected.

Thus, the existing literature indicates that further research is required, for example, on the influence of horizontal interdependencies across countries and vertical interdependencies through IOs in the field of education. If education makes a significant contribution to the transmission of culture, the differentiation in various cultural spheres should influence the emergence and spread of national state education systems, as well as any changes in these systems. In addition, the kind and the extent to which IOs develop and spread ideas about education and education policy on a global scale has not been examined sufficiently. Also, the question remains if specific influences of IOs in individual cultural spheres can be established that possibly work against a global trend to isomorphism. Previous studies have mainly focused on the expansion of the nation-state as the starting point for universal education (e.g. Boli et al. 1985; Ansell and Lindvall 2013). The influence of IOs as providers of ideas and impulses for the developmental dynamics of education policy has largely been overlooked (one exception is Verger 2012). We expect that not only functional and transnational influences can be identified in globalization processes. In addition, we expect effects of regional-cultural consolidation in diffusion networks, ranging from identity-political countermovements to a possible global trend toward isomorphism.

In response to the previously mentioned desiderata, this volume seeks to build and expand upon the findings from previous research in several respects. In light of its theoretical perspective, our book is able to participate in macro-sociological debates on the reach and form of the diffusion of Western-modern rationality and forms of order (Krücken 2005). When appropriate, it is also able to trace empirically the significance of self-contained regional and cultural paths (Eisenstadt 1986; Knöbl 2007). We also relate to constructivist studies in international relations as we examine the potential of IOs to develop and spread ideas, values, and norms. By combining these fields and applying a wide set of methodological tools in this study, we align our research to current studies in global education governance (Karseth et al. 2021). In the field of education policy, it is crucial to analyze these specific paths because education is inextricably linked with the maintenance and reproduction of culture, history, religion, and identity. The decisive factors in the evolution, diffusion, and transformation of education policy will be further described in our theoretical framework, which follows in the next section.

Theoretical Framework: Transnational Isomorphism versus Cultural Spheres in Education

Long-term trends of globalization result from macro- as well as micro-processes. First and foremost, globalization implies that nation-states transfer political authority and governance capacities to international or supranational organizations. However, globalization is also driven from 'below' by transnational networks of politicians, experts, or migrants (Castles et al. 2014). From a sociological perspective, the content of global diffusion via transnational networks includes monetary transfer but also institutions, practices, routines, and taken-for-granted knowledge. In this sense, globalization implies a level of cultural convergence. The globalization debate is at the core of early sociological theory, when Max Weber (1972) described the evolution and diffusion of rationalization, beginning with Protestant sects in Europe and America in the seventeenth century. Interestingly, just a few years after the City of Boston was founded in 1630, the Massachusetts Bay Company enacted a law to finance primary schools with local taxes for the purpose of religious education (Brock and Alexiadou 2013). Although limited to a selective group, this early precursor of publicly financed education was invented in the colony. Much later, with the Education Act of 1870, the British government turned compulsory education into a public matter.

The theoretical debate on the global diffusion of occidental rationalism has prominently lasted until today, where it is represented by sociological neo-institutionalism (Meyer et al. 1997). We identify two broad theoretical strands in this debate. Proponents of the isomorphism thesis expect a global diffusion of Western rationalization that also affects education systems. Organizational forms and curricular content might become increasingly similar across the world in the long run. The cultural spheres concept, in contrast, focuses on different cultural clusters defined by religious characteristics, gender role orientations, language groups, civil rights, and rule of law. If two countries share a cultural characteristic, they establish a link in a network. The more cultural characteristics they share, the stronger they are tied to each other. This valued cultural

network is a fuzzy set typology of world cultures. It is the pipe structure through which education policies can spread around the globe. Its topology can moderate or also block the diffusion process (Centola 2015). The network comprises different pathways, even though the assumed general trend toward isomorphism, for example, in terms of compulsory schooling, is rather uncontroversial.

Transnational Isomorphism

The modern wave of globalization since the 1950s resulted from structural conditions without parallel in world history. Scholars in the social sciences observed the diffusion of organizational forms and knowledge at an unprecedented scale. These observations led to the theoretical concept of isomorphism (Meyer et al. 1997). Indeed, if some bureaucratic organizational forms are more efficient than others (Weber 1972), and if at the same time international organizations require certain standards of accountability from their member states, it is far from implausible to expect that these efficient forms achieve evolutionary success at a global scale. Nation-states are keen to adopt bureaucratic organizational forms as instruments for exerting authority in a way that guarantees predictable obedience and stability, without just relying on coercion and brutal force. In this regard, education has been crucial in the process of state formation (Green 2013).

Efficient and modern organizational forms are attractive in the fields of legislation, administration, policing, and law enforcement. Yet, since Bismarck introduced the social insurance system, most European policymakers are aware that social policy essentially contributes to the legitimacy of authority and to political stability in market-based economies. Contingencies in economic development pose serious risks to the labor force, particularly to the most vulnerable segments, for example, to the low-qualified working poor. As a result, social upheaval and political instability become more likely. Alternatively, neoclassical economists limit their concepts of social policy to the development of the individual (Allais 2012). Skill formation, labor market qualification, and professionalization—all of which require a sufficient amount of general

education—are supposed to reduce individual levels of vulnerability and increase economic productivity. Moreover, an increase in productivity increases the amount of the domestic budget to be redistributed through social policy programs. In this regard, education policy is either a specific form of social policy or a functional equivalent.

Social policy can be regarded as a crucial aspect of the 'one best way to organize' (Cummings et al. 2017) from the modern, democratic state's perspective. In this view, generating legitimacy by institutionalizing social policy is an effective approach to smooth government. At the very least, the normative expectation of rational and efficient authority is institutionalized in a state's environment. In addition, social policy is evaluated in global mass communication and by international organizations with respect to social justice and moral standards. If social policies are not in line with the institutionalized normative expectations, there will be considerable normative pressure to conform to these expectations (Meyer et al. 1997).

Bureaucratic authority depends on a minimum level of basic education among its inhabitants, who need a certain level of literacy to read and follow written instructions as well as legal regulations (Weymann 2014). Adopting efficient education policy, however, should also increase the employability of the labor force and thereby increase productivity, tax revenues, and the contributions to the social security system. Again, education organizations are expected to be accountable and reliable bureaucracies with a curriculum that should not be in conflict with the ideologies needed to provide belief in the legitimacy (Weber 1972) or the 'legitimacy myths' (Meyer et al. 1997, 160) of the institutionalized order. Liberal democracies and legal states that guarantee personal freedom to the individual require citizens who believe in the value of the respective institutions. Regarding these outcomes and the benefits of education policy, can we expect a global isomorphism in the forms and content of education systems? Perhaps it can be expected, even though education policy has a particular feature: It closely relates to the intergenerational reproduction of a society's culture and their collective identities, for example, ethnic, religious, or national, which all seem to have gained importance during the last three decades.

Cultural Spheres

Education strongly affects the intergenerational transmission of knowledge, national traditions, identities, and culture more so than other kinds of social policy, including family policy. Relational sociology agrees with the view that a particular culture is not an 'essence'; rather than being a stable entity, culture is embedded in a network of socially constructed elements and gains its identity from relations between these elements. For instance, the valuation of personal autonomy in one culture acquires its significance in relation to other cultures, just as the relationship with other socially constructed elements gives a culture its meaning. Rather than having clearly specified boundaries, elements of cultures are related to each other like fuzzy set clusters, as we know from social network analysis (Emirbayer 1997, 299; Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994).

Highlighting the challenges of global cultural differences instead of their benefits became increasingly controversial from the mid-1990s when Huntington (1996) responded to Fukuyama's optimistic view on the end of history (Fukuyama 1992). Huntington argued that future global conflicts would occur at religious–cultural 'fault lines' separating different civilizations from each other (Huntington 1996). His work has been accused of paving the way for anti-multicultural backlash because it focuses on cultural confrontation rather than on benefits due to diversity (Perry 2002). Yet, recent studies in evolutionary anthropology and psychology have emphasized the general importance of culture. Culture played a crucial role in human evolution and even today we are still a 'cultural species' (Henrich 2016). For example, early humans' niche construction was based on the social transmission of knowledge, for example, on hunting, toolmaking, and food preparation, which even affected humans' genetic disposition during evolution. Selective genetic adaptation created the human species whose members are incapable of existing as isolated individuals without an appropriate social and cultural environment (Henrich 2016). Human's gene-culture coevolution created us as 'norm internalizers', but this came at the cost of a tendency toward keeping social distance between cultural groups. Norm compliance and cooperation within groups, particularly in hunter-gatherer bands during

human evolution, was a competitive advantage. However, many social norms are non-obvious, and "natural selection took advantage of the fact that the cultural transmission pathways of social norms are often the same as those for other more observable markers, like language, dialect, or tattooing practices" (Henrich 2016, 201). Some cultural elements serve humans' coalitional psychology and exist for the sole purpose of signaling group membership and coalitional affiliation (Boyer 2018, 49).

In this view, humans are highly sensitive to sharing observable markers, which they interpret as indicators of sharing the same 'tacit' normative and cultural sub-universe that is crucial for their survival. Paradoxically, humans' inherent tendency toward outgroup hostility is a result of their deeply ingrained sociality. Since we strongly depend on the social-cultural and normative environment constructed by our group, any challenge toward this particular environment would reveal our social vulnerability. The sensitivity toward indicators of difference even became 'wired' in the neural hardware of our social cognition (Greene 2015; Berns and Atran 2012). Therefore, acknowledging culture as a crucial aspect of the human condition implies that cultural differences matter for the history and development of countries (Weber 1972; Rose 2019; Basáñez 2016).

Long before Huntington's work, cultural typologies were common in the field of Business Administration, particularly in the wake of Hofstede's groundbreaking study (Hofstede 1984; Lewis 2018, 121). Recent research based on the World Values Survey reveals cultural differences between countries with respect to values and personality traits (Alexander and Welzel 2011; Norris and Inglehart 2011; Schulz et al. 2019). Western people tend more toward individualism and independence, to impersonal pro-sociality (e.g. trust to strangers), and less toward obedience and conformity (Hofstede 1984; Henrich et al. 2010). In experimental studies on cooperation, Westerners respond more sensitively to sanctions against noncooperation than subjects from Athens, Oman, Russia, or Turkey, for example. The latter tend to regard sanctions as an insult and respond more often with repeated noncooperation (Bowles 2017, 138). From a global comparative perspective, Westerners are Western, educated, industrialized, resourceful, democratic (WEIRD) people and seem to be the exception rather than the rule (Henrich et al. 2010). Research on the WEIRD people supports Weber's notion of the Occident's

peculiar path. In line with Weber, anthropologists point to the importance of religious institutions and belief systems, but they suggest a different explanation: Westerners became WEIRD in the long run also because the Western Church imposed restrictive marriage policies. The Church "had become obsessed with incest and began to expand the circle of forbidden relatives, eventually including not only distant cousins but also step-relatives, in-laws, and spiritual kin" (Schulz et al. 2019, 2).

Cousin marriages were common in prehistoric societies around the world and resulted in large clans, which provided security for the individual in stateless societies. Communities were characterized by high kinship intensity and clan-like social organization. A clan's reputation determined its power and vulnerability as well as the fate of the individual. In turn, individual behavior represented the reputation of the clan, which is why social control of clan members and women, in particular, became a crucial aspect of clan politics (Weiner 2013, 35). Gellner (1994, 7) described this kind of social order as the "tyranny of cousins". In human history, collectivistic orientations and parochial altruism (Bernhard et al. 2006; Boehm 2011; Bowles 2017) were rather the norm, whereas relevant individualistic WEIRD cultures did not exist. Dissolving clan structures by marriage and family policies of the Western Church (not the Eastern Orthodox Church) cleared the way for the evolution of an individualistic and less conformist culture, where individuals were at the same time more fair and trusting toward strangers. Indeed, the length of exposure to the Western Church correlates positively with indicators of the WEIRD culture, but this exposure obviously differed historically around the world. According to these empirically justified arguments, it can be ascertained that cultural differences still matter today (Schulz et al. 2019; Basáñez 2016).

Cultural Spheres as a Limitation of Isomorphism?

Sociological neo-institutionalism is in line with the idea that humans live in and strongly depend on self-created social environments (Meyer et al. 1997). Personal identities, goals, and 'individual' decisions are based on narratives needed to develop the self-concept of a person who pursues the

narrative in a meaningful way. Many of us regard the personal narrative as unique, but such narratives and identities are institutionalized as taken-for-granted options in our social environments (Meyer 2010, 5). In the globalized world society, individuals and organizations are interested in common institutionalized standards when they interact across different national institutions. Due to the activities of international organizations, but also because of its organizational efficiency (Weber 1972), the modern Western-style bureaucracy tends to spread around the world (Meyer et al. 1997). By converging to the Western standard, organizational forms become more and more similar. Meyer's view is therefore in contrast to Huntington's idea of 'fault lines', which are assumed to clearly separate civilizations.

Given the remarkable cultural differences between societies concerning aspects such as gender roles, religious identities, individualism, narratives of ethnic origin, autonomy, or collectivism, the assumed global trend toward transnational isomorphism, in the form and content of education systems, would challenge the maintenance of global cultural diversity. Recently, however, policymakers have become more inclined to draw distinctions related to identity and culture (Fukuyama 2018). One indicator is the rise of right-wing populism in Western democracies; another is the increasing importance of identity politics from a global perspective. If the preservation of culture and identity became more important over the recent decades, we would expect differing cultures in the world to structure the diffusion of education systems, and thereby moderate—accelerate or delay—the isomorphic diffusion of modern education forms and content. If cultural spheres were still relevant today, our empirical study would find at least a moderate effect of cultural clusters on the diffusion of education policy. There might be different pathways to education, even though we expect global diffusion according to the theory of neo-institutionalism.

A crucial question is how to define and measure different global cultures? Inspired by existing cultural typologies, we rely on a set of countries' cultural characteristics, namely, indicators of political liberties, rule of law, gender roles, dominant religion, language group, government ideology, classification of civilization, and colonial past and apply methods

of two-mode network analysis to generate a fuzzy set typology of what we call 'cultural spheres'.

Figure 1.1 shows a two-mode network approach we use to measure 'cultural spheres'. A two-mode network consists of two different sets of nodes, in our case countries and their cultural characteristics. Countries 1, 8, and 9 share the binary characteristic A, which could be a language group, but 8 and 9 also share B, for example, the same dominant religion, which is why the similarity of 8 and 9 in the country-level projection is higher than, for example, between 1 and 8 (red edge in the right graph). Here, 'projection' means that the two-mode network is transferred into a network of countries, regarding shared characteristics as ties between countries. Since two countries are more similar to each other, the higher is the number of shared ties. The network is thus valued or, synonymously, weighted.

We hypothesize that the focus on the autonomous individual, liberty, fairness, and equity ingrained in the WEIRD culture is not always recognized and accepted as a role model for other cultures in the world (Haidt 2012). Instead of 'assimilating' toward the WEIRD, the issue of identity and identity politics has become increasingly important over the last several decades. In continuation, there might also be explicit defensive actions against isomorphism, particularly in the field of education.
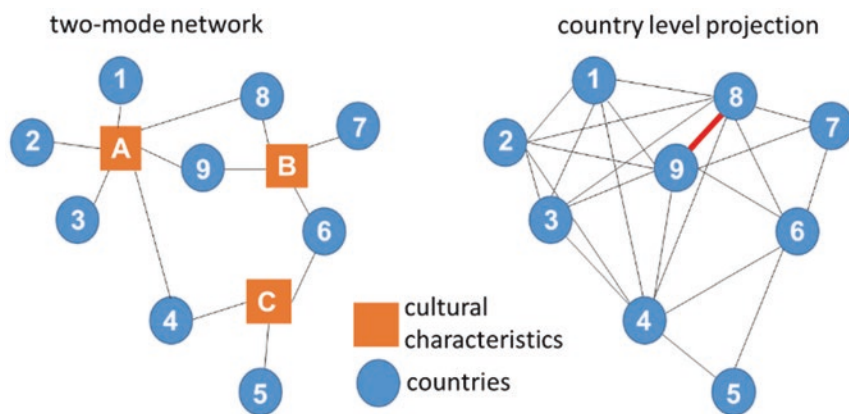
Fig. 1.1   Projection of the two-mode network on the country level

Education relates closely to a country's cultural heritage as well as its narrative about its history and identity. Therefore, cultural spheres may moderate the diffusion of educations policies in the shape of fuzzy boundaries between different cultural spheres, whereas policies might easily diffuse within a respective sphere.

Horizontal and Vertical Interdependencies Interlinked with National Factors

In our theoretical framework, culture and cultural spheres are crucial for the diffusion of education policy. Proceeding from the neo-institutionalist hypothesis, the postulated consequence of horizontal and vertical interdependencies would be a global spread of diffusion accompanied by isomorphism. Potential barriers to this diffusion, or decelerators, especially in the field of education, are constituted by national, regional, and culturally specific factors. Resistance, creative enrichment, and new creations can modify the diffusion process or even block it over the course of identity-political defensive reactions. Consequently, educational statehood can follow fully self-contained cultural and regional pathways into modernity. Viewed from a global perspective, the emergence and transformation of education systems depend on horizontal and vertical interdependencies as well as on factors within a given nation-state. Our concept of 'cultural spheres' implies that culture and cultural differences have an impact on the diffusion of education policy. We postulate that cultural-spatial consolidation in networks forms topologies that may counter trends toward global isomorphism in the field of education via horizontal interdependencies.

Some older IOs such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) emphasized the importance of education for social policy to improve quality of life early on and thereby trying to impact upon education policy via vertical interdependencies. The propagated role of education can be investigated in greater detail at the level of the IOs by determining which IOs consider education to be either an important social policy or an important developmental policy in a given country. IOs can universally propagate guiding principles if they can claim global validity. IOs can also pursue

culturally or regionally specific goals, which means that they concentrate their education policy activities either on a particular region or on a specific cultural group so that they are not transferable to the international community. For instance, the OECD with its Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study claims worldwide validity for the 'what works' examples, and in doing so, influences small countries in terms of education policy reform as well as nations that did not take part in the PISA study (Niemann and Martens 2018; Bieber et al. 2014).

However, national factors can mediate horizontal and vertical interdependencies. Economic specialization in the international division of labor and production can also correspond to path-dependent special developments in national education systems, namely, when the economic specialization of a country requires a particular set of competencies in the population (Hidalgo 2015). The same is valid for factors such as the extent of ethnic-cultural diversity or the degree of democratization or autocratization in a country. In contrast to 'classical' social policy, often introduced by some autocratic regimes to close a structural legitimation gap, other autocracies often restrict the expansion of education to maintain the elite's position of power. In both cases, authoritarian regimes use education to reproduce legitimacy (Ansell 2010), which is why the content of state-organized education is also relevant, such as teaching universal ethics, religious instruction, or Marxist-Leninist philosophy in the formerly socialist countries.

One distinctive feature of education as a policy field is that education is intimately entwined with the reproduction of culture and collective identity and as such can function as a set of 'switches', in Max Weber's sense, that determine the course of developmental paths (Knöbl 2007) specific to 'cultural spheres'. In addition to spatial proximity, belonging to world religions, cultural spheres, or particular IOs produces relevant linkages between states that can facilitate a diffusion of education policy. Thus, in many African countries, the influence of Islam on the national education system is evident, similar to the role of *zakat* in social policy (Richardson 2004). Especially in remote rural regions, the Koran schools ('maktabs') provide the only accessible primary education, while in other regions they compete with the official state primary schools (Brock and Alexiadou 2013, 137). While the 'maktabs' are religious educational

establishments rather than state schools, the substitutive role they play in certain contexts could counter the adoption and spread of modern Western primary education. Furthermore, the importance of religious education in Central Asia has increased during the post-Soviet period, for instance, in Uzbekistan (Yakhyaeva 2013). Nevertheless, even during the Christian and Islamic colonialization of African countries, the education systems imposed by the colonial powers were being challenged at the level of local communities, mainly by preexisting local cultures, languages, and social structures. However, the diffusion of education policies and innovation may be stronger in other cultural spheres such as Latin America and East Asia.

In sum, our research interests lie in the complex tension between global diffusion (i.e. isomorphism), on the one hand, and subclusters that form in certain regions or 'cultural spheres' and determine particular pathways, mediated by national factors, on the other hand. We investigate the extent to which globally active IOs spread universal ideas about education; how the culturally or regionally specific orientation of IOs limits the global diffusion of education policy; and how it may restrict it to culturally or regionally specific network clusters. Furthermore, we expect culturally specific or regional IOs consolidate the diffusion network within a 'cultural sphere' and thus influence the opportunities for and speed of diffusion. Our hypothesis is that the introduction and configuration of state education correspond to world regions and cultural clusters characterized empirically by consolidated relations and dynamic subnetworks. The focus of our explanation of these patterns lies on territorial and national factors, including culturally shaped objectives and the imperative of maintaining power, urbanization, the growing demand for competencies enabling global economic and technological competition. These factors are mediated by vertical interdependencies, primarily through the programs propagated by IOs for generating human capital. We argue, in addition to the horizontal diffusion processes, IOs—some of which are culture-specific—also affect national policy fields in a top-down fashion. Thus, the emergence, transformation, and development of education systems can be linked to national factors and the international diffusion of ideas. This diffusion of ideas occurs within a network of relationships that countries participate in and which spreads ideas arising from impulses

given by IOs. The following questions are considered relevant: Do education systems spread via the cultural spheres network? Which predispositions within countries and which spatial-structural factors affect the likelihood of adopting a characteristic? Consequently, can patterns be found in the diffusion paths of education systems and in the impacts of cultural-specific IOs?

Research Design and Empirical Approach

For the purposes of this book, we apply a mixed-method approach. We draw on a relational approach to describe cross-national horizontal interdependencies by means of combined network and diffusion analysis and to analyze their policy effects. Although this approach is gaining in popularity (on healthcare policy see Valente 2015), it has rarely been applied to the field of education. In the formation of national education systems and their reform dynamics, including possible turning points, abstract characteristics can diffuse through networks. Examples include high standardization, low stratification, and sufficient resources (Teltemann 2015, 131). Nevertheless, more tangible characteristics of education systems also spread through networks between nation-states, such as compulsory schooling, mass education, and changes in the minimum duration of schooling.

We investigate vertical interdependencies by analyzing the influence of IOs as providers of ideas and impulses for the developmental dynamics of education policy. Previous research on vertical interdependencies showed that the transnational effects generated by internationally operating actors can exert a considerable influence on the transformation of national education policy—at least for the PISA study and the Bologna Process (Martens et al. 2010, 2014). In the PISA study, the OECD highlighted various deficits in national education systems and propagated guiding principles for educational reforms (Bieber et al. 2014). Many of the 80 countries that participated in PISA have initiated reforms of their national education systems based on recommendations of this international comparative study. By means of a systematic qualitative comparison of the programs pursued by IOs that are active in the field of education, we are

able to more precisely discern the degree of vertical interdependence between education policies.

The research is implemented in three areas of work to explore the transformation of education systems, namely, the compilation of a global data set and the analysis of diffusion processes, networks, and types of education IOs.

Compilation of a Global Data Set on Education Systems

For the purposes of this work, we compile a global data set incorporating the systems of school education in potentially all countries. The information from these data sets is augmented by the series *Education Around the World* (Brock and Alexiadou 2013), which describes the education systems of individual countries up until 2013, including their historical dynamics. Historical developmental processes are also described in the *International Encyclopedia of National Systems of Education* (Postlethwaite 1995) and in greater detail within the volumes of the *International Handbook of Education Systems* (Cameron 1983). Thus, it is possible to assess the reliability of the data (e.g. on the date when compulsory schooling was introduced) by comparing several sources. Our aim is to systematically classify education reforms and to further develop existing theoretical models of the diffusion, development, and transformation of education systems. The diffusion of information through networks is analyzed using a logistic growth function that portrays the cumulative proportion of "adopters" who have accepted the information (Valente 1995; Rogers 2003). The estimation of the diffusion rate follows a procedure used in event history analysis (Windzio 2013).

The Analysis of Diffusion Processes and International Networks

In addition to the modifying effect of cultural spheres and world regions, we also consider factors at the level of the nation-state in the analyses of diffusion, such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or levels of

democratization. A concentration of network contacts in a given cultural sphere does not necessarily imply a simultaneous disintegration of the global network into components between which the individual nodes cannot reach each other. Rather, bridges would arise in the networks (Burt 1992), in this case between cultural spheres. Theoretically, topological structures in the form of "small worlds" (Watts 2004) would be conceivable, with maximal spatial reach of the diffusion being established based on short path distances. These structures arise from a high level of clustering and a low level of random linkages, which means that cliques or highly interconnected "k-plexes" (Newman 2010, 194) can be delineated, which in turn are connected by individual bridges. Spatially or culturally consolidated clusters can therefore produce "small world" networks at the global level.

Recent research on diffusion through networks shows that specific network topologies (such as a random network with overall short path distances or highly consolidated subclusters) considerably influence the likelihood that information is diffused. If, on the one hand, we take the case of innovations that are only adopted after sustained confirmation through repeated contacts, short average path distances promote diffusion. On the other hand, the number of overlapping group memberships is also relevant (Centola 2015); if, for example, countries are part of a specific cultural sphere and members of certain IOs where the IO memberships open redundant bridges to other cultural spheres. We expect that the strength of a given cultural sphere's influence is relative to the influence of universalistic intercontinental IOs (e.g. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)). These IOs can determine whether there is either a trend toward the global spread of Western-style education systems, as expected by neo-institutionalism, or whether systematic regional and cultural differences between education systems continue to exist, due to autonomous paths and other factors.

We expect that the introduction and spread of new organizational forms in the education sector at the global level proceed according to a diffusion model. For example, Wollons (2000) proves this idea with the example of the kindergarten, developed around 1850 by the German pedagogue Friedrich Froebel. Froebel trained teachers in Berlin, who then spread the idea to other countries, including the United States.

Japanese teachers imported it to Japan and from there it spread to China so that only 60 years later, "kindergartens were everywhere, including Africa and Asia, where colonial powers and missionaries introduced kindergartens to modernize local people" (Rogers 2003, 63). Since the education sector is closely interwoven with the cultural uniqueness of a given nation-state, creative new ideas and practices emerged during diffusion. Thus, Froebel's original socialist idea was modified and 'recontextualized' (Wollons 2000).

This example demonstrates the linkages between nation-states that facilitate diffusion can be present at several levels. Specialized actors enter into transnational contact, especially in cases where nation-states are actively searching for role models for their facilities or the transformation of their education systems. Even countries that were not involved in long-term colonial dependencies, such as China or Japan, actively sought exchange with European or North American education experts (Brock and Alexiadou 2013, 8). In addition to intentional contact between experts, nation-states are interconnected through close economic relations and membership in IOs, including in the fields of education and culture. As recent studies on diffusion and the transfer of policies have shown, the geographical proximity between nation-states can lead to mutual influence via various mechanisms (Obinger et al. 2013). Furthermore, networks of converging interests between countries may be formed based on their tendencies toward similar voting behavior in the United Nations (UN) (e.g. Voeten 2000). The analytical representation of the networks between countries can also be based on a combination of these characteristics. Thus, countries can be connected by their shared history under the same colonial power, even though they would otherwise not be connected because they are located in different cultural spheres or world regions.

Leitmotifs and Typology of International Education Organizations

In our work, we also analyze the guiding principles for education propagated by IOs and how linkages between education-focused IOs are constituted. Building upon earlier works of Bremen education policy

researchers (Nagel et al. 2010) we distinguish between two ideal types of education policy leitmotifs. Leitmotifs are understood here as a recurring conceptualized theme of the purpose of education. They are composed of ideas that establish (ontological) links between causes and effects (Goldstein and Keohane 1993). On the one hand, education's economic utility can be emphasized through a leitmotif. In this view, the formation of human capital and economic productivity is prevalent. On the other hand, education policy is a means to raise humanistic liberal citizens. In this view, the generation of responsible citizens and their ability for political and social participation is the focus. These types are not mutually exclusive; rather, they reflect the broad values education can have. Moreover, both perspectives on education can be applied to the individual level as well as to the collective or national level (Table 1.1).

Overall, 30 IOs have been revealed as being active in education policy (Niemann and Martens 2021). Of these, we select six organizations for detailed analysis. On the one hand, we look at three education IOs with the word 'education' in their names: UNESCO, Islamic World Education, Science and Culture Organization (ICESCO), and the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO). We refer to these as the *dedicated* education organizations. We expect these IOs to represent interests specific to education and orient their guiding principles less toward producing human capital. For UNESCO, the universalist principle of 'education as a human right' is in the foreground, whereas ICESCO and SEAMEO appear to propagate more culturally particularistic values. Second, the three leading IOs active in the fields of economics and labor, which also concern themselves with the education sector among their other range of tasks, are selected. We refer to these as

Table 1.1 Spectrum of education leitmotifs

	Economic utilitarianism	Humanistic liberal citizenship
Individual level	*Skill formation*: Focus on education as improving individual productivity	*Self-fulfillment*: Focus on education as a means for personal self-development
Collective level	*Wealth of nations*: Focus on education as boosting national economic growth	*Social right and duty*: Focus on education to ensure political and social participation

Source: Adapted from Nagel et al. (2010: 16), own account

derivative education organizations as they incorporated education into their activities under an economistic perception: the OECD, the WB, and the ILO. While the OECD represents the 'advanced economies', the WB provides loans to the Global South. The ILO is the worldwide operating special agency of the UN concerned with labor and tasked with promoting social justice as well as human and workers' rights. We assume these economically oriented organizations primarily take a human capital approach in their guiding principles for education. This selection also means that, on the one hand, three UN special agencies (WB, ILO, and UNESCO) form part of our sample. In these organizations all recognized states can become members. On the other hand, three IOs in our sample impose specific membership criteria, namely, a high level of economic development (OECD), religious affiliation (ICESCO), and geographical position (SEAMEO). Based on documents and expert interviews, the IOs' guiding principles and the modes of their diffusion over time are described, as well as the influence of other IOs (Table 1.2).

Our investigation also focuses on analyzing the centrality of the IOs as well as contextualizing them within the broader network of IOs. Research questions include: Which other IOs does the IO in question have close relationships to? If close relationships are present, are the guiding principles for education similar across the IOs involved? Biermann (2008) thus proposes three cooperative mechanisms for forming network relationships, namely, exchange of information, coordination of activities, and shared decision-making. Meanwhile, in the *Yearbook of International Organizations* (https://uia.org/yearbook), membership of an IO in the

Table 1.2 Typology of the education IOs

Membership \ Responsibility	Derivative education organizations	Dedicated education organizations
Open to any state		
Focus: Labor	ILO	
Focus: Education/culture		UNESCO
Focus: Development	World Bank	
Restricted by specific criteria		
Focus: Economic development	OECD	
Focus: Religion		ICESCO
Focus: Geographical position		SEAMEO

boards of other IOs, consultations between IOs, or even just mutual citations are recorded. With this data, network analyses can be conducted to calculate the local extent of centrality (i.e. as characteristics of the nodes in the network, e.g. "closeness centrality" or "betweenness centrality"; Wasserman and Faust 1994), and these results can be used to measure the structural prerequisites for the influence of one IO on other IOs. Nonetheless, such a network analysis is predominantly heuristic; we can investigate the question of what IOs in central network positions actually do, and if they exert a hegemonic influence, only by employing qualitative analysis in a second step.

Therefore, this work aims to analyze the diffusion processes and to investigate the linkages between IOs and the guiding principles they propagate, which yield an overview of global activities; in addition, the intensity and degree of vertical interdependencies in the field of education are explored. Furthermore, the adherence of national education systems to the propagated guiding principles are investigated for either the respective cultural sphere or for possible network subclusters.

Structure of the Book

While this introduction provides the theoretical and analytical framework for the volume, eight substantial chapters examine the global development, diffusion, and transformation of education policies empirically. The volume ends with a commentary and a conclusion.

In Chap. 2, Helen Seitzer, Fabian Besche-Truthe, and Michael Windzio investigate the diffusion of compulsory education from a global perspective. Compulsory education closely relates to the reproduction and change of a country's culture, while possibly facilitating the process of modernization. In this chapter, the authors analyze the diffusion of compulsory education by focusing on the effect of a country's membership in different clusters defined by cultural characteristics. Global cultural clusters of countries do not necessarily have rigid, clear-cut boundaries or 'fault lines' but are fuzzy sets. Thus, the authors apply valued two-mode social network analysis to define global 'cultural spheres'. Following this approach, countries are tied to each other by sharing cultural

characteristics, but the resulting 'cultural spheres' have fuzzy boundaries: Countries become more connected to each other the more cultural characteristics they share. The resulting network is the structural framework behind the social network diffusion process of compulsory education. The impact of cultural spheres on the diffusion process, controlling for indicators of economic development, is tested by exposure in terms of close cultural ties to other countries with compulsory education, where they are found to significantly increase the rate of adoption.

In Chap. 3, Fabian Besche-Truthe looks at the global trajectories of compulsory education. There exists a plethora of studies that examine fundamental policy changes at the national level from a transnational or global perspective. Such studies have highlighted, for example, the worldwide introduction of mass schooling in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Meyer et al. 1997), and the universal spread of compulsory education, which started with 12 early adopters in 1850 and has now been introduced by 162 countries in 2018 (Besche-Truthe et al. 2020, 2021). In comparison, the global policy trend of expanding the duration of compulsory education has been less explored. Besche-Truthe draws on the concepts of trajectories and "pathways" (Verger et al. 2016) to surface the various development paths that account for the adoption of this particular global education policy, resulting in the worldwide extension of compulsory education. A sequence analysis (SQA) lends itself as a method of inquiry because it enables the researcher to regard the whole trajectory of policy development as a single unit of analysis. Recent developments in methodology have opened new gateways in using SQA within the social sciences. The chapter yields an exploration into different trajectories as well as into which national socioeconomic and cultural constellations best explain these specific development paths.

In Chap. 4, Helen Seitzer and Michael Windzio address PISA scores, student exchange, and (family) migration. PISA, a triennial study on education system effectiveness starting in 2000, has led to the very public discussion and comparison of countries' education systems. The study's results are used to name and shame the 'best' and 'worst' of state education. This led to a surge of education policy reforms and directed the general public's attention to education. Better education and job prospects are some of the reasons for migration patterns. They might also

influence students' choice of the destination country for exchange programs. However, there are no studies combining a network approach to migration, student exchange, and the coevolution of PISA scores. Seitzer and Windzio, therefore, ask if a country's education system reputation coincides with student exchange flows and family migration patterns, or if other factors such as cultural similarity are the reason for choosing a destination?

In Chap. 5, Dennis Niemann reviews IOs and their new interpretations on old education paradigms. Different ideological paradigms have dominated the global education discourse at different periods. Fundamentally, they revolve around the two poles of an economic utilitarian view on education and on an interpretation that emphasizes the cultural value of education in enabling refined citizens. Both paradigmatic leitmotifs were influenced by general developments in world politics, and they were also reflected in international organizations. In this chapter, Niemann analyzes how major education IOs, namely, the WB, UNESCO, the ILO, and the OECD, influenced the global discourse on education and how they interacted with each other. First, he argues that within the IOs, the two antipodal views on education (neoliberalism vs. citizenship) became more complementary over time. Second, he shows that the pattern of interaction between the four IOs has also changed from competition to cooperation.

In Chap. 6, Helen Seitzer analyzes OECD reports regarding the education topics they address. Through its country reports, extensive data collection on the effectiveness of education systems, and policy advice, the OECD is contributing considerably to the diffusion of a transnational model of education. However, critics argue, one size does not fit all, and policy advice distributed in a watering can system is not helping countries to advance their education systems due to their specific local conditions. In this chapter, Seitzer uses a topic model to determine whether the OECD does in fact discuss the same issues in its country reports on education with all countries, or if there are local clusters to be found and thus reports are tailored to the local condition. Seitzer finds regional clusters due to similarity in economic and cultural conditions.

In Chap. 7, David Krogmann looks at IOs and education in the Islamic World. There are a number of education IOs of predominantly Muslim

member states that have not yet been reviewed systematically in the almost 40 years of their existence. This chapter maps the existing education IOs in the Muslim world. The analysis presented here revolves around two main questions: First, which organizations with predominantly Muslim member states are active in the field of international education policy, and how, if at all, do they cooperate with each other? Second, which education leitmotifs do these organizations promote, and what kind of discourse do they construct around education policy? The analysis finds Muslim education IOs, namely, the ICESCO, Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS), and Arab League Cultural, Educational and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), participate in a distinct discourse that revolves around the synthesis of traditional values drawn from Islamic philosophy and the demands of a modern global labor market.

In Chap. 8, regional identities in international education organizations are the focus of attention in David Krogmann's chapter on SEAMEO. SEAMEO has been a major player in education policy in Southeast Asia for decades. Despite its history, it has not garnered attention by scholars of international education. This chapter represents a first step toward filling the gap by exploring the underlying themes and ideas that inform discursive patterns produced and reproduced by SEAMEO. How does SEAMEO conceive of education? Did SEAMEO's image of education evolve over time? The analysis by Krogmann finds SEAMEO mostly follows the UN's global sustainable development agenda in education policy, stressing both the social as well as the economic purposes of education. Nevertheless, it does so with a distinct emphasis on the educational purpose of reinforcing the collectively shared values and traditions of its member states, which it deems unique to Southeast Asia.

In Chap. 9, Michael Windzio and Raphael Heiberger examine which topics are important for major education IOs. IOs in the field of education follow different ideological paradigms in the global education discourse. According to our theoretical concept, we distinguish between dedicated and derivative IOs. Derivative IOs in the field of education mainly focus on other important issues, such as economic prosperity or economic development in the Global South. In contrast, dedicated IOs

focus on education policy as their major issue. Yet, it is an open question as to whether these different types of IOs also focus on different topics and thereby support different paradigms of education. Based on more than 1000 documents published by the WB, UNESCO, the ILO, the OECD, ICESCO, and SEAMEO, they explore education issues as dealt with in this sample. Using standardized methods of qualitative text analysis, in particular topic modeling, Heiberger, Seitzer, and Windzio explore whether the major topics found in these documents do indeed differ between the different types of organizations or not.

In Chap. 10, John W. Meyer contributes a commentary to the book in light of his long-standing work within the sociology of education from a neo-institutionalist perspective. The concluding Chap. 11 by Michael Windzio and Kerstin Martens, evaluates the theoretical framework presented in this Introduction in light of the empirical findings of the individual chapters. The chapter also points out avenues for further research resulting from this volume.

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2

The Introduction of Compulsory Schooling Around the World: Global Diffusion Between Isomorphism and 'Cultural Spheres'

Helen Seitzer, Fabian Besche-Truthe, and Michael Windzio

Introduction[1]

State-regulated education has a long history, with its earliest mentions appearing in the Talmud, in Ancient Greece and later during the Enlightenment (Weymann 2014). Virtually every society has established some form of education over time (Craig 1981, 191f). Most early forms of education, however, were limited to particular groups, for example,

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boys from the ruling class, military commanders, or people of the clergy. Most of the beneficiaries were traditionally chosen to maintain the social and political equilibrium and keep certain people in power (Boli et al. 1985)—education was a means to shape the future elite (Weymann 2014). Moreover, education was and still is strongly tied to local culture, for example, the Protestant Reformation (Ramirez and Boli 1987). Historically, religious traditions and class conflict have strongly shaped the development of state-regulated education.

In this chapter, we apply a relational concept of 'culture', in which shared cultural traits are assumed to shape the diffusion process of social policies, as it allows for easier communication between these countries. We elaborate how this concept of culture relates to education as a means of socialization, but also how different 'cultural spheres' can influence—accelerate or decelerate—the diffusion of global norms such as the introduction of standardized schooling. To this extent, we explore empirically how compulsory education developed around the globe, and we test the influence of membership in certain 'cultural spheres' on the introduction of compulsory education. Researching policy diffusion requires a combination of processes on the local as well as the global level, which we account for by combining network analysis with event history analysis for diffusion (Valente 1995).

The origin of state-regulated compulsory schooling for all children can be traced back to Europe. We argue that culture cannot be ignored as a driving force behind the diffusion of social policies and suggest a relational approach. Cultural similarity establishes a linkage between groups, which increases communication and exchange. We measure culture in a way that allows countries not only to share cultural characteristics in varying strengths but also to change their culture over time. Cultures and their differences result from shared histories, traditions, exchange, and power relations, all of which develop over time and bind some countries

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closer together, but also allow them to drift apart over time. Cultures are not fixed or mutually exclusive entities. Nevertheless, compulsory education corresponds with the reproduction and change of a country's culture and drives the process of modernization. As we know from international comparative research, there are different pathways into modernity, so the role of education in the reproduction and change of a nation state's *culture* might differ as well (Weymann 2014).

Yet, global cultural differences are still a neglected issue in studies on the development of education systems. If educational standards differ from local cultures and traditions, powerful actors in some countries could even oppose the introduction of (standardized) compulsory education. Accordingly, we expect the diffusion of compulsory education around the globe to depend on local cultural factors.

In this chapter, we identify a limited set of cultures in the world as 'cultural spheres' (see Chap. 1) and analyze their importance for the diffusion of education policy. We analyze the diffusion of compulsory education by focusing on countries' membership in fuzzy clusters defined by cultural characteristics. By deriving clusters from a valued two-mode social network analysis, we explicitly consider the overlapping boundaries and fuzzy set character of cultural spheres in contrast to rigid 'fault lines' (Huntington 1993). We measure cultural spheres by indicators such as religion and language, and test their impact on the diffusion of compulsory education, controlling for indicators of economic development, democratization, and colonial legacies.

In the following sections, we first discuss the role of culture in the diffusion process of institutionalized education. Subsequently, we illustrate the reproduction of culture and social order through standardized education and the effects of its increasing isomorphism. Lastly, after introducing our estimation method, we extensively illustrate the cultural spheres we have identified and their impact on the adoption of compulsory education policy.

Culture and the Diffusion of Education Systems

The definition of 'culture', its influence on individual behavior, and its global differences have become a central controversy within the social sciences (Anderson-Levitt 2012). Marxists regard culture as a superstructure determined by productive forces and the organization of property rights. As an outcome of a progressively simplified class structure in capitalist societies, class-consciousness is a condition of class conflict—an essential concept in Marxist theory (Lockwood 1992). Although Max Weber considered the importance of economic organization for the development of societies, he focused on the impact of religious orientation and the evolution of Occidental rationalism, economic motives, and specific forms of authority. Long-term historical path dependencies led to remarkable differences between global cultures (Weber 1972), and these differences are still important today. Nevertheless, cultures are not stable entities but embedded in a network of socially constructed elements. There is no objective point of reference when we contrast different cultures. For example, when we evaluate the degree of individualism in a society, we can just compare average levels of individualism between societies. As we know from social network analysis, elements of culture relate to each other like fuzzy set clusters and mutually give each other meaning (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Emirbayer 1997, 299). In our view, a more relational approach to the concept of culture allows for the analysis of culture as a determinant of policy diffusion through networks without the identification of 'fault lines'.

Culture and the Legitimacy of Order

Various academic perspectives define culture by using a set of common principles: beliefs, norms, symbols, values, and meanings, which are part of a shared stock of knowledge in a given community (Rose 2019; Basáñez 2016). Such a community can be local or global, the latter being especially prevalent in times where transnational online activities are highly influential (Anderson-Levitt 2012). Elements of culture must be transmitted from one person to another, for example, by communication, by

intergenerational transmission within families, and by educational institutions. The sustainability of cultural elements depends on their spatial distribution and stability over time, so that transmission is possible. Yet most ideas and practices created by individuals will never pass the transmission threshold and will not enter stable diffusion chains; therefore, they do not become part of a socially shared stock of knowledge. The more attractive ideas and practices are, the higher their likelihood of becoming part of a social tradition. Attractiveness and accessibility of cultural elements fuel their diffusion by repetition, redundancy, and proliferation (Morin 2016, 146). Furthermore, the attractiveness of a cultural element is determined, among other things, by its adaptability and benefit to the community (Meyer et al. 1997).

Culture exists not only as shared knowledge in the minds of individuals but also in an 'objectified state'. An individual should not expect to influence the objectified culture in a substantive way (Parsons and Shils 1951, 58–66). Nevertheless, in liberal-pluralistic and culturally diverse societies, interpretations of norms and symbols are flexible, debatable, and subject to negotiation. People can be part of multiple subcultures, or they are accepted by only some members of a culture but not others (Anderson-Levitt 2012). Ironically, although there is no 'essence' of a culture, culture is nevertheless of crucial importance for a society's social and economic order (Emirbayer and Goodwin 1994; Rose 2019). Societies need minimum consensus on values, normative expectations, and the meaning of symbols (Parsons and Shils 1951; Rose 2019).

In their study on economic development and political stability, Acemoglu and Robinson (2019) emphasize the role of institutions, but we know from Weber (1972) that different forms of authority and institutionalized order show varying levels of stability. This variance in stability strongly depends on the *legitimacy* of order, particularly from the administration's point of view but also from that of the general population. The German constitutional lawyer Böckenförde (1976) emphasized that the "liberal and secular state is based on conditions which this state itself is unable to guarantee … and this is the risk the liberal state has taken for the sake of freedom" (Böckenförde 1976, 60).[2] It is another way

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[2] Own translation.

of expressing the importance of Weber's concept of legitimized order. Legitimacy of institutions and social order results from shared taken-for-granted knowledge, which is a crucial aspect of a country's culture. The liberal state needs a cultural foundation. Being liberal, it cannot enforce this culture by law but depends on the appropriate socialization of its citizens. Moreover, it gains legitimacy by actions regarded as efficient and beneficial. The liberal nation-state, which was formed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, operates in a (world) society of 'sovereign' nation-states in which legitimacy of state action is mutually dependent on and influenced by the actions of other members of that society (Meyer et al. 1997).

Culturally defined goals of statehood became universal, crossing borders around the globe. For legitimization, states need to fulfill specific functions, for example, ensuring national, individual, economic, and social progress (Ramirez and Boli 1987), or the inclusion of societal groups in the state's social and political framework (Wallerstein 2007).

This framework of nation-state formation (Green 2013) crucially relies on the individual as the focus of attention and the cornerstone of economic and societal action. This individualistic shift away from communal units like family, clan, or small religious and ethnic groups is inherently European and was largely brought forward by the prohibition of intra-family marriage (Henrich 2020). These norms became even more common as a result of the Reformation, which devalued the church collective and emphasized individual action as the appropriate pathway to salvation (Ramirez and Boli 1987, 12). Modern norms and values are in line with the state's effort to control progress through individual education. In other regions of the world, this cultural turn came after the nineteenth century, if at all. Nevertheless, we can deduce that (state) legitimacy as an element of culture conceptually links social and political order, on the one hand, and education systems, on the other hand. Education systems are systematic means to transfer the standards of state legitimacy to future generations. Institutionally similar configurations, especially the concept of 'sovereign nation-states', with their similar purposes of economic growth, human rights, and social equality, have proven to be accelerators for the diffusion of abstract norms and values (Strang and Meyer 1993).

Institutionalized Education and the Transmission of Culture

Only through the acceptance of concepts such as 'nation', 'citizenship', and 'culture' can the state legitimize the implementation of rules and norms regulating the lives of its citizens through laws and education (Schriewer 2012). Just as citizens regard themselves as part of a local and national culture, nation-states are characterized by culture to some degree (Basáñez 2016, 16). 'Vertical' transmission of knowledge by teaching a predefined curriculum to children and adolescents in schools became a functional requirement of modern societies, which are based upon highly specialized knowledge in various fields. A major part of cultural transmission in modern societies falls on educational institutions. While anthropologists focus on the 'bottom-up' evolution of culture, or more precisely on gene-culture coevolution (Henrich 2016), sociological neo-institutionalism (Meyer et al. 1997) advances Weber's view on the consolidation of rational institutions during the transition into modernity. Modern institutions are so efficient that Weber (1972) suspected the emergence of 'iron cages', in which individuals are trapped and execute instructions in dehumanized bureaucracies. Neo-institutionalists (Meyer et al. 1997) argue that Western organizational forms transcend the boundaries of Western culture due to their general efficiency in organizing state and society. The evolution of the Occidental culture took a rather specific path in Weber's view, whereby Western rationalization and secularization resulted in remarkable differences to other cultures. Western individualism is regarded as Western, educated, industrialized, resourceful, and democratic (WEIRD) (Schulz et al. 2019; Henrich 2020). WEIRD cultures lean toward individualism and independence, toward impersonal pro-sociality (e.g. trust to strangers), and less toward obedience and conformity. Anthropologists agree with Weber on the importance of religion, but according to Schulz et al. (2019) and Henrich (2020), Westerners became WEIRD due to the marriage policies of the Western Church. The Church prohibited marriage between cousins and repressed the influence of extended families and clans, which resulted in

higher individualism and an increased reliance on state institutions for competition and conflict resolution (Henrich 2020, 323–359).

As a result, modernity strongly depends on institutions; nowadays, it also depends on international and supranational organizations such as the European Union (EU), the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and others. These organizations tend to be bureaucratic, so that they can survive and efficiently attain their goals. Their organizational culture tends to be WEIRD as well. Becoming an accepted part of these organizations serves as a legitimization tool for some countries. The implementation of compulsory education, for example, is a common tool of legitimization for states (Meyer et al. 1997). How important these institutions are in guiding peoples' behavior, however, is a different question. The acceptance of a global culture can be more of a performative act than an integration of these norms into the local belief system (Steiner-Khamsi 2000); it can be just "myth and ceremony" (Meyer and Rowan 1977). Nevertheless, IO membership demonstrates a country's affiliation with the group of countries already following these norms and increases a country's 'social standing' within the group. In our globalized world, individuals and organizations are interested in shared institutionalized standards when they interact across different national institutions. Modern, Western bureaucracies tend to spread around the world due to their efficiency (Meyer et al. 1997) but also because international organizations require predictable, reliable, and accountable organizational standards. The impressive isomorphism portrayed by nation-states as well as IOs becomes evident, for instance, when states establish a bureaucracy charged with managing science policy even though the need for it is hardly justifiable (Finnemore 1993). According to neo-institutionalists, actors, individuals, and organizations evolve in an environment with predefined expectations and aspirations along with standardized modes of reaching these goals. Since World War II, this environment has gained strength in penetrating nation-states' development, rendering domestic structural, cultural, and historical factors less impactful (Benavot and Riddle 1988, 204). Isomorphism proceeds covertly 'behind our backs'. However, we suspect that culture and identity, for example, in terms of Protestantism and Catholicism, were fundamental influences on the formalization of

institutions, especially during the early time frame of our study (Boli et al. 1985, 165).

Even today, culture and identity are still important issues in the domestic politics of many Western countries, but they are also critical at the global level (Fukuyama 2018), having become highly controversial since the mid-1990s. For example, Huntington (1993) argued that religious-cultural 'fault lines' now separate different civilizations from each other, and it is at these fault lines that future global conflicts would occur (Huntington 1996). Although many global conflicts result from diverging economic interests and many future conflicts might result from environmental deterioration, Huntington made us aware of the role played by ethnic, cultural, and religious movements. These facets were hidden during the Cold War but became visible since the early 1990s. Huntington pointed to culture as a crucial issue due to potential tensions between different cultures and civilizations.

His typology of civilizations (Huntington 1996) is rather rough, and stimulated severe criticism for good reason (Norris and Inglehart 2011, 134–137). As demonstrated above, culture exists at different levels (Basáñez 2016, 16), for example, in romantic relationships, small groups, but also in nation-states, or supra-national entities such as the EU. We must either allow some abstraction when we analyze cultures at higher levels (Anderson-Levitt 2012, 443), or we must give up the concept entirely and thereby implicitly regard cultural diversity at the global level as intractable to scientific inquiry. In accordance with Chap. 1, we expect culture to be a shaping force, influencing the spread of state education systems, because it is inherently interwoven with education, which is affected by cultural configurations and charged with transmitting them. We argue that culture, as a domestic factor, accelerated or delayed global isomorphic tendencies.

Institutionalized Education and Society

The first observation of a spread of Western values impacting schooling and, in turn, society is through the introduction of modern mathematics. There have been various ways of calculating throughout human history,

but the system introduced by European merchants to other trading partners has prevailed (Bishop 1990). Similarly, during the 1800s, the understanding and Romanticizing of childhood as a sacred period of exploration and learning changed, and in combination with the attempt to regulate child labor, education became an instrument to socialize citizens (Benavot et al. 1991).

With the introduction of compulsory schooling and scientific advancements, there was a 'demystification of the world', as Weber (1972) called it; society developed toward rationalized explanations of reality and away from religious ones. At the same time, academic achievement and graduate certificates became a mark of status in and of themselves. They not only allow for occupational opportunities and social mobility but also mark the transition from adolescence to adulthood (Baker 2014). Graduating from school or dropping out have a significant influence on a person's self-perception as well as on the social evaluation by others. Education is considered a necessary requirement for citizens, whereas 'dropouts' are often regarded as nonproductive members of society (Baker 2014). The common usage of the word 'dropout' merges the act of leaving school early with personal failure; thus, it indicates a cultural transformation in terms of how people think about themselves and others (Papagiannis et al. 1983).

The standardization of education not only results in homogeneity of student knowledge but also in homogeneity of self-perception, namely, the experience of oneself as a citizen in a cultural (national) context. Childhood becomes a distinct and important part of the human lifecycle. Since every child has human rights by virtue of being a human individual, the experience of school education as a mythical yet rationalistic inauguration into full citizenship is shared across the globe (Ramirez 2013, 147). In a nutshell, educational standardization, national identity, culture, and globalization are inseparably interwoven.

The spread of state-led education all over the world has been obvious since the early nineteenth century; but what has been the impact of cultural similarities and differences in the facilitation of that expansion? Has culture been shaping the diffusion process within rather than between cultural spheres?

In line with arguments highlighting the importance of identity and global identity politics (Fukuyama 2018), we expect cultural spheres to be relevant in shaping the development of compulsory education. We also expect them to have an effect on the diffusion of education policy. We regard global cultural differences as important but at the same time disagree with the assumption of there being rigid fault lines between cultures. Global cultures are fuzzy sets, meaning that the boundaries between cultural categories are merging, not clearly cut. We represent this fuzziness as a valued network, where countries are linked to each other by cultural proximity. The strength of ties increases with the number of shared cultural characteristics (Chap. 1), allowing for a gradual description of cultural similarity. Hence, we are ultimately interested in what effects this new operationalization of cultural similarity has on the timing of policies that mandate state-organized education.

Data and Methods

In this chapter, we analyze the worldwide diffusion of compulsory education from 1789 to 2010. We collected data on cultural characteristics of $N = 164$ countries, including indicators of political liberties, rule of law, aspects of gender roles and relations, dominant religion, language group, government ideology, classification of civilization, and colonial past (Besche-Truthe et al. 2020). We generated quartiles of continuous measurements, for example, for the index of gender relations, in order to get discrete categories for the valued two-mode network. If two countries share a characteristic, for example, the same dominant religion, they will be connected in the network. Regarding the multitude of cultural characteristics in our data set, most countries have several relations to each other, for example, when they share the language group 'Atlantic-Kongo' and the same category of political liberties. The weighted nature of this network derives from the number of shared characteristics; the higher the number of ties in this network, the closer the cultural proximity between two countries. Rather than homogenous clusters and clear-cut 'fault lines', this method yields a network of cultural spheres with relations of varying intensity between countries. We then applied the Louvain

algorithm for clustering in order to cluster the countries. The algorithm finds communities by maximizing the density within communities relative to the links across communities. As shown in Figs. 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4, the cultural spheres network is time-varying due to the time-varying measurement of most cultural indicators. Elsewhere, we used the metaphor of a 'pipe structure' as the underlying structure of the diffusion process (Besche-Truthe et al. 2021), where the 'pipe diameter' is the number of ties in a dyad and thus, the degree of similarity between two countries. Larger pipe diameters lead to a higher weight of a tie and indicate higher 'cultural exposure' of Country A to Country B. This should increase the likelihood of 'contagion', given that a specific policy has not yet been adopted in one of the two countries. We use the R package *netdiffuseR* (Vega Yon and Valente 2020), which defines exposure as the share of j adopters in the ego-centered network of node i ($i \neq j$) at time t and is supposed to affect the adoption rate between t and $t+1$ (Valente 1995). If a country is only connected to other countries that have already adopted compulsory schooling, exposure is 1, and if none of these countries have adopted it, exposure is 0. To be precise, we calculate the exposure weighted by the tie strength, which is lagged by one year, that is, the exposure one year before we observe a possible introduction.

The introduction of compulsory schooling (*no compulsory schooling* = 0 and *introduction of compulsory schooling* = 1) during the window of observation is the dependent variable in our discrete-time logistic hazard model. Once a country has introduced compulsory schooling, it drops out of the risk set. Introductions after 2010 are right-censored, adoptions before the window of observation begins (before 1789) are not considered in the risk set but contribute to the network exposure of countries that have not yet adopted.

To account for specific unequal power relations, we introduce a second potentially influential network that is built through colonial ties of countries. In contrast to static colonial relations, we represent colonial ties in a time-variant way. The data set "COLDAT" by Bastian Becker (2019) was extended by including non-European colonizers like the Persian and the Russian Empires. Countries send a link with a value of 1 to countries who are their colonizers in the respective year. However, after colonization, the relationship between the two countries does not end; interlinkages still

prevail, although through other channels like trade or development aid (Shields and Menashy 2017). Institutions initially founded during colonization might pose path dependencies. Generally, we expect a higher possibility for contact and orientation on policies between the former metropole and colonized state. We model these possibilities by a decreasing value of a colonial tie after colonization formally ended by accounting for 'post-colonial' ties using an exponential decay function.

Our 'cultural spheres' network and the network of (post-)colonial ties are the underlying structures for calculating a country's exposure to other countries that have already implemented compulsory schooling. We hypothesize exposure in the valued 'cultural spheres' network to be a relevant driving force behind the introduction of compulsory schooling, but we also account for relevant confounders. The introduction of compulsory schooling might also depend on a country's level of economic development, which is certainly not exclusively determined by culture but nevertheless correlates with countries' cultures (Weber 1972; Rose 2019). We interpolated Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita for the entire time frame by taking the minimum value in every income group based on all observations before 1800, where we filled missing values with this minimum value. To fill the historic time points, we took the last observed group per country and extrapolated the value for all previous years.

Although Paglayan (2020, 9) finds the event of democratization to occur approximately 50 years later than the introduction of compulsory primary schooling and generally argues that the expansion of primary school enrolments is not significantly larger in democratic time periods of nation-states, we still include an index representing the level of democratization ranging 0–9. We utilize data from the V-Dem Project (Coppedge et al. 2019) and linearly interpolated missing time points. We suspect that contrary to Paglayan's operationalization, using an index instead of a dummy variable captures country-level heterogeneity better. It is possible that nominally weak or undemocratic systems could be quicker in institutionalizing state-mandated education to ideologically secure their regime or pacify conflicts arising from economic and social inequalities. Finally, the process might be time-dependent, which is usually a result of unobserved heterogeneity. We control for five equally sized time intervals, beginning in the historical year of 1789.

Results

Geographies of Compulsory Education Diffusion

Geographically, the global diffusion process started in a few countries in Northern and Central Europe and then spread to the Americas and Australia. Until 1900, Japan as well as the Philippines had also adopted compulsory schooling. Until 1950, it is apparent that countries in sub-Saharan Africa had not introduced compulsory schooling, while China and Russia had adopted the policy by this point. By 2010, only 20 out of the observed 164 states had not introduced compulsory schooling. Figure 2.1 maps Rogers' (2003, 281) classification of early adopters, the early majority, the late majority, and laggards. These categories are derived from the distribution of times-of-adoption: times within one standard deviation around the mean time indicate the early and late majority; times below and above one standard deviation are early adopters and laggards. The initial hegemony of Western state formation (Green 2013) can be visualized though the diffusion pattern of compulsory schooling, where it originated in Europe and then spread across the globe. The hegemony of the Western education states has run its course since then (Weymann 2014).

The diffusion pattern of compulsory schooling shown in Fig. 2.1 supports Meyer et al.'s (1997) argument regarding the spread of Western institutions across the globe. Early adopters are mostly Western and some
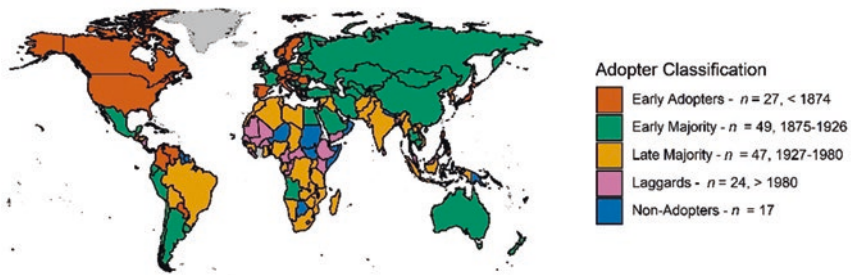

Fig. 2.1 Diffusion of compulsory education around the world, 1789–2010. (Source: Own computation WeSIS database)

South American countries, the early majority consists of most Asian and some Middle Eastern countries, whereas the late majority shows a high prevalence in Africa, South America, and South Asia. Alphabetization through standardized education fosters a culturally homogenized civil society and at the same time ensures the survival of state power by increasing the identification with the state. This process is bolstered by emphasizing the importance of education for the individuals' participation in the labor market, as stated above. The geography of adoption in Fig. 2.1 gives a first impression of how adopter-types are distributed across the globe. However, geographic location itself is not a meaningful explanation for the process. According to our argument, ties in the network of 'cultural spheres' that are derived from a two-mode network of countries and cultural characteristics are the backbone of the diffusion process. Hence, we now turn to a more thorough inspection of our 'cultural spheres'.

Describing Cultural Spheres

Figures 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 show the one-mode projection of the two-mode network on the vertex set of countries after applying a Louvain clustering method for group detection (Luke 2015, 115–119). The vertices (nodes) are connected via shared cultural characteristics and labeled with the ISO-3-character code of the respective country they represent. The tie strength increases with more shared characteristics. Countries sharing multiple characteristics are therefore considered more similar than countries sharing only few or no characteristics. For a better overview, only ties with strength greater than 2 are depicted in these plots. A general rule for where countries are placed in the graph is as follows: highly similar countries are located closely together, outliers with only few ties such as China or Thailand (Fig. 2.2) are placed at the outer rim of the plot. The cluster solution obtained with the Louvain clustering algorithm sorts the countries into an optimal number of clusters based on the weight of the ties in any given year. For the year 1880, this results in a solution with five clusters, as indicated by the colors (Fig. 2.2). The visualization makes the fuzzy boundaries obvious, as these clusters partially overlap and show
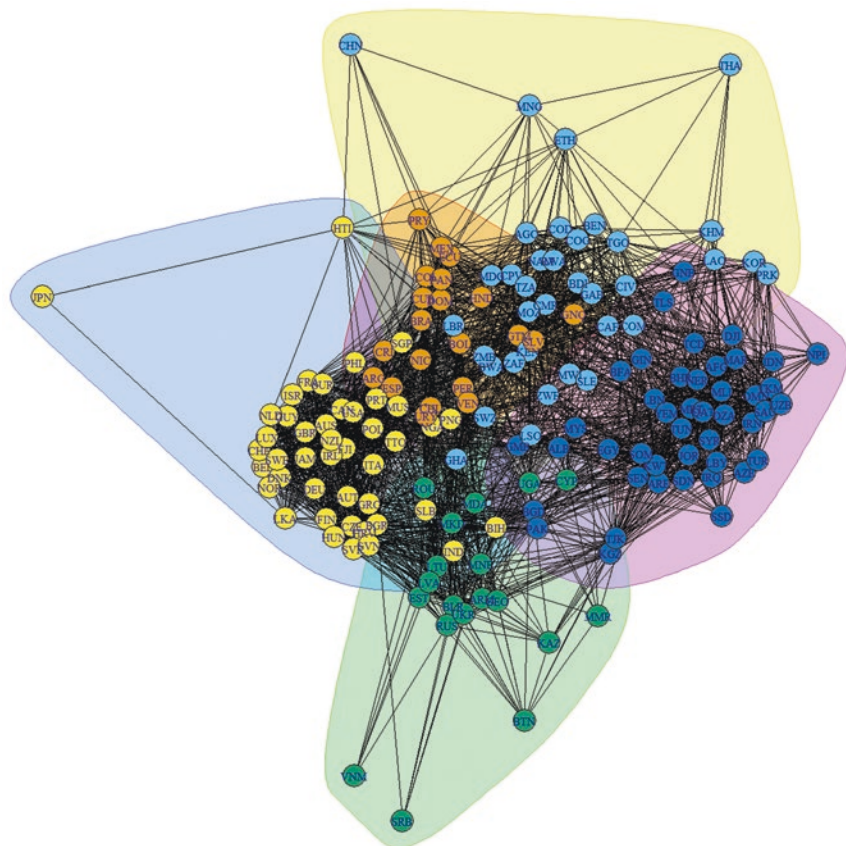
Fig. 2.2 Network of cultural spheres in 1880

many linkages across clusters. In 2010 (Fig. 2.4), the cluster solution collapses into only three categories, which underlines the time-varying nature of our cultural indicators, and there is certainly no static 'essence' of a culture. For our analysis, we use the five-cluster solution from 1880, which represents cultural spheres at the beginning of our window of observation. Inspecting countries in the respective clusters gives a meaningful result: cluster 1 consists of *Catholic, Spanish-speaking* countries; cluster 2 of *not predominantly Muslim African and East Asian* countries; cluster 3 of *Eastern European and Asian* countries; cluster 4 of mostly
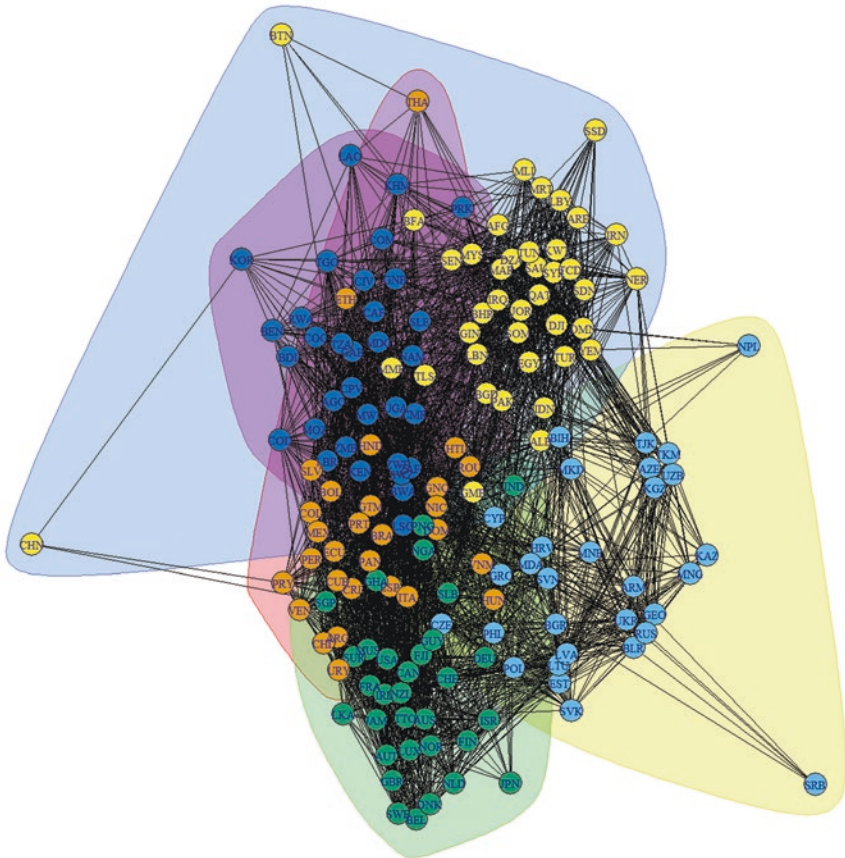
Fig. 2.3 Network of cultural spheres in 1945

WEIRD countries; and cluster 5 of *predominantly Muslim* countries. Also, the fuzzy set nature of our clustering approach reveals that some countries do not seem to fit perfectly into a group. For instance, the cluster *Eastern European and Asian* also includes Vietnam and Uganda as two outliers who have a rather marginalized position within this cluster (Fig. 2.2). In addition, Japan and Haiti belong to the WEIRD cluster, but they take a marginal position because the number and intensity of their ties to other members of this cluster are comparatively low.
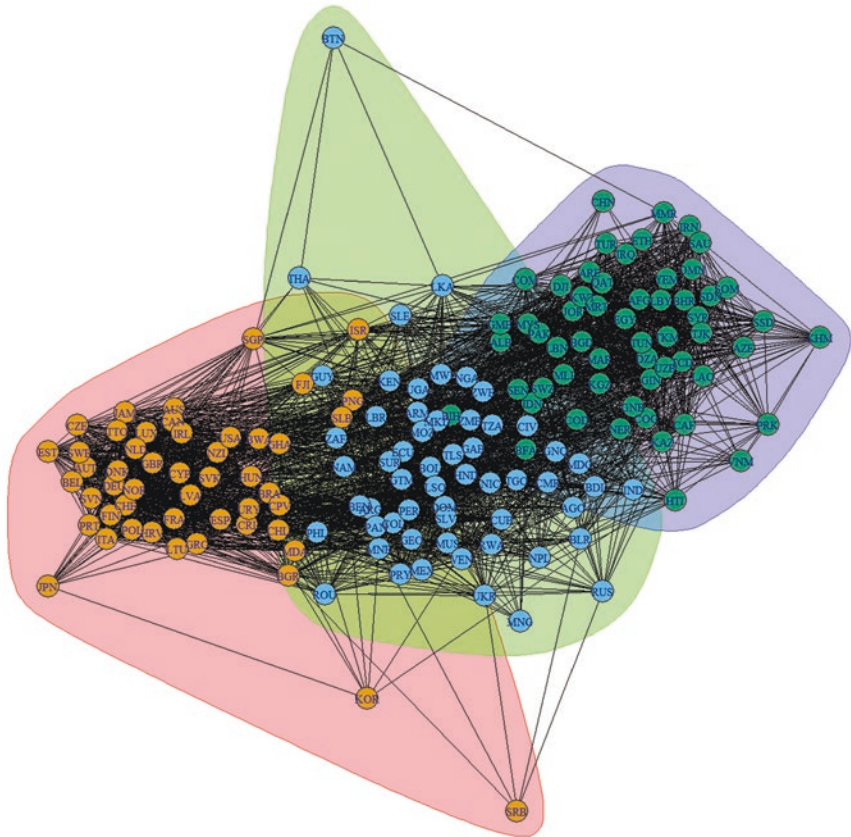
Fig. 2.4 Network of cultural spheres in 2010

Inspecting the cluster solution in 2010, we quickly notice several distinctions from the network in 1880. First, there are only three clusters remaining, and still with considerable overlap. The aspects dividing countries in terms of cultural characteristics seem to move toward an equilibrium: While a constant stock of traits is shared, a constant stock of traits also remains exclusive. Second, the graph seems to have merged into a single hairball, causing a reduction in the number of outliers. While in 1880 countries such as Japan, Vietnam, Serbia, Bhutan, China, and Thailand shared only few characteristics with other countries, by 2010 only Japan, South Korea, and Serbia remained in this position. The

orange cluster contains mostly *WEIRD/Western* countries, the green cluster mostly *not predominantly Muslim* countries, and the purple cluster mainly *Muslim/African* countries but also countries more difficult to place such as China. Despite the change in cluster membership and number, the overlap between the clusters is still obvious. The number of shared characteristics does not culminate in a separation of cultural clusters, nor is it intended to do so. Overall, the cluster solution provides a good classification and interesting insights.

We can deduce that our cluster solution is in line with other recent attempts to create a classification of cultural groups. For example, recent studies using the European and World Value Survey classified countries according to religious cultures and highlighted the differences between the Western and the Muslim world with respect to sexual liberalization and gender equality (Norris and Inglehart 2011, 154). Moreover, a multilevel view on global culture assumes three overarching 'hyper-cultures' and eight 'macro-cultures' in the world. While the former depends on legal systems (Islamic, Anglo-Saxon, Roman), macro-cultures result from systems of belief in different religions (Basáñez 2016, 163). Cultural spheres resulting from our clustering procedure are in line with previous studies, as indicators of religion, language, gender roles, and political liberties were also included as the basic characteristics for defining culture.

Estimating the Influence of Culture on the Diffusion Process

In the previous sections, we laid out in detail that 'culture'—not as a specific domestic essence, but rather as a relation to other countries' cultures—is subject to change over time and interwoven with national policy-making as well as education policy more specifically. How culture can be influential is shown through the network diffusion models in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 shows three discrete-time logistic hazard models of network diffusion (Valente 1995). Due to the interval-specific baseline hazards, it is a piecewise constant rate model. Countries that had adopted compulsory education before the process time began were included in the calculation of exposure but excluded from the logistic hazard model, as they are no longer at risk of adopting the policy. Only $N = 160$ countries

Table 2.1 Diffusion of compulsory education in the cultural spheres network

	Introduction of compulsory schooling		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Rate t(0–44)	0.0003***	0.0002***	0.0001***
Rate t(45–89)	0.002***	0.002***	0.002***
Rate t(90–129)	0.001***	0.002***	0.004***
Rate t(130–169)	0.001***	0.002***	0.008***
Rate t(170–221)	0.001***	0.002***	0.024***
GDP per capita/10,000 USD	1.042	1.023	1.037
Democratization	1.039	1.015	1.064
Cultural spheres netw.: w. exposure (lag 1 year)	158.652***	40.625***	—
Colonies netw.: w. exposure	1.387	1.28	—
Clu. 1: Catholic, Spanish-speaking	—	2.012*	3.451***
Clu. 2: Not predominantly Muslim African/ East Asian	—	0.752	0.895
Clu. 3: Eastern European and Asian	—	2.224**	2.897***
Clu. 4: WEIRD	—	1.916*	3.031***
Clu. 5: Predominantly Muslim	—	Ref.	Ref.
Observations	21,910	21,910	21,910
Log likelihood	−748.251	−738.824	−746.366
Akaike Inf. Crit.	1514.503	1503.649	1514.731

Discrete-time event history model, hazard ratios, N = 160 countries
Source: WeSIS database, own computation
Note: + $p < 0.1$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$

remain in the risk set. The first model estimates the effects of (weighted) exposure in networks of cultural spheres lagged for one year, colonial history, and controlling for GDP per capita and levels of democratization. We adjusted the standard errors for time periods in which several countries belonged to an overarching entity. Serbia and Macedonia, for instance, were once part of the former Yugoslavia. Their adoption times are not necessarily independent from each other and require a correction of the standard errors (Zeileis et al. 2020).

We get a positive, strong, and significant effect of weighted exposure in the cultural spheres network on the adoption rate in Model (1), whereas the effect of weighted exposure in the network of colonial histories is insignificant. In line with our expectation, the network of cultural spheres is an underlying structure for the diffusion of compulsory education among countries. Including dummy variables of the cultural spheres-clusters in Model (2) does not substantially alter the direction and significance of

exposure. The cultural spheres dummies show significant effects in Model (2). Moreover, three cultural spheres significantly accelerate the adoption process in Model (3), where we excluded the exposure effects from the estimation. The reference group is cluster 5, which is the cultural sphere of countries with a *predominantly Muslim* population. The reference group was chosen due to its large intra-cluster difference. Compared with this reference group, effects of the *not predominantly Muslim African/East Asian* cultural sphere do not significantly differ. These countries show no accelerated adoption speed compared to *predominantly Muslim* countries. In contrast, the adoption rate is increased by a factor of 2.897*** in the *Eastern European and Asian* cultural sphere compared with the reference group in Model (3) and is even increased by a factor of 3.031*** in the *WEIRD* cluster and by 3.451*** in the *Catholic, Spanish-speaking* cluster. We observe strong evidence for diffusion through 'pipes' built from cultural similarity, the sheer membership in a cultural sphere does significantly raise the adoption rate of a first compulsory education law in most cases. Regardless of the exposure through the cultural network, the membership in the clusters 1, 3, and 4 (*Catholic, Spanish-speaking, Eastern European and Asian*, and *WEIRD*) significantly influences the adoption of compulsory education positively. In Model (2), the adoption rate is increased by the factors 2.101*, 2.276**, and 1.954* respectively, supporting our hypothesis that culture around the globe can have an accelerating effect on the diffusion of compulsory education.

These results clearly signify culture as a relevant variable in macro-quantitative social science studies, where using a relational approach brings mechanisms to the fore that would normally be unobserved when using rigid and clear-cut categorizations. We demonstrate that the risk of adopting compulsory education for any given state is significantly heightened by the adoption of compulsory education in a culturally similar country. Moreover, *not predominantly Muslim African/East Asian* and *predominantly Muslim* countries show remarkable differences in the timing of compulsory schooling introduction. Once exposure through cultural similarity increases, the risk of policy adoption increases as well. Furthermore, this result corroborates what the map of adopter types (Fig. 2.1) suggested: Formalization of education through the introduction of educational institutions appears to be a WEIRD project. However,

when institutionalized education crosses over to other cultural spheres, it spreads rapidly within that sphere. As predicted by neo-institutionalism, it seems difficult for countries in other cultural spheres to elude the adoption in the long run; according to our theoretical considerations, we expected that cultural spheres would mediate the adoption process.

Conclusion

Cultures differ remarkably around the globe. Even though the definition of culture and the identification of an appropriate level of abstraction are far from trivial, our empirical analysis reveals different cultural spheres in the world. Acknowledging these differences at an abstract level does not necessarily mean to "stereotype and exoticize other people" (Anderson-Levitt 2012, 441). Contrariwise, from a European academic's perspective, our 'own' culture and psychology appear exotic and WEIRD (Henrich 2020). Today's predominantly WEIRD culture relies on properly operating and legitimate state institutions, which in contrast to premodern clan societies are the modern form of social order. Public education systems organize the reproduction of culture and often provide efficient governability of the literate population by legitimating state activity. Often, they increase the WEIRD-ness of a population, and it is not surprising that the propensity to establish such educational programs differed historically between nation-states. A 'rational' organization of the state, the economy, and other 'spheres of life' (Weber 1972), each endowed with its own criteria of rationality (Lepsius 1994), is a crucial component of modernity. The rationalization of these 'spheres of life', including education, resulted in powerful technology and social organization as never seen before. But Weber noticed the destructive potential of this development and influenced later critical theory (Lukács 1968) when he described the efficiency of bureaucratic authority as an 'iron cage'. Neo-institutionalism further elaborated these theoretical considerations and motivated our hypothesis of a global diffusion of education policy—in our case, the introduction of compulsory education mediated by 'cultural spheres'. We developed the concept of 'cultural spheres' as a response to classifications of cultures that ignore their fuzzy-set nature

and their overlapping boundaries. Even today, differences between cultural spheres become apparent in our data. These include differences relating to indicators of gender roles, dominant religion, language group, and political liberties. The results of clustering our time-varying two-mode networks consisting of countries and cultural characteristics as node sets revealed five cultural clusters with overlapping boundaries; but these clusters nevertheless result in a meaningful typology of Catholic, Spanish-speaking, *not predominantly Muslim African and East Asian*, *Eastern European and Asian*, *WEIRD*, and *predominantly Muslim* countries. Modern states cannot exist without literacy and basic education (Weymann 2014), so it is not surprising that state-mandated education began in Western countries and ultimately spread globally.

While ties in the network of cultural spheres strongly influence the diffusion process of compulsory education, we did not find evidence for diffusion via the network of colonial histories. Furthermore, while the *WEIRD* cultural sphere does not show the highest adoption rate, the *Catholic, Spanish-speaking* cluster does. Compared with the other four cultural spheres, the adoption rate is significantly higher in the *Catholic, Spanish-speaking* cluster (Model (3) in Table 2.1). In line with our expectations, cultural spheres considerably mediate the diffusion of compulsory education. Moreover, we show that viewing culture in a relational way, that is, showing the fuzzy boundaries of states grouped together, instead of in a rigid way, that is, in terms of 'fault lines', is beneficial in uncovering diffusion patterns. Although we just analyzed the introduction of compulsory education as a formal institution without considering any content or curriculum, our results highlight that culture and cultural change strongly affect the identity of groups and individuals. As a consequence, "when global ideas enter a local arena, meanings are re-made not only because local actors inevitably reinterpret ideas in the context of their own frameworks, but also because they may struggle against the meanings offered or imposed by global actors" (Anderson-Levitt 2012, 451).

An important limitation of our macro-quantitative diffusion analysis is the abstract perspective on times-of-adoption, without specifying the micro-mechanisms of how countries prepare the decision to adopt the policy. Referring to previous studies, theoretically elaborating diffusion mechanisms (Gilardi 2016) and providing empirical evidence does not

solve this problem because our data does not provide any information on which particular mechanism was at work when, for example, Chile or Pakistan introduced compulsory education. Therefore, future research should combine diffusion analysis with qualitative case studies. Another limitation of this chapter is the focus on horizontal interdependencies, that is, networks between countries. Due to the strong influence of international organizations in education policy-making in recent years, it might be interesting to include a membership network of different IOs in future publications.

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3

The Global Trajectories of Compulsory Education: Clustering Sequences of Policy Development

Fabian Besche-Truthe

Introduction[1]

Compulsory education became an imperative trait of sound state education systems at the very latest with the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UN General Assembly 1948, Article 26, 1). Ever since the Education for All Dakar Framework for Action, in which the members of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) committed to ensuring access to "free and compulsory primary education" (2000, 8), a nation-state without compulsory education has hardly been imaginable. In fact, only a handful of United Nations

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(UN) members do not have a compulsory education law in place; with Solomon Islands, Oman, and Bhutan being counted among them. Seeing as the world is pledged to Education for All, universal primary education (mentioned in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)), and universal secondary education (mentioned in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)), one can assume that making education mandatory would constitute a viable first step toward achieving these goals. In accordance with the SDGs, extending the duration of compulsory education would be the second step. The extension can be targeted by either raising the school-leaving age or lowering the school-entry age, thus making preprimary education compulsory.

While the social sciences agree on the value of a sound education system, the focus of international comparative research has been on the determinants of the spread or retention of specific educational structures across the globe (Busemeyer and Trampusch 2011 provide a good overview). Causes relating to education system transformation have also been extensively analyzed. In this chapter, I take a step back and look at the larger picture, the constitutive factor of a state education system: compulsory education laws. In contrast to past studies, I aim to explore the development of compulsory education and its duration over time. How did policies concerning compulsory education develop globally? Are any trends discernible? Are there clusters of countries that develop similarly regarding compulsory education legislation?

Starting with the premise that there are different ideas about the necessary duration of education, compulsory education policy constitutes an observable manifestation of the importance of state-led education. Moreover, recognizing that these views are changing with time, ideas manifest themselves within policy changes. Therefore, research should spotlight the very changes over time. The policy developments grant insight into how compulsory education evolved in past decades. Finding common developments in nation-states might support further research on other policy developments and highlight commonalities previously unseen. As described below, past and current scholarship, regardless of theoretical and methodological background, focus on either the origins or outcomes of policies. Using snapshots or predefined outcome

variables, these studies disregard developments that unfold over long stretches of history.

Drawing on recent developments in Sequence Analysis (SQA), this study seeks to depict and analyze the trajectories of compulsory education policies in 167 countries from 1970 to 2020. SQA lends itself as a method of inquiry because it enables the researcher to regard the whole trajectory of policy development as a single unit of analysis. Thus, it allows us to draw upon and explore the temporal context of policy development. Here, context becomes a point of entry for thinking about how processes of change relate to one another in an environment that unfurls over extended periods of time (Pierson 2004, 172). This opens avenues previously untrodden and allows one to ask new questions, that is, how did policy develop, and how is that different from the same policy in a different location at distinct times? How can we study dynamics macro-quantitatively without losing the focus on the temporal and spatial context? How can this be accomplished with as little predetermination as possible? I utilize recent methodological developments for an inquiry that is, both, broad across time and space as well as narrow in analyzing the development paths. My chapter yields the first exploration into different trajectories of the duration of compulsory education and how these trajectories can be subsumed and clustered into specific development paths.

The chapter continues with a short overview of the current state of compulsory education legislation and summarizes potential explanatory theories that are widely used in education policy research. After presenting recent empirical evidence on the global expansion of compulsory education, I make the case for a descriptive rediscovery of changing compulsory education policies. A brief introduction into the method of SQA is followed by a detailed description of different trajectories of compulsory education policies. Furthermore, a clustering of similar trajectories based solely on the data and calculated with an *Optimal Matching* algorithm is presented. In the end, I provide an initial explanation regarding these different trajectories and conclude with an outlook regarding the focus of future research.

The State of Compulsory Education Policy

Even before the two World Wars, education was seen in the Western world as a salvation for a myriad of social, political, and economic problems. In Prussia, compulsory education was introduced because of the need for a polis that fit with the hierarchical structure of society as well as a military that was able to sufficiently follow orders. In line with the Pietist puritan tradition, the young United States of America introduced compulsory schooling state by state, starting in New England (Rickenbacker 1999). In the Ottoman Empire, compulsory education was introduced in 1869 and was intended to build a coherent Ottoman culture and populace (Cicek 2012).

On the other hand, former colonies quickly introduced compulsory schooling after the surge of independence—some even before formal independence. In Ghana, for example, the legislative Assembly of 1951 "declared basic education to be free and compulsory for school-aged children" (Marlow-Ferguson 2002, 506), even though Ghana only became officially independent in 1957. In this 'new era', education was seen as embodying the ideals of a caring and prosperous state. Education became a human right and compulsory education an obligation for the nation-state. This is evident in the Bolivian entry into compulsory education; for example, the *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* introduced compulsory education as an attempt to reach new generations in their endeavor to build a truly democratic republic (Marlow-Ferguson 2002, 72).

Compulsory education is a very divisive political issue. Changes are difficult to adopt on the policy level and even harder to implement on the ground. Political struggles revolve around ethical questions (Hodgson 2016; Tan 2010) as well as budgetary issues. Extending mandatory schooling drains governments' monetary resources. That is why, in India, an extension of the right to free and compulsory education from the ages of six to fourteen to the ages of three to eighteen has been dropped from a recent education policy change, specifically because of the "financial burden" the state would have to bear (Dutta 2019). A state that has weak institutional capacities might also have a hard time monitoring whether

the duration of compulsory schooling is being fulfilled, especially in rural areas.

Explanatory Attempts for Compulsory Education Policymaking

Having just explored historic and current developments of compulsory education policies, it is now time to focus on theories that try to explain the convergence of education policies. In line with this edited volume, the theories presented here build the canon of explanations on the development of 'modern' education systems. They either emphasize ideational influences, as evident in neo-institutionalist accounts (e.g. Ramirez 2013) and global economic influences, as shown in the World System approach (e.g. Griffiths and Imre 2013), or a mixture of both while highlighting specific national factors, as carried out in Cultural Political Economy (e.g. Dale 2000).

Proponents of the *isomorphism thesis* (Chap. 1) can be subsumed under the general headline of neo-institutionalists. When considering the global convergence of state structures, they highlight the normative influence of a *World Culture* pressuring policymakers to implement seemingly rational institutions. Neo-institutionalist theory argues that education policies spread around the globe through globally theorized models of 'what is a problem that needs to be solved' and by defining the worth of the 'good' salvation for that problem (Strang and Meyer 1993). The spread of idealistic norms has culminated in an impressive isomorphism of state structures and policies not predicted by other theories. Yet, "world cultural models are highly idealized and internally inconsistent, making them in principle impossible to actualize" (Meyer et al. 1997, 154). Thus, the theory acknowledges the phenomenon of *decoupling*, leaving some room for diverging policy developments.

However, neo-institutionalist explanations lack an engagement that goes beyond the sole valuing of some abstract model of education. In a volume edited by Anderson-Levitt (2003b) many anthropological case studies find a common model of schooling, for example, the so-called

egg-carton school (Anderson-Levitt 2003a, 6) but they also show that these models are actually lived, experienced, and built in very different ways according to the (sub-)national contexts. Although World Culture theory claims to describe diffusion processes of abstract outcome variables quite well, it ignores probable conflating mechanisms and time inconsistencies in policy adoption (Dale 2000). Time, as a variable, gets degraded to specific structural frameworks, whereas norm development becomes universally influential, impacting policies with increasing rapidity. Variation in national institutional evolution, including the speed, order, and sequencing of it, is seen to starkly diminish since World War II (Boli et al. 1985).

Another approach analyzing the convergence of state structures can be subsumed under the headline of realist approaches, which culminated in the World System approach. It assumes political units are tied together in a world system grounded in capitalism (Wallerstein 2005, 24). This system is divided into the core, semi-periphery, and periphery. Membership of countries in one of these spheres dictates the possibilities of policy-making because of the divergence of valuable production processes along with the capital capabilities emerging from that. From this view, economic inequalities determine specific modalities of "[s]chooling, rather than serving the interests of the majority in the periphery, abets the process of capital accumulation by hegemonic actors" (Arnove 2009, 105). Global isomorphism might be inhibited through the different positions in this system. However, widening the agenda to also consider dependencies and hegemonic coercion, the World System approach leaves little room for intragroup differences on paths toward similar outcomes. Moreover, the theory is depicting a widespread institutional stasis in which most countries are locked in their position. This translates to a static policy arena in which, if ever, changes are rare and should overlap depending on the distance to the core.

Contrary to the purely constructivist and Marxist-oriented approaches, Cultural Political Economy (CPE) attributes changes in policy to a multitude of factors, including changing political and economic parameters (Dale 2000). Using a CPE framework, Toni Verger et al. (2016) focus specifically on developmental paths. The authors find that although global discourse on education privatization is surging and has to some

extent, elevated into a global norm, processes constituting the privatization and policy outcomes "can be extremely diverse in nature" (Verger et al. 2016, 148). The authors detect six different paths toward privatization. Thus, on the surface, seemingly congruent policy developments are comprised of polylithic trajectories that are influenced by different agents as well as different ideational, economic, and political rationales. The goal of the book by Verger et al. is an in-depth analysis of the different clusters of trajectories that led to education privatization. I build on that framework to quantitatively explore the routes compulsory education policy took in different locations around the world over 50 years.

All the approaches mentioned explain some similarities and dissimilarities of state education systems. Nonetheless, research has been mainly limited to a focus on either the origins, the output, or the outcome of education policy. Attempts at answering why nation-states initially required children to receive an education largely ignored differences in timing, sequencing, and the determining factors inherent to this contextual view. Research focuses on 'why' policies were implemented in the first place (e.g. Meyer et al. 1997; Wallerstein 2005). In this regard, event history approaches, although taking duration until an event seriously, have the caveat of a teleological focus, that is, the introduction of one (abstract) policy. While Seitzer, Besche-Truthe, and Windzio (Chap. 2) investigate the influence of cultural similarity regarding the introduction of compulsory education, the analysis stops at one point in time. Those attempts focus on a decisive answer on 'when' policy adoptions happen. Still, the method, by design, leaves blind spots, especially the possible steps taken until a predefined end-state is reached and focuses on one transition. Hence, it cannot answer the question of what happens after an initial adoption, and, since the method is focused on rather abstract policy determinants, it cannot answer exactly 'what' was adopted.

In outcome-centered research, duration of compulsory education is used as an independent variable in assessing the influence of longer schooling on enrollment and attendance (e.g. Landes and Solmon 1972), dropout rates (Diaz-Serrano 2020), poverty reduction (Zhang and Minxia 2006), fertility (Wilson 2017), health (Courtin et al. 2019), and so on (see also Stephens and Yang 2014 for a myriad of effects).

Precise investigations of the institutional change of compulsory education are a rare endeavor. When conducted, qualitative case studies account for the majority. These illustrate the highly conflictual nature of compulsory education laws. For instance, in the year 2000, after almost thirty years of denying the necessity of any law, the Singaporean government quite suddenly argued for ten years of compulsory education (Tan 2010). However, due to pressure from home-schooling parents and the Malay/Muslim community, attending mostly *madrasah* schools, compulsory education was finally introduced in 2000 with a duration of six years. Accordingly, Hodgson (2016) illustrates the remarkably ethical discourse regarding a proposed increase in duration within Western Australia. The policy discourse on extending the school-leaving age was highly idealistic and hinged on neoliberalist themes (Hodgson 2016, 502–503). Similar discourses, highlighting the need for longer education, especially for young people at risk, can be observed in a number of Western countries starting from the 2000s (Hodgson 2016, 495ff).

Contrary to the case studies, Murtin and Viarengo (2011) analyze factors influencing the expansion of compulsory education from 1950 to 2000 in fifteen European states. They detect strong evidence for *beta-convergence*: Countries with lower initial values extended the duration more than those with higher initial values. The most statistically compelling reason for the general trend of extending compulsory education is trade openness (Murtin and Viarengo 2011, 505). This does hold true for the investigated Western European cases, but leaves open whether the same mechanism can be detected in post- or nonindustrialized countries.

While Murtin and Viarengo (2011) focus on the role of economic influence when it comes to the expansion of compulsory education in postwar Europe, Chapter 2 introduces the connection of event history analysis with a relational approach. Nonetheless, empirical attempts like the ones just mentioned use models that compare country-years and not country-trajectories, leaving the specific developments per country unattended. They might give answers to 'what' policies were adopted as well as 'why' and 'when' those were adopted, but they are unable to discern 'in which order' changes happened. Only a focus on the developmental paths enables one to combine the juxtaposition of the origin, output, outcome, and the very steps that lead or decisively did not lead to the

state currently observed. This helps to recognize that any process is environed by its temporal location, its place within a sequence of occurrences (Pierson 2004, 172).

With this chapter, I aim to analyze compulsory education policy outlined in a way that takes sequences of change serious and, thus, investigates choices of policymakers around the globe structured through the progress of time. In this approach, policy outlines are not seen deterministically but due to structural factors like timing, order, and sequencing, display much more contingency than assumed by classic social science (Howlett and Goetz 2014, 480). In the words of Pierson (2004, 172), I want to know not just 'what' the duration of compulsory education was and 'when' change occurred but 'in which order' changes were made. As an additional feat, I am able to see 'for how long' the state of one policy was static and not changing at all.

Methodological Remarks

"For many years, our usual approach in sociology has been to think about cases independent of one another and, often, of the past" (Abbott 1995, 94). According to Abbott, empirical research erases the stories behind social reality by focusing on causality based on some variables' manifestations. Contingent narratives become impossible (Abbott 1992, 429). However, this does not apply to all research. There have been remarkable attempts at describing the emergence of compulsory education laws and the expansion of education opportunities, which take the past and specifically social action into account. This action is either intentional—motivated first and foremost by economic situations and interdependencies as in a capitalist World System—or unintentional—motivated by institutionalized ideals in a World Culture. However, these theories have been starkly criticized by empirically oriented researchers for lacking causal variable-oriented applications. These critiques are correct in their assessment but wrong in their solutions. What is missing in current research, especially in political science, is a thorough description of policies, their histories, and evolutions. Although not a new methodology, it is worth mentioning the unique techniques of Japanese comparative education. In

their view, the primary focus should be on the description of unique features within a given area of study "rather than the discovery of 'universal' laws and theories" (Takayama 2015, 39).

By placing compulsory education policy as the focal point, I aim to analyze the policy's trajectories globally. In SQA, the unit of analysis is the sequence itself. This goes further than a time-series, cross-section model because I do not rip apart yearly observations of compulsory education durations nor try to correlate yearly measured variables on these dependent values. Event History Analysis takes time seriously, especially process time until an event. Unfortunately, it is focused only on a transition from one category to another. It thereby leaves more complex steps unattended. Instead, I take the whole trajectory of compulsory education duration as one case. The aim is to first separately describe the trajectories of the duration of compulsory education for a large number of countries and then to search for patterns of similar trajectories. Through the recontextualization, that is, regarding institutional change not as single incidents but the focus on the very development of one policy, I am able to answer questions, previous research was unable to ask: In which order did the extension of compulsory education occur? When were critical junctures that changed the outlook of compulsory education? How is a policy developing not in one country but in relation to other countries as well as to time? Hence, I argue that it is important 'when' institutionalization of a specific duration of compulsory education occurs. It is furthermore important to investigate how these embedded aspects interact with the broader social context of other nation-states' policy developments (see Pierson 2004, 77f). Analyzing sequences allows me to identify linkages between processes in distinct spaces and at distinct points in time.

My dataset contains the number of years of compulsory education as defined in the legal framework. In building the dataset, I started with data from the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), where more historic data have been added from a variety of sources.[2] In total, the dataset covers 167 countries over a time span of fifty years from 1970 until 2020. In-depth analyses of certain cases illustrate difficulties regarding sources

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[2] I am especially grateful to my research assistant Philip Roth for helping to compile this vast and encompassing dataset of which I only use a small amount.

and the correct definition of compulsory education. For instance, while the UIS website describes the compulsory education in Guatemala as encompassing all children aged 0–15, which would result in sixteen years of compulsory education, the International Bureau of Education (2011) states that compulsory education consists of 3 years preprimary, 6 years primary, and 3 years secondary education; culminating in twelve years. The latter value has finally been coded. In case of uncertainties for countries with state responsibility over education, for example, Canada, the coding has been oriented on the law established for the most populated state or the capital. In any case, it tries to mirror what UNESCO reports on the federal nation-state. The data are available in the Welfare State Information System (https://wesis.org).

As previously noted, I am not interested in the specific time point of the policy's first introduction, but rather in the trajectory. Thus, in the following analysis, I start my inquiry after a surge of former colonies gained independence for more consistency. The data were recoded into sequences using the R package TraMineR (Gabadinho et al. 2011): "[S]equences are made of three basic dimensions: the *nature* of the successive states, chosen among the alphabet; the *order* in which they occur; [and] their *duration*, that is, the duration of constant subsequences" (Blanchard 2011, 4 emphasis in original). In my case, the nature of the state is the number of years of compulsory education. The sequences are ordered according to successive years in calendar time. Changes in the duration of compulsory education have been coded according to the de jure implementation of the policy.

Sequences of the Duration of Compulsory Education

Figure 3.1 shows all sequences ordered by their starting value in the year 1970. The horizontal lines, each represents one nation-state and the colors show the valid duration of compulsory education in that specific year. One can see that a few sequences show no change in their duration. These countries have a stagnant trajectory. On the other hand, some seem very
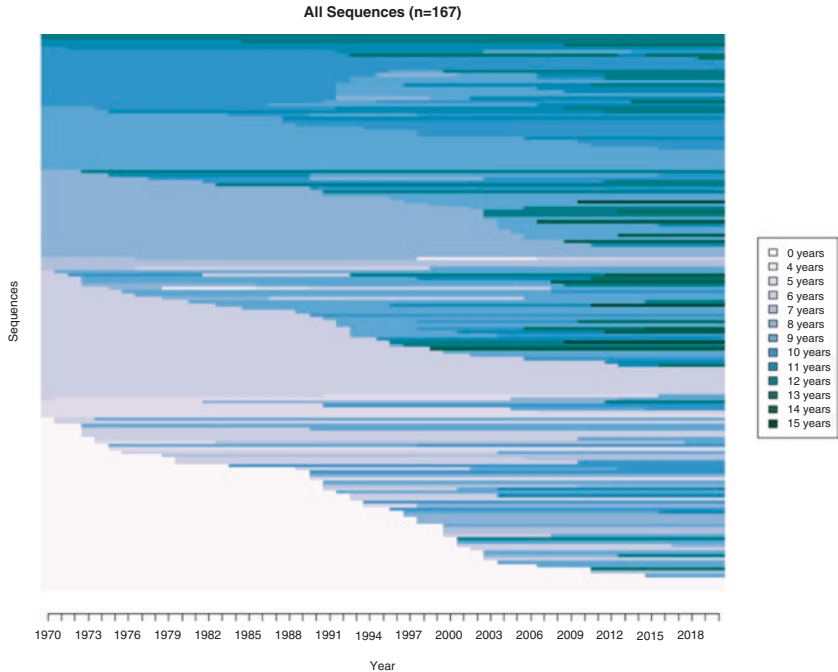
Fig. 3.1   All sequences of the duration of compulsory education policy

active in policy changes. One can discern a general trend toward more years of compulsory education. However, timing and actual extension, that is, by how many years, is difficult to systematize with this first large-scale observation.

To provide a better overview and a first glance at different trajectories, Figs. 3.2 and 3.3 show the sequences grouped by *income group* and *cultural spheres*, which have been used in Chap. 2. Following economic arguments, I would suspect stark differences between income groups and coherent trajectories within a group. If a World Culture is influential, I would suspect no discernible differences in the economic as well as in the cultural spheres.

Through an economic grouping of the trajectories, one can see that although some countries never changed the duration of their compulsory schooling, a dynamic is detectable. General differences become a bit
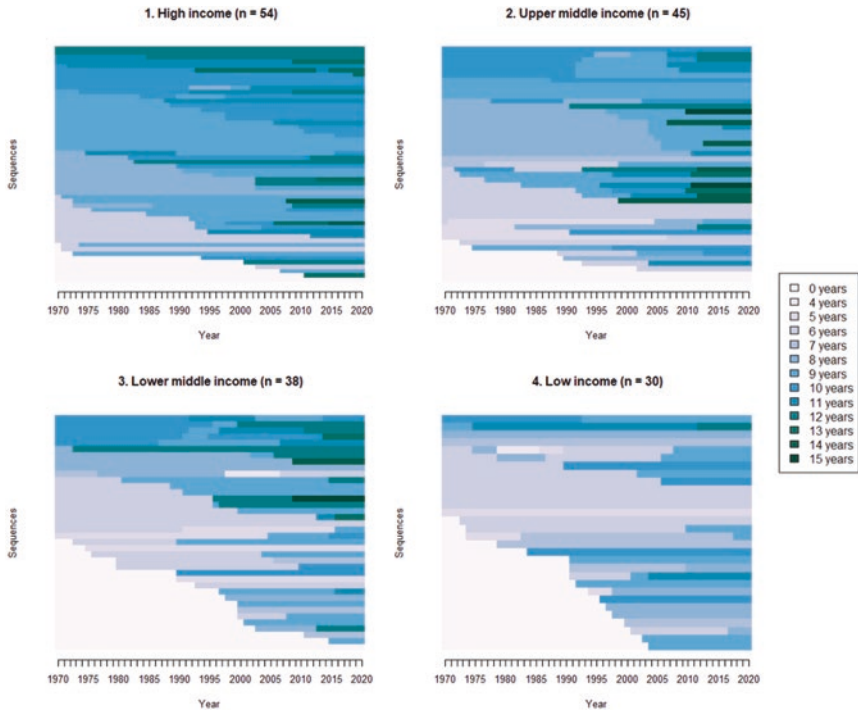
Fig. 3.2 Sequences grouped by income classification according to the WDI by the World Bank

more discernible when looking at different income groups. However, there is remarkable variance in the four different groups as defined in the World Development Indicators (WDI). The durations range from five to fifteen years in lower middle-income countries and from six to fourteen years in high-income countries. One can detect on average, high-income countries have longer durations of compulsory schooling with a mean of around 11 years. In contrast, low-income countries have around eight years of compulsory education on average. The largest differences are detectable in the middle-income groups, in which we see a similar pattern of average durations in upper middle-income countries, which have higher values than lower middle-income groups. Interestingly, there are countries surpassing high-income countries in duration with fourteen to fifteen years of compulsory education. These high values are possible
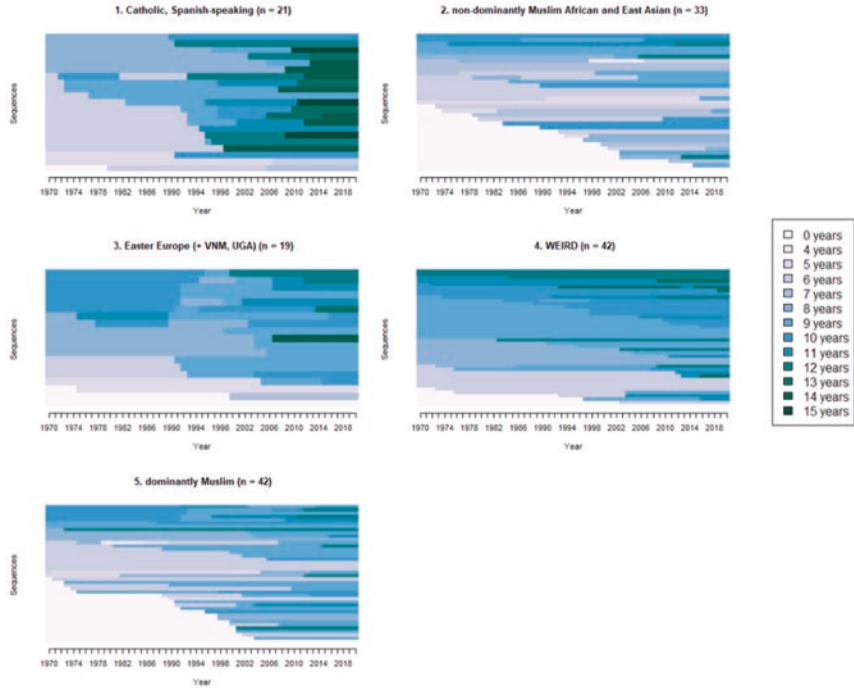
Fig. 3.3 Sequences grouped by cultural spheres

when preprimary education becomes compulsory—policies high-income countries seem unwilling to introduce (GSP Digest 2019).

Regarding grouping by cultural spheres (Fig. 3.3), there are huge intra-cultural differences observable. In 'dominantly Muslim' countries, the durations range from five to twelve years from the 2000s onward. Given the theoretical framing of this edited volume (Chap. 1), one can detect a tendency toward likeness in culturally similar groups and concurrently, a resistance toward an increasing global isomorphism. This becomes evident from the stark differences regarding the duration in compulsory education between the 'WEIRD' and 'Catholic, Spanish-speaking' countries. In the latter, the general trend toward compulsory preprimary education is detectable through the very high durations of compulsory education, which in most cases means an earlier start to education rather than a later completion. Since UNESCO (2000) is largely propagating

these models, vertical interdependencies seem to be an accelerator for that phenomenon. However, 'WEIRD' countries are largely holding back from implementing policies regarding preprimary education as mandatory.

Additionally, groupings by democratization level in the years 1970, 1992, 2000, or 2018 (not presented here) do not show similarities in trajectories. The grouped sequences are very diverse in their outset. Nevertheless, the duration of compulsory schooling per se might have a strong effect on democratization itself, making it an inverse relationship (as suggested by Paglayan 2020).

In sum, we can deduce partial evidence for countries in higher income groups having longer durations of compulsory education earlier. However, this does not manifest in a simplistic center, semi-periphery, and periphery manner. Aside from the intragroup differences, it is still interesting to see that the semi-periphery, operationalized through the upper middle-income group, exceeds a large portion of the high-income group at the end of the observation. Especially the surge of making preprimary education compulsory in South American countries contributes to the picture. Taking diffusion mechanisms seriously, I do not expect to observe perfect homogeneity in development paths. Indeed, the heterogeneity is detectable, especially in later years of the time frame. However, these differences go beyond what would be expected by a diffusion mechanism that assumes a one-sided direction from Western countries to others in the world. In other words, the norms of an ever-increasing grip on childhood—which decisively includes education for very young children—overtook the former hegemonic WEIRD countries. In the future, one might expect to see the pattern develop as non-WEIRD countries adopt compulsory preprimary education first and through the interplay of horizontal and vertical interdependencies, the policy spreads around the globe. This direction is the opposite of what is observed within compulsory education in general (see Chap. 2). Lastly, it shows the investigation timing is relevant because the picture will probably look very different in 2030 or later.

Clustering the Trajectories

For answering the question on how trajectories might be grouped together, it is now time to benefit from SQA as a metric analysis tool that searches for similar patterns across a multitude of sequences (Abbott 1995, 105). SQA makes it possible to compute distances between sequences and classify specific trajectories. The *Optimal Matching* (OM) algorithm lends itself perfectly for assessing dissimilarity. In a nutshell, the algorithm calculates which values of a sequence, when compared to another one, need to be changed to make the two sequences look similar. Thus, "an OM distance is the sum of two terms, a weighted sum of time shifts (indels) and a weighted sum of the mismatches (substitutions) remaining after the time shifts" (Studer and Ritschard 2016, 14). The algorithm goes through all the sequences and calculates the least 'costly' set of operations necessary to turn one sequence into another. Here, costs refer to values that have been assigned to operations, that is, the weights for every single operation, which get summarised in the end to define dissimilarity between sequences.

Since we are not only dealing with ordered values but also metric ones, I opted to define the weights for operations in a straightforward manner. A substitution of eight years of compulsory education with nine years costs 0.1, substituting eight years with twelve years costs 0.4. Thus, the costs are proportionate to the actual difference in duration of compulsory schooling. The only nonlinear substitution is present when a country has no compulsory education law at a given time, that is, they have a duration of zero years of compulsory education. Substituting this by any number of years has the overall maximum weight of 1.5, thus representing the stark differences between having some form of mandatory education and having none at all. Studer and Ritschard (2016) report that by defining the costs for *indel* operations, researchers can influence the time sensitivity of the algorithm. High values render the distance measure very time sensitive because substitutions become increasingly cheaper than shifting sequences. Accordingly, I set the indel costs as low as mathematically meaningful to 0.8 so that the analysis would be as independent of small differences in the timing of policy enactment as possible. In the

end, it is not my goal to overestimate time differences. For example, Indonesia and Syria both changed the duration of compulsory education from six to nine years; however, the former did so in 2003 and the latter in 2002. This one-year difference between them should not be more highly valued than the closeness in their actual overlapping trajectory.

Let us consider the example sequences of Mexico and Panama's durations of compulsory education from 1990 to 2010 in Fig. 3.4. Both countries start with a duration of six years of compulsory education but follow different paths after five observations. While the lower sequence (Panama) shows only one change in the state of the policy, that is, from six to eleven years, the one at the top (Mexico) shows a gradual increase regarding the duration of mandatory education from six to nine, and then eleven years. In this example, the algorithm, despite the low indel costs, opts for only substituting the values to calculate dissimilarity. For the period of 1993–1994, this means a sum of 0.3 + 0.3 and for the period of 1995–2000, this means the sum of the difference of 0.2 for a duration of six years. The dissimilarity is thus: $0.3*2 + 0.2*6 = 1.8$.

The output of the OM calculation is a matrix that depicts the dissimilarity of countries' compulsory education law trajectories in the years 1970–2020. Using this matrix, I calculate clusters with the *PAM* (partitioning around medoids) algorithm as described by Kaufman and Rousseeuw (1990). The goal of this clustering algorithm is to assign each object to the nearest representative object. The representative object is defined "as that object of the cluster for which the average dissimilarity to all the objects of the cluster is minimal." (Kaufman and Rousseeuw 1990, 72). Although an *elbow* and *silhouette* test suggests four and two clusters, respectively, I opted, after several runs of the algorithm, for an
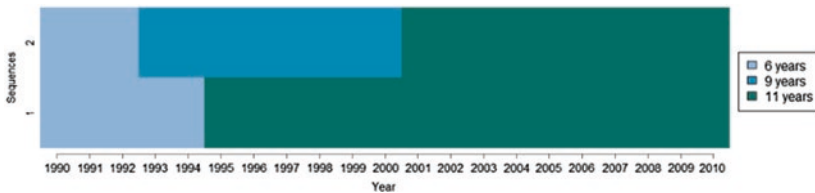
Fig. 3.4 Example sequences (Mexico and Panama from 1990–2010)

eight-cluster solution. In a four-cluster solution, almost two-thirds of sequences would be part of one cluster, making the intracluster differences too high to analyze. Nevertheless, the tests show that I operate on rather slim margins. Holding true to the explorative goal of this chapter, this solution gives insights previously unseen. However, some intercluster differences are difficult to account for. Moreover, changing the time frame certainly changes the clustering. It is imperative to, again, stress that this chapter is not intended to draw causal relations or all-encompassing judgments from the clustering presented here. Nonetheless, we can generally take hints and insights from this endeavor.

Hence, the chosen solution produces clusters that are coherent in their trajectories and still downsized in a way that makes it possible to analyze and describe them. In Fig. 3.5, the trajectories of the eight distinct
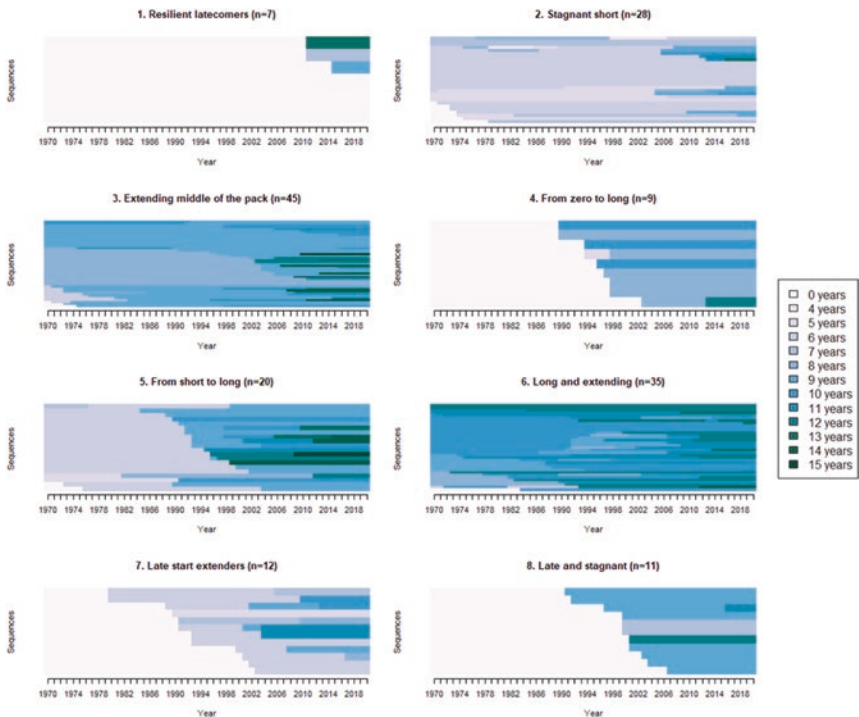
Fig. 3.5 Sequences grouped by cluster

clusters are shown. Next, I describe the different groups of trajectories separately.

Resilient Latecomers (Cluster 1)

The first cluster consists mostly of countries that did not introduce any compulsory education up until 2020. Although four countries introduced the policy very late and with large variation in durations, these are still part of the cluster. Similarity to one another for a long time, that is, having no compulsory education policy, is the key factor in building this cluster. After several years, we could expect the countries to become increasingly different in their durations, therefore, more similar to countries in other clusters. A large intragroup variety is visible, especially regarding countries that introduced any compulsion late. For instance, while Aruba introduced compulsory education with a duration of 13 years, Zambia's first legislation mandates almost half of that.

Stagnant Short (Cluster 2)

Countries in this cluster started with short durations of compulsory education in 1970. After its introduction, there is a general tendency for an increase in the duration of compulsory education for some countries. The extensions are moderate and not as large as in the fifth cluster. However, this development began later in the 2000s, if at all. In the Philippines, six-year primary education was compulsory until 2011. In the same year, with the enactment of the K-12 reforms, secondary education was extended from four to six years and divided into two levels: four years of Junior High School and two years of Senior High School. All six years of secondary education are compulsory and free of charge for public schools. Additionally, one-year preprimary education became mandatory, which culminates to a total duration of thirteen years. In Rwanda, on the other hand, compulsory education started in 1962 with six years of primary school. A 1979 reform tried to extend primary school, but this did not hold for long and as ethnic tensions grew, the grades were essentially

eliminated again. After the genocide, Rwanda followed quite a unique path and extended compulsory education via the '9-Year-Basic-Education Policy' in 2007 to extend mandatory education through senior secondary school which is still regarded as basic education (Mathisen 2012, 108–9).

Extending Middle of the Pack (Cluster 3)

Consisting of forty-five countries, this is the largest cluster by far and it naturally shows the largest intragroup differences when regarding it as cross sections for specific years. Concerning the trajectories, however, we see that it mostly starts with middle-range durations. While very few countries decrease the duration for a short period of time, most increase it starting as early as the 1970s. The trajectories show a rather similar path: extensions of duration occur in two waves, at the end of the 1970s and around the 2010s. Especially during the latter wave, it seems that the duration of compulsory education converges toward rather long ones. For instance, the Dominican Republic shows the highest duration of compulsory education, that is, fifteen years in 2010. This was achieved by extending compulsion to three years of preprimary education. It now includes children from ages three to seventeen at the end of secondary education. The trajectory is similar to Ecuador's, in that both extend the durations gradually over time. This pattern of extending compulsory education toward younger children is also detectable in Brazil, Chile, and Costa Rica. Nonetheless, not all countries in cluster 3 end up with these high durations: While Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia extended compulsory education by one year in the 2000s, Croatia stayed with eight years throughout the time frame.

From Zero to Long (Cluster 4)

This particular cluster consists of countries with no compulsory education until roughly 1990 but then introduced long durations of ten to eleven years. While both Belize and Sudan introduced compulsory education in 1990 with a duration of eight years, Malawi started with five

years of duration, which was then extended to eight years. The longest duration is mandated for children in Kenya. It was the last country in this cluster to introduce compulsion in 2008 but then became a frontrunner by extending the duration from eight to twelve years of education.

From Short to Long (Cluster 5)

Contrary to the previous cluster, these countries implemented compulsory education by 1970. Starting in the mid to late 1980s, the previously short durations were extended, in some cases by a large margin reaching durations of up to fifteen years. The timing for these extensions is earlier than most countries within cluster 3. Paraguay and Argentina have similar paths; they both started with six years of compulsory education and extended the duration to nine, ten and eventually thirteen years, with Argentina extending to fourteen years. The largest difference in timing of these policies is only three years and while Paraguay was a bit earlier in the 1990s, Argentina is now quicker to extend. Another example of these steady extensions includes Turkey: When the Republic was founded in 1923, five years of primary education for six to eleven-year-olds became compulsory. From 1997 onward, compulsory education encompassed eight years of primary school, after which pupils could receive a secondary non-mandatory education at a four-year lyceum. "Another reform abolished the continuous primary school education and replaced it in 2012/2013 with a three-level, 12-year compulsory schooling divided into a 4-year primary school, a 4-year middle school, and a 4-year lyceum" (Karakaşoğlu and Tonbul 2015, 828).

Finally, a somewhat unconventional path becomes evident when looking at Thailand, where compulsory education was initially expanded in 1960 from four to seven years by extending the primary education by three years. However, after democratization in 1977, the system was rebuilt and the length of primary school was decreased by one year, which was added to upper secondary school, in effect decreasing compulsory education. Nevertheless, with the National Education Plan of 1999, lower secondary became compulsory, resulting in a duration of nine years.

Long and Extending (Cluster 6)

Subsumed under the headline of this cluster are countries that already started with long durations of compulsory education in 1970. Almost all of them went on to extend these long durations further down the line. No waves of extensions can be detected. Moreover, those at the bottom in the 1970s converged toward the long durations of roughly fourteen years, showing a good exemplary case of uncoordinated beta-convergence. This holds especially true for the rather nonlinear trajectory Peru shows: In 1972, the first three years of secondary education were moved to basic education, which made it compulsory and extended the duration from six to ten years. However, this reform was abolished in the 1980s bringing the former structure back (Chuquilin Cubas 2011). Then, the constitution of 1993 declared education as compulsory for preprimary, primary, and secondary levels again (Marlow-Ferguson 2002, 1047). In the end, compulsion was extended to upper secondary education, resulting in fourteen years of compulsory education.

Another decrease in compulsory schooling happened in Azerbaijan, where after the fall of the USSR compulsory education law prescribed a nine years' duration, instead of the former ten years. Nevertheless, after some time, the duration was extended to eleven years in 2011. Interestingly, this new Education Law, making general secondary education mandatory, makes the Azerbaijani education system almost entirely conform to the principles of the Bologna process (International Bureau of Education 2011).

Late Start Extenders (Cluster 7)

Countries here start with no compulsory education, although these policies had been introduced in 2014 at the very latest. The trajectories are similar to those in cluster 4; however, the first introduction shows a rather short duration. Nonetheless, a decisive tendency for longer durations is detectable. While Cabo Verde extended compulsory education from six to ten years right away, Lebanon shows a stepwise extension from six to nine and finally ten years. Malaysia introduced compulsory education in

2003 with a duration of six years and did not alter this policy. This holds true for Cameroon and Singapore as well. Given the discussions in Singapore before the introduction of compulsory education, described above, it is clear why the government might be hesitant to extend compulsory education, although the government initially advocated for a longer duration (Tan 2010).

Late and Stagnant (Cluster 8)

Similar to the previous cluster and the *From zero to long* cluster, countries here had no compulsory education in the 1970s. In most cases, there was no change since the introduction at the end of the 1990s. This is shown by the trajectories of Yemen and Mali in which a nine-year compulsory education was introduced in 1991 and 1992, respectively. These policies still stand today. In Qatar, on the other hand, compulsory education was introduced later in the Compulsory Education Law No. 25 of 2001 covering primary and secondary education that culminate in twelve years of education. Sri Lanka is the only member of this cluster that extended the duration of compulsory schooling by expanding compulsion through senior secondary school, that is, Grade 11.

A Global Picture on Clusters of Compulsory Education Duration

Finally, I look at the global picture of the duration of compulsory education. Figure 3.5 shows the difficulty of choosing the correct clustering method, since it remains unclear why some trajectories are part of one cluster and not another. Especially, some countries in cluster 3 (*Extending middle of the pack*) and cluster 6 (*Long and extending*) have very similarly looking trajectories. So, we need to review the global picture with the caveat that always comes with drawing strict distinctions where ranges would be more appropriate. When regarding a longer time frame, say from 1900 to today, I suspect the two mentioned clusters (depicted in purple and yellow) to be part of a similar supercluster. Nevertheless, we

see subtle differences on average, so I urge readers not to draw conclusive absolutes of, for example, 'Canada is significantly different from the US', but rather, acknowledge differences in the developments of the duration of compulsory education, as subtle as they may be.

Moreover, there are several key elements that we can take away from this endeavor: As opposed to cross-sectional observations, examining trajectories helps highlight differences and similarities that would not have been visible before. Some countries followed a specific wave of either introducing or extending compulsory education starting from the 1990s until the mid-2000s. After that, the pace and margins of extensions increased, especially concerning countries that have had shorter durations of compulsory education. One first intuitive correlation might be traced back to international initiatives, especially the Education for All Framework for Action, which might have had a large impact on countries to either introduce or extend compulsory education.

Furthermore, the degree to which domestic factors vary in clusters is striking. For a comparison, I defined the dominant religion of a country in 1970, in that at least 33% of the population is adherent to it as well as the Gender Rights variable used in building the cultural spheres. The latter is an index that combines the "Women's political empowerment index" (Sundström et al. 2015) and the "Exclusion by Gender Index" (Coppedge et al. 2019) from the Varieties of Democracy Project. The former takes its raw data from the World Religion Dataset (Maoz and Henderson 2013). Additionally, I investigated the percentage of high- and low-income countries in the distinct clusters. Although there is at least one high-income country in every cluster, the highest percentages are in the *Long and extending*, the *Extending middle of the pack* and interestingly, also one in the cluster of *Resilient latecomers*. Furthermore, against first intuition, in the group of *Resilient latecomers* no country is defined as low income. In other clusters at least one low-income country can be found: in the *From zero to long* almost half of the countries and in the *Late and stagnant* cluster even more than half are low-income countries. Moreover, the *Long and extending* cluster shows the highest mean of the Gender Rights value, while the *Late and stagnant* countries show the lowest mean value. Interestingly, the *Stagnant short* countries have the second lowest mean gender value. Concerning the dominant religion

there is no pattern discernible. In every cluster, at least half of the members have Christianity as a dominant religion, except the *Resilient late-comers*, where the percentage of countries is still over 40%. The *Extending middle of the pack* with the *Stagnant short* shows the highest variability in dominant religions, being made up of Animist and Syncretic religions, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, and nonreligious persons. Again, this shows that with rather broad domestic variables it is hardly possible to find correlations on compulsory education policy trajectories.

Additionally, when plotting the previously described cluster onto a world map (Fig. 3.6), it is astonishing to see that for some clusters a geographic pattern is hardly detectable. The largest cluster of the *Extending middle of the pack* is scattered throughout Southern, Central, and Eastern Europe, South America, and North Africa. A slight North-South difference can be noticed, which shows that some sub-Saharan as well as Southeast Asian countries are clustered together. Some striking evidence we can gather from this map is that there seems to be weak colonial
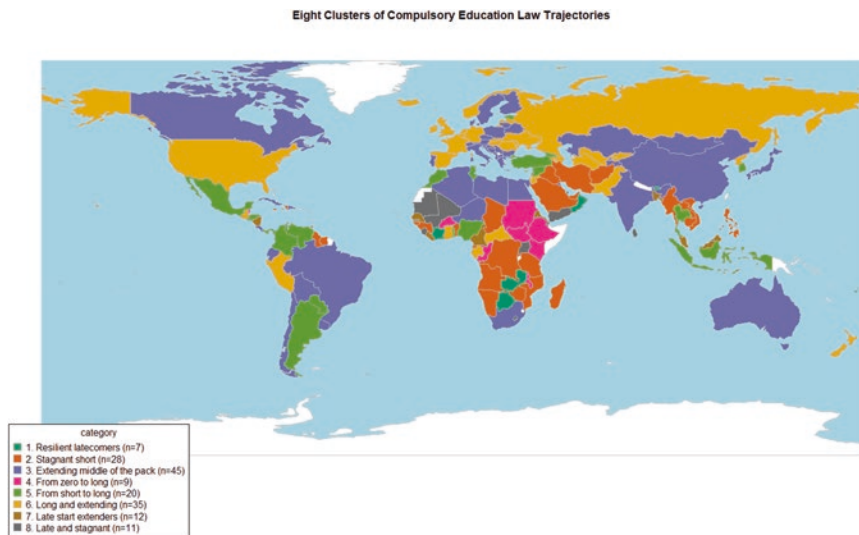
Fig. 3.6 World map showing countries' membership in clusters of trajectories of the duration of compulsory education

heritage discernible, if any. The United Kingdom (UK), except in combination with South Africa, has a different compulsory education policy since 1970 than most of its former colonies. For example, India and former British colonies in sub-Saharan Africa not only differ in their trajectories with one another but also with the UK. This also holds true for other colonies of European states. Furthermore, after the breakup of the USSR, some countries seem to follow distinctly different paths than their former Union countries.

The goal of this chapter is not to draw conclusive or even causal statements about the development of compulsory education policy. However, what I can show is that international comparative education should refrain from 'easy' and overly hasty explanations. Nation-states as diverse as Belgium, Guatemala, and North Korea (*Long and extending*) show similarity regarding their trajectories of compulsory education policy. This could excite new ways of international comparative education research.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I started with the observation that recent international comparative education research has advanced at a rapid pace. Notions of an isomorphism of national education systems overshadow the actual analysis of different developmental paths of single elements of these systems. Past scholarship has been focused on the origins, output, or outcome of compulsory education legislation. In contrast, I argued to take into account the whole trajectories of education policy and use them as the focal point of research. This recontextualization in terms of environing policy changes in time and relation to other countries yields the possibility to simultaneously answer questions on 'what' policy change looks like as well as 'when' and 'in which order' this happens or does not happen.

With the help of sequence analysis tools, I demonstrated that when looking at the duration of compulsory education from 1970 until 2020, durations of compulsory education and their development paths show large differences that cannot be explained at first glance by crude

classifications of economic development or cultural spheres. However, it is possible to generally discern, that higher income countries, on average, have longer durations of compulsory education and 'Catholic, Spanish-speaking' nation-states have high durations. The latter is probably due to a shift of norms regarding mandatory, preprimary education. It seems that we are witnessing a new diffusion dynamic in which policy innovation starts in non-Western states but transfers to the West in the future.

I set out to quantitatively cluster countries together based solely on their actual trajectories of compulsory education law. Eight clusters have been described, which, on the one hand, show remarkable overlap but, on the other hand, still have large intragroup variances. However, we can take hints from this clustering. For example, there are some regional specialties and, generally, higher income means earlier extension on average as well as longer durations of compulsory education in general. Furthermore, a second wave of introduction and extension of compulsory education seems to correlate—at least time-wise—with the increasing intensity of international discourses like Education for All or the Sustainable Development Goals, for example. While the first started at the World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien in 1990 and was renewed in the Dakar Framework for Action in 2000, the latter are currently shaping education policies around the world since 2015.

However, these are the first intuitions and do not claim causal relationships.

Moreover, accepting the clustering leads to imprecision when reviewing it as set-in-stone boundaries. Similarly, to what is argued in Chaps. 1 and 2, the social reality of policy change shows overlaps that are changing throughout time and space. The clusters observed look different from ones built from sequences starting in 1900 and will look different when observed in 2050.

Nonetheless, the information gathered here shows clearly the numerous, different paths, even though clustering proves difficult. Trying to discern broad trends in domestic factors is almost impossible. The precise interplay of political ideology, global discourses, and especially regional/cultural discourses can have an impact on trajectories. This complexity is difficult to discern. However, with this descriptive investigation, I have found possible avenues where scholarship might be able to place further

focus. In my view, this should motivate researchers to take a step back and take stock of the complexity found in the real world of education policies. It is tedious work but should nonetheless be done in order to understand what is really going on in a global education sphere that shows isomorphism only in a very abstract way.

Going forward, I suggest keeping the following in mind: To actualize complexity does not inhibit researching on a macro-level; rather, it should motivate us to do it more often in an all-encompassing way. Different and complex trajectories do not end in one telos but are instead open for debates situated in different locations and different times. The complexity of nation-states' education systems should be systematically described and analyzed before turning toward actual explanations that most probably will not yield one-size-fits-all solutions. I took a first step in that direction. Future research should take the insights presented in this chapter and expand on other constitutive parts of education systems. One should also focus on what determinants are influential in bringing about trajectories that unfold in a specific sequential order. Such an analysis should involve interdependencies between countries as well as national factors. A thorough and structured analysis could yield more insights into the global developmental paths of education systems. Furthermore, using this study as the starting point, new theories on the international transfer of education system characteristics could be possible. Taking a step back and considering the bigger picture helps in highlighting the shortcomings of research that global education policy needs to address.

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4

Does Globalization Affect the Performance of Secondary Education Systems? A Coevolution Model of Multiplex Transnational Networks and Educational Performance

Helen Seitzer and Michael Windzio

Introduction[1]

In today's globalized world, interactions between countries are manifold, where borders are fading. Globalization itself is a complex, multidimensional process. The *concept* of globalization refers to the historical development toward more interconnectedness between nation-states. It is also closely tied to the differential power of nation-states within a hierarchical

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world system. Furthermore, countries exert power to influence the global distribution of economic capital (Wallerstein 1995). Countries became connected due to a multitude of reasons such as economic exchange, diffusion of culture, increasing trends in global migration, the international organization of politics, new techniques of communication, and easier access to long-distance transportation (Meyer et al. 1992; Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Castles et al. 2014; Windzio et al. 2010).

Nonetheless, asserting that the world becomes increasingly globalized and interconnected to the point where nation-states lose—or even *should* lose—their relevance in almost all respects is oversimplifying things. Rather than accepting this assumption, we should study the effects of globalization within various fields of society, for instance, on the performance of secondary education institutions. The rationale behind the assumption of globalization affecting societal outcomes is that more interconnectedness and exchanges between countries require similar attitudes and values, which can be expressed in similar policies and institutional structures. Similarity can be purposefully demonstrated by adopting similar institutional structures to facilitate more between-country exchanges. The participation in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an example of these converging institutions. This, and the subsequent reforms in education systems, influence educational outcomes and the performance of secondary educational institutions.

Globalization can be driven by horizontal interdependencies between nation-states, for example, by global trade or migration, or it can be a result of vertical interdependencies between nation-states and international organizations (IOs) (Dobbin et al. 2007; Obinger et al. 2013; Kuhlmann et al. 2020). Empirical research should take up the challenge to investigate whether horizontal interdependencies exist and if they do, which mechanisms are driving policy diffusion in the respective field. According to the literature, the basic explanations for diffusion are (1)

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learning, adoption of policies due to (2) competition, (3) imitation, or (4) coercion (Dobbin et al. 2007; Obinger et al. 2013). Correspondingly, in the case of education policy, competition for graduates and a hegemonic position in reputation due to educational quality drives the diffusion of education system characteristics, either causing countries to imitate or learn.

Since the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) first published their PISA in 2000 and ranked the participating countries according to their educational performance, existing research has revealed considerable influence of these rankings on domestic education policymaking (Niemann 2014; Martens et al. 2014). By publishing these benchmarks, the OECD stimulated the above-mentioned competition among those countries that considered education an important condition for their economic and social development. In the literature, this has been described as vertical interdependence between IOs and countries participating in or observing the PISA studies. Being interconnected within global networks in a competitive situation provides many opportunities to learn from or to imitate better-performing countries. Diffusion by learning or imitation can be a way of coping with the intensified competition. The increased performance in secondary education is ultimately an outcome of this diffusion process.

In this study, we take a macro-quantitative approach to diffusion through vertical and horizontal interdependencies. We focus on domestic secondary education systems and investigate whether three subdimensions of globalization affect their performance: the global exchange of tertiary students, global migration, and global service sector trade. We utilize relational and time-varying measures of these globalization indicators. More precisely, these indicators are dynamic *networks* in which the set of countries remains constant, but the ties among them change over time. By analyzing the coevolution of these networks and countries' performance in the PISA study, we can simultaneously test the impact of globalization on domestic secondary education systems and investigate the impact of performance in the PISA study on global exchange patterns. Our assumption is, therefore, that countries that are highly interconnected due to these networks are just that due to their educational outcomes. We expect, for example, that a *difference* in performance might

influence service sector trade toward higher-scoring countries, which then stimulates lower-scoring countries to reinvent their education system to compete in the game of hegemonic education.

The exchange of persons, whether short term for educational purposes in terms of student mobility or permanently in the form of migration flows, ties countries together but often presupposes institutionalized conditions that allow this exchange to occur in the first place. In the interconnected web of entities, a country's reputation or prestige (Alderson and Beckfield 2004) is one factor determining institutionalized exchanges. However, it is not countries as abstract entities that form reputations among one another but rather everyday people who hold judgments on and prejudices against countries, thus helping to establish their reputation (Beghin and Park 2019). The question here is whether long-established and stable interrelations, such as migration or trade flows, are being redirected by recent changes in countries' reputations. PISA significantly influences the perception of a country's educational quality through the triennial rankings of student achievement, but this influence does not necessarily surpass the prejudice of local customs (Waldow et al. 2014). This new threat to national legitimacy and reputation raises the question of whether similarities and differences in PISA scores and rankings influence student exchange, migration patterns, and service sector trade flows. Are persons looking to migrate aware of a country's reputation due to PISA rankings and, therefore, follow this pattern, or are these exchange flows uniquely dependent on institutionalized pathways, which are not threatened by changes in an international reputation? Moreover, do countries adapt to the performance of countries that they are tied to in the global network?

Theory

International relations at the country level are influenced by a multitude of national factors, including but not limited to shared goals and standards (e.g. the establishment of the Sustainable Development Goals or human rights). According to Wallerstein's World Systems Theory, education adapts to accommodate the spread of capitalism (Wallerstein 1995).

However, this focus is heavily dependent on an economic perspective, dismissing all other influences on the diffusion of education policy. Groundbreaking in this theory, however, is the growing interdependence of nation-states. From this perspective, international migration and increased student exchanges may be a result and function of the spread of capitalism. The core–periphery structure of the world described in Wallerstein's theory suggests that people from the 'periphery' are drawn to the 'core' of the world system, regardless of national borders. Similarly, capital, but also educational hegemony is distributed unequally throughout the system with core-countries possessing not only the lion's share in an economic sense but also the power to influence, accept, or reject policy suggestions from other parties such as IOs. In turn, aspects of education systems are diffused to the periphery from the core. An extreme case of this demonstration of educational hegemony lies in the diffusion of the language of instruction from the colonizers to the colonies (Griffiths and Arnove 2015). Given the fact that PISA was not only developed *in* a rather central country (France) but was also initially developed *for* central European countries, taken together with the criticism of PISA's Eurocentrism and cultural bias (Zhao 2020), it could be assumed that these central countries would perform significantly better in the test than more peripheral countries. Central countries in the network of student exchange and migration would rank higher in PISA, while peripheral countries catch up over time. Service sector trade might have the opposite effect, as countries with lower scores most likely take on more 'outsourced' labor from countries with a higher rank in PISA. Wallerstein suggests that these networks tend to converge to a maximum before the network evolution comes to a halt. This theory, however, does not account for the potential influence of PISA scores on the network patterns; instead, it may suggest no influence at all.

Another theory on the homogenization of the world originated in the 'Stanford school' of global isomorphism. John Meyer and colleagues' World Society Theory (Meyer et al. 1997) accounts for the homogenization of education systems and the international alignment of goals, such as PISA participation, along with the joint acceptance of a model of democracy and human rights. This theory highlights the importance of legitimacy due to the acceptance of world polity standards. The theory

does not explicitly predict an increase in global interaction as Wallerstein's theory suggests. It does, however, account for the creation and spread of 'myths' of countries' reputations, thus allowing the potential to create a reputation that contributes to the pull factors of migration and student exchange. This is where PISA rankings unfold their influence: The rankings inform the 'myth' of a country, influencing the popular perception of the quality of public (welfare) policy through implementing the notion of a good education system. This in turn fosters international relations and potentially increases migration flow.

Wallerstein includes a stronger account of the core–periphery structure of migration patterns through the emphasis on commodification, which Meyer and Ramirez's theory does not. PISA rankings are often associated with development, which would indicate a correlation of PISA scores and a more central network position, meaning a greater influx of people, which is in line with Wallerstein's approach. Meyer's theory would suggest a similar association but would predict an increase in migration inflow due to the changing popularity of a country. However, we will not be able to disentangle the differentiation between both mechanisms in this study. Instead, what we can test is whether there is indeed an increasing influx of people, coevolving with the change in PISA scores.

Both theories could shed some light on migration patterns as well as student mobility. They suggest that participation in PISA may influence international relations, with Wallerstein's theory emphasizing the economic aspects, whereas Meyer and colleagues' theory indicates a more culturally driven approach. While the former suggests a correlation between rankings and network centrality, the latter indicates a causal effect. But, as stated before, PISA results do not only influence national policymakers but also increase the competition and interaction between countries when it comes to the quality of education systems (Bieber and Martens 2011). As shown in existing research, cross-national comparisons, policy transfer, and exchanges between countries have been rapidly increasing in the wake of the PISA study (Steiner-Khamsi 2014). The public discussion of PISA scores and the naming and shaming of countries' outcomes greatly influence countries' reputations with other countries and their own citizens. While PISA rankings, as published by the OECD, may influence a countries' reputation, the cleaned PISA scores

might not necessarily confirm this effect. PISA scores are, in contrast to the rankings, displaying the countries educational *effectiveness given its social circumstances*, for example, the number of people with an immigrant background, the number of girls tested, the qualifications of teachers, and so on. This can result in different outcomes. In support of Meyer's theory, we expect an effect from the rankings, as they are publicly discussed. The scores relate more to Wallerstein's classification of core and peripheral countries, as the educational hegemony often goes along with this classification.

Reputations and prejudices inform interactions between citizens on an individual level but also determine larger trade volumes, as the demand for products from a certain country can diminish with its declining reputation or be reinforced due to a positive appraisal, thus leading to the strengthening of political interdependencies or disagreements (Maoz 2011). Adhering to similar standards in welfare politics is a prominent determinant of political interdependencies and policy diffusion (Robertson and Dale 2015). The participation in and results of International Large-Scale Assessments (ILSAs) like PISA might be a new way to foster international relations, as not only the participation but also the implementation of reforms as a reaction to results are seen as legitimizing instruments (Addey et al. 2017). Regarding legitimization within a given country, a way to cope with the intensified competition can be to gather information on the education systems of better-performing countries. The diffusion mechanisms of learning and imitation can thus help cope with this challenge, which requires contact with other countries based on an underlying social network.

Global trade and its increase over recent decades, combined with the increasing importance of the service sector economy, are important aspects of globalization (Glick Schiller et al. 1992). In contrast to the exchange of raw material, *service sector trade* relies more on communication and social interaction. Particularly in highly qualified and specialized economies, such as information technology or the knowledge economy, trade partners mutually rely on the trade partners' educational standards.

Moreover, countries become more attractive as destinations for *global student mobility* if they are closely linked to the home country by service sector trade, as students' employment prospects might increase if they are

familiar with modes of communication and knowledge production in *both* countries. For this reason, we expect that global student mobility corresponds with the educational standards in the sending and receiving countries but also with the service sector trade flows between these two countries.

International migration is driven by various factors (Windzio 2018; Windzio et al. 2019). These factors can be categorized as economic, ecologic, demographic, and political. Much like trade flows, migration flows also follow the famous gravity model (Walsh 2011): Geographical proximity, cultural and linguistic similarities, as well as historical interlinkages determine the destinations of goods and people alike. Student exchange follows similar patterns to migration and could even be seen as a form of 'short-term migration' or 'trial migration' since some graduates of higher education remain in their destination country (Vögtle and Windzio 2020).

Since the sending and receiving countries' characteristics influence migration and student exchange patterns, we wonder whether PISA results belong to the list of push or pull factors for international interdependencies. While PISA strongly influences policymaking, does it also inform the public to a level where rankings determine a country's international reputation? Does PISA influence the policymaking process to the extent that it affects international relations, and how much of that influence trickles down to the population? Do citizens consider PISA as an instrument to determine which country has a suitable education system and might be a worthy destination country? Does the embeddedness of a country in global networks influence the performance of its secondary education, for example, due to 'social remittances', learning or imitation? We will address these questions by simultaneously inspecting three networks, specifically student exchange, migration, and global service trade; we then combine them with changing PISA rankings for Mathematics in a network coevolution model.

Previous Research

As this chapter includes four variables of interest, the change in student exchange patterns, the development of migration stock, global service sector trade, and PISA rankings and scores, this section discusses multiple aspects of previous research.

When choosing a destination country for degree-seeking student exchange, students take a multitude of factors into account (Vögtle and Windzio 2016). Most studies involving a network perspective utilize a macro-level perspective. Studies show that the student exchange network has undergone considerable changes and developed an increasingly unequal and centralized topology. This observation hints toward an academic hegemony that is consistent with economic performance (Barnett and Wu 1995; Shields 2013). Moreover, student exchange patterns follow economic development and exchange (Barnett and Wu 1995; Shields 2013; Vögtle and Windzio 2016). In addition, it is a common approach to consider the geographical proximity, shared borders, shared colonial history, and similar cultural aspects such as language similarity and religious factors as determinants of student mobility (Vögtle and Windzio 2016; Barnett et al. 2016).

Some students study abroad with the prospect of staying in their destination country (Peterson et al. 1984), and these 'tentative migrants' link the network of student mobility to the network of global migration. These graduates are particularly attractive in economic segments, where they can rely on their familiarity with both countries, their country of origin, and the country of destination. This argument might be particularly important for service sector industries where young graduates often begin their occupational careers. In general, reasons for migrating to different countries are similar to reasons why young students seek certificates in other countries: Economic, cultural, and social motivations are among the top pull factors for migration (Windzio 2018). Migration for the benefit of future children's lives and education are potential reasons for migration, especially for families or younger generations. In addition, according to gravity theory (Boyle et al. 1998), geographic proximity and contiguity play a major role in migration patterns. Moreover, a

core–periphery topology (Windzio et al. 2019) as well as a South-to-North migration movement can be observed (Jennissen 2007).

In contrast to global student mobility, however, the general global migration stock results from various forms of migration, for example, labor migration, refugees, family reunification, and student mobility. Although the migration of refugees is mostly directed toward economically well-performing countries, less developed countries also host many refugees, such as Turkey, Colombia, Pakistan, and Uganda (https://www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/). Moreover, global migration may increase opportunities to become involved in global trade since migrants' economic transnational activities link sending and receiving countries together (Glick Schiller et al. 1992).

The flow of so-called social remittances (Lacroix et al. 2016) could be one reason why, in the long run, sending and receiving countries assimilate to each other with respect to the performance of their education systems. Much like student mobility and global trade, these migration networks provide information channels and, thereby, the conditions for learning from and imitating other countries. The question is whether the isomorphism of education systems is influenced by the rising numbers of migrants, as similar education systems allow for easier integration of migrant children into schools.

Educational performance might be crucial for service sector trade. Some foreign students stay as 'tentative migrants' after graduation in order to work in highly qualified jobs, often in the service sector or trade related to the country of origin. Strong ties in service sector trade might correspond with migration and student mobility but also with performance of the education system. In contrast to industrial production, service sector trade relates to what people *do* to customers, so that a similar level of qualification and communicative capacity is required. If the average level of educational performance strongly differs between two countries, this asymmetry might affect the myriads of single economic transactions in the service sector industry, so that countries interacting either have similar average levels of educational performance or try to increase their educational performance or assimilate to their partners' performance levels.

The influence of PISA on international relations is somewhat ambiguous. As stated before, the initial argument as to why participation in the PISA study might have an effect on international relations points to *legitimacy*. According to World Society Theory, participating in PISA demonstrates a country's willingness to follow norms of the world society (Addey et al. 2017). In addition, participation facilitates the acquisition of development aid funds (Kijima 2010). However, to date, there has been no clear empirical evidence of exactly how participation in PISA might influence international relations. One assumption is that migration and student exchange patterns follow changes in PISA scores and rankings, as people looking to travel or to migrate choose countries with a good international reputation. To determine whether the PISA scores and rankings do influence peoples' decision-making regarding migration and exchange destinations, we ask if these patterns of international exchange coincide with PISA scores and rankings. In our model, we include network effects of degree-seeking student exchange flow, migration stock, and service sector trade flow. We also include independent variables representing the classic approach to migration and student exchange patterns: gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, cultural aspects such as language and religious similarity, contiguity, and the ratification of free trade agreements. In addition, we include the number of top-ranking universities in a university ranking to represent the popular perception of the quality of the higher education system.

Data

All data for the following analysis was collected every three years from 2006 to 2018, resulting in 5 data points. Missing observations in the migration stock data were interpolated linearly. A total of 49 countries and subregions were included in the sample due to their consistent participation in PISA.[2]

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[2] Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Brazil, Canada, Switzerland, Chile, Colombia, Czech Republic, Germany, Denmark, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, United Kingdom, Greece, Hong Kong, Croatia, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Japan, South Korea, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Latvia, Macao, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Poland,

In the coevolution model of networks and a related outcome measure (see below), outcomes of influence are often called the 'behavior'. We collected data on our outcome of interest, PISA scores, and rankings, from the original information published by the OECD. To obtain measures most likely to influence the public's perception of a country's quality of education, the OECD published *rankings* in Mathematics that were derived from the original data.[3] We did not adjust these rankings for domestic factors since we were not interested in replicating the OECD's rankings. For reasons of simplicity and due to requirements of the models presented below, we separated the distribution into 10 percentiles. Additionally, we computed PISA country *scores*, as opposed to *rankings*, by using a hierarchical linear regression model with individual and country levels from the original OECD data (Teltemann and Windzio 2019). The final scores included in this analysis are country-level random effects, indicating the deviation of each country's mean PISA scores from the overall mean in the respective year while controlling for individual, school, and aggregated country characteristics. The conditional country scores were adjusted for gender, immigrant background (native, first, or second generation), the number of books at home, if the language spoken at home was the test language, cultural resources and possessions at home, ESCS (Economic, Social, and Cultural Status), and parental education level, as well as the percentage of girls per school, the percentage of certified teachers, ability grouping, school size, and student–teacher ratio. The missing values for the immigrant background for Japan in 2018 were recreated with available information (country of birth of parents and self). The analysis was weighted with standardized senate weights, so every country contributed equally to the analysis, irrespective of the year since the country size is not relevant in this case. All five plausible values were used. School-level variables were aggregated to percentages at the country level to treat missing data. Just like the rankings, the scores were split into 10 percentiles.

Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, Thailand, Turkey, Uruguay, USA

[3] http://www.oecd.org/pisa/data/.

The *service trade networks* for the respective years were obtained from the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTADstat Trade in Goods and Services 2020). The original data provided general trade flows as continuous information rather than discrete categories. Since the values for Switzerland and Liechtenstein are combined, but Liechtenstein does not have individual trade values nor is it part of our sample, the values were adopted for Switzerland. Trade ties are normalized on the amount of total export of each country, describing the importance of each receiver (alter) to the respective sender (ego) measured by the percentage of ego's total trade going to that specific alter. We then only included ties if the respective trade volume was above 80% of the overall trade volume. Figure 4.1 shows the trade network in 2012.

The *student mobility* data was collected from the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS) (UIS 2020). The data contains the numbers of inbound degree-seeking students by country of origin and was normalized on the origin countries' enrolment numbers in tertiary education (UIS and own
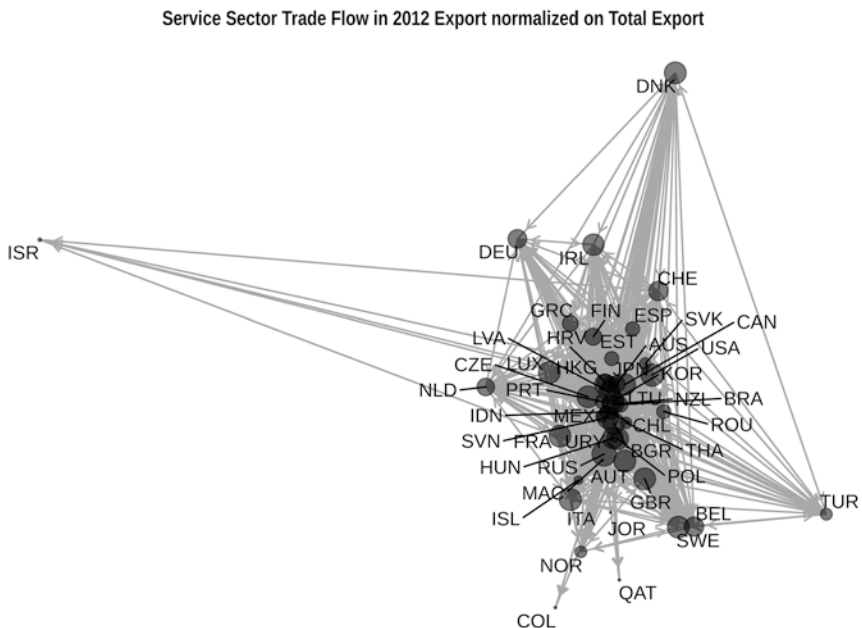
Fig. 4.1 Service sector trade flow in 2012. Export normalized on total export

collection). Accordingly, the exchange students then represent the percentage of enrolled students from ego studying in specific alteri. Much like service trade, only the top 20% of all student flows were coded as ties between countries. Figure 4.2 shows the student exchange flow in 2018.

We obtained *the migration stock data* from the United Nations Database (2019) and calculated the migrants as the percentage of the sending country's population (Windzio 2018; World Bank 2020) living in a receiving country. Similar to the other networks, a tie was only coded if the percentage of migrants surpassed 80% of the total migration flow. Figure 4.3 shows the migration flow network in 2015.

All three networks are increasing in density, where the density of the student exchange network rises from 0.163 to 0.251, the Migration network from 0.180 to 0.218, and the service sector trade network from 0.142 to 0.234, with an average degree of 9.469, 9.576, and 9.624,
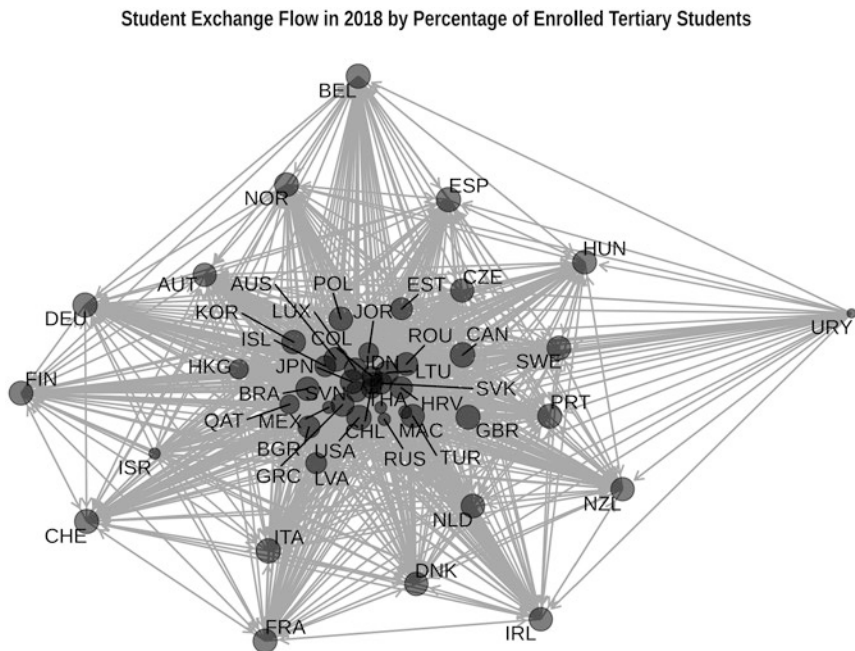
Fig. 4.2 Percentage of exchange students in 2018 depending on the number of enrolled students

Migration Stock in 2015 Normalized on the Percentage of Population Abroad
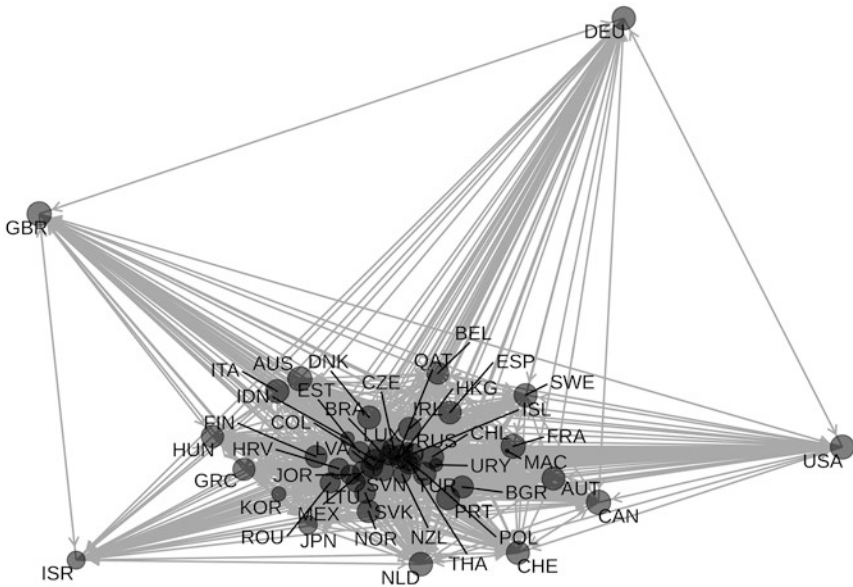
Fig. 4.3 Migration stock in 2015 as a percentage of ego's population living in the respective alter country

respectively. Despite the rising density, they are relatively stable, as the student exchange network has Jaccard indexes between the waves around 0.7, the migration network around 0.9, and the trade network has increasing values between 0.6 and 0.9. These values in combination with the increasing density show that the networks are relatively stable and rarely devolving. New ties are being built and existing ties maintained, but the number of breaking ties is extremely low.

Further data included was collected from the Centre d'Études Prospectives et d'Informations Internationales (CEPII) to account for variances usually captured by a gravity model approach. Specifically, we accounted for language similarity (lp2) (Melitz and Toubal 2012), common religion, the ratification of free trade agreements (FTA-WTO) (Head and Mayer 2014), contiguity (shared borders or water), and former colonial ties (Mayer and Zignago 2011). The GDP per capita in

constant 2010 US Dollars was collected from the World Bank (World Bank 2019). Furthermore, a proxy for the quality of higher education was developed from the Shanghai Rankings,[4] counting the number of universities in the top 100 rankings each year. Regardless of the practices that construct these rankings, the average student might still consider it an important source in their decision process regarding the choice of the destination country.

Methods

Recent developments in longitudinal social network analysis culminated in stochastic actor-based models (SAOMs) of network evolution (Snijders et al. 2010). The underlying rationale is that cross-sectional network analysis assumes that actors are in a Nash-equilibrium regarding the costs and benefits of their ties so that none of these actors has an incentive to change their social relations by either establishing a new tie or dropping an existing tie. Relaxing this unrealistic assumption requires a longitudinal perspective on network evolution. A social network is a higher-level structural outcome of actors' individual decisions on whom they would prefer to be linked to in this network. Actors' basic motive behind their network decisions is maximizing their utility. If the utility of closing triads or reciprocating an incoming tie is comparatively high, the model assumes that actors *prefer* these decisions to existing alternatives, for example, to establishing a tie that does *not* close an open triad. The question in the actor-based network model is: What does it take for an actor to establish, maintain, or dissolve a tie? SAOMs specifically assume that actors change or maintain their ties depending on the cost of this action, instead of assuming a relative 'laziness' of networks. Ties are easier to maintain and establish if the actors have either attributes in common or both benefit from the attribute imbalance. This perspective requires longitudinal data, especially if actor attributes change over time, as the attributes' changes might coincide or even induce changes in the network. In the specific case of a coevolution model, not only is the network

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[4] http://www.shanghairanking.com/ARWU-Statistics-2018.html.

dependent on the previous waves' network composition, but also on the levels of a 'behavior', an additional dependent variable that in turn also changes due to the networks' composition.

The application of this model utilizes simulation algorithms based on multinomial discrete choice models (Greene and Hensher 2010) of tie creation, tie dissolution, or inactivity. Hence, it derives the utility of a local (actor-based) network characteristic from their empirical distribution in the network. Examples of such characteristics are reciprocity, transitive triads, or homophily with respect to actor attributes. The algorithm simulates the transition from the network at t to $t+1$ by simulating utility-maximizing decisions at the actor level and thereby finds those logit coefficients for the specified regression model that make this transition most likely. Based on these so-called micro-steps, the regression equation predicts networks for the subsequent periods. If the explanatory variables specified by the researcher do not sufficiently explain this transition, the *simulated* networks will not fit well to the *empirical* network in the subsequent period.

In addition to overcoming the restrictive equilibrium assumption in most cross-sectional network analyses, the SAOM's longitudinal approach allows for the disentanglement of ego's selection process into a particular network tie, for example, by homophily, from the influence of nodes the ego is connected to (Steglich et al. 2010). This feature of the SAOM is important for our analysis since we are also interested in how countries' characteristics—in our case their performance in the PISA study—change according to the influence of the countries they are tied to in the respective network. To do so, however, we have to control for the selection processes into these networks: Countries either establish network ties due to their similarity in educational performance (which we will call "PISA" in the following), or they assimilate to the educational performance of their alteri, or they do both. The coevolution model for selection and influence provides a multi-equation system that can separate these processes.

Results

In the following, we analyze the coevolution of three networks—student exchange, migration stock, and service trade—and secondary education performance as indicated by PISA scores. In addition, the unadjusted PISA rankings as published by the OECD were included as 'behavior', more precisely, as the countries' characteristic that could be under the influence of the alteri in the network. A set of additional predictors was included which can be categorized as follows: economic (GDP per capita in 10,000), geographic (contiguity: shared borders), cultural (language similarity, common religion), and educational (interactions with the 'behavior', number of top-ranking universities in the top 100 Shanghai Ranking). Thus, the main interest lies in detecting (a) how the networks influence each other; (b) if the PISA rankings have an effect on the change in network structure, as well as on the networks correlating with the PISA rankings; (c) whether other countries that a focal country (ego) is tied to influence ego's education system; and (d) whether network partners influence each other in the PISA ranking and score.

Table 4.1 shows the results of four equations representing the effects on our three networks and on the outcome of educational performance. The first three equations show determinants of selection into network ties, whereas the fourth equation (*Behavior*) shows the effects on social influence exerted by alteri that ego is tied to. Each network equation includes structural effects. The term "density" is a regression constant, showing the density of the network if all explanatory variables are set to zero. Moreover, reciprocity accounts for the propensity to reciprocate an incoming tie, whereas the GWESP (geometrically weighted edgewise shared partners) term accounts for transitivity (Harris 2014).

The goodness of fit statistics (not shown) demonstrate a sufficiently good fit for behavior and outdegree distribution. Nonetheless, there are significant deviations from the empirical indegree distribution in all three networks, although the overall fit is acceptable. We focus our interpretation on Model 2 (M2) in Table 4.1, where we calculated educational performance as adjusted PISA *scores* as opposed to PISA *rankings*.

Table 4.1 The coevolution of networks of global trade, migration, student mobility, and PISA performance

	M1: Rankings			M2: Scores		
Network effects	EST	SE		EST	SE	
Student exchange network						
Density	−1.273	0.131	***	−1.28	0.128	***
Reciprocity	0.77	0.111	***	0.772	0.108	***
GWESP	−0.025	0.097		−0.017	0.097	
Language similarity	−0.038	0.046		−0.031	0.045	
Common religion	−0.086	0.175		−0.057	0.174	
Contiguity	0.392	0.187	*	0.43	0.194	*
PISA alter	0.009	0.018		0.021	0.056	
PISA ego	–	–		−0.106	0.054	*
PISA similarity	0.202	0.175		0.032	0.309	
GDP alter	−0.03	0.022		−0.027	0.02	
No. of top 100 univ. alter	−0.023	0.007	***	−0.023	0.007	***
Crprod migration	0.419	0.098	***	0.413	0.104	***
Crprod reciprocity with migration	0.223	0.108	*	0.211	0.112	+
Crprod trade	1.433	0.11	***	1.435	0.113	***
Crprod reciprocity with trade	0.194	0.135		0.202	0.131	
Migration stock network						
Density	−0.56	0.321	+	−0.52	0.369	
Reciprocity	0.923	0.257	***	0.922	0.264	***
GWESP	0.193	0.223		0.202	0.244	
Language similarity	0.183	0.107	+	0.191	0.108	+
Common religion	−0.5	0.464		−0.499	0.456	
Contiguity	−0.735	0.554		−0.812	0.564	
PISA alter	−0.045	0.041		0.07	0.119	
PISA ego	–	–		0.241	0.268	
PISA similarity	−0.134	0.411		−0.699	0.87	
GDP alter	−0.113	0.057	*	−0.159	0.055	**
Crprod stud	0.534	0.321	+	0.525	0.327	
Crprod reciprocity with stud	0.095	0.352		0.106	0.342	
Crprod trade	0.7	0.312	*	0.675	0.314	*
Crprod reciprocity with trade	−0.148	0.331		−0.154	0.35	
Service sector trade network						
Density	−1.11	0.143	***	−1.113	0.147	***
Reciprocity	0.948	0.133	***	0.943	0.122	***
GWESP	−0.196	0.106	+	−0.187	0.112	+
Contiguity	−0.236	0.249		−0.246	0.255	
Colony	−0.32	0.277		−0.334	0.286	
FTA-WTO reciprocity	0.227	0.191		0.198	0.191	
PISA alter	0.049	0.019	*	0.113	0.057	*

(*continued*)

Table 4.1 (continued)

Network effects	M1: Rankings			M2: Scores		
	EST	SE		EST	SE	
PISA ego	–	–		0.068	0.065	
PISA similarity	–0.126	0.19		–0.586	0.336	+
GDP alter	–0.059	0.025	*	–0.045	0.022	*
Crprod stud	1.636	0.129	***	1.649	0.132	***
Crprod reciprocity with stud	0.324	0.149	*	0.32	0.151	*
Crprod migration	1.04	0.113	***	1.003	0.113	***
Crprod reciprocity with migration	–0.359	0.129	**	–0.344	0.122	**
Behavior: Educational performance						
PISA linear shape	–0.091	0.141		0.008	0.162	
PISA quadratic shape	–0.127	0.155		–0.829	0.503	+
PISA average sim. (stud)	1.669	7.607		4.418	8.293	
PISA average sim. (migr.)	–12.264	12.313		–5.528	9.758	
PISA average sim. (trade)	–0.789	7.274		–4.627	8.589	
Effect from GDP	0.03	0.049		0.174	0.074	*
All convergence t ratios	< 0.07			< 0.09.		
Overall max. Convergence ratio	0.21			0.29		

N = 49 countries, 2006, 2009, 2012, 2015, 2018
Note: +p < 0.1; *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p < 0.001
Source: WeSIS data base, own computation

In M2 from Table 4.1, we can see that the *student exchange network* depends not only on reciprocity but also on spatial proximity, measured here as contiguity. If two countries share a border, the log odds of observing a tie in the student mobility network increase by 0.43*. We find a significantly negative effect of ego's scores on ties in the student exchange network, which probably indicates that students in high-performing countries prefer to study in their home country. In contrast to our expectation, there is a negative effect of the number of high-ranking universities. This is a rather surprising result, as one would expect more students to aspire to go to countries hosting these universities. This result raises the question whether countries with many high-performing universities are open to students from all over the world or whether the incoming student population in these countries is highly selective and limited to just a few sending countries. Yet, due to a higher influx of foreign students, these universities might impose a more challenging selection process for admission and thereby restrict the inflow. The debate on restrictions

imposed on the admission of high-performing Asian applicants by Harvard University points in this direction: "Asians are demographically overrepresented minorities, but they are underrepresented relative to the applicant pool" (Gersen 2017).

Moreover, we find a significantly positive effect of the migration stock network on the student exchange network (0.413***): Students prefer to go to countries where their origin country has already established ties in the global migration network. In addition, there is an effect of reciprocated ties in the migration network on the student exchange network, but it is significant only at the 10% level (0.211+). Furthermore, the student exchange network depends on the service sector trade network since there is a positive effect of this network on student exchange (1.435***). Aside from that, we cannot observe any significant determinants of ties in this network. There are neither ego nor alter effects of the PISA scores, nor do we find homophily with respect to the PISA scores: The effect of selection into these networks due to PISA similarity is not significant.

In the next equation, the *global migration stock network* is the outcome of interest. This network leans toward reciprocity and shows a (marginally significant) positive effect of language similarity. It also displays a negative effect of alter's GDP, which is a rather unexpected result. This might originate from the limitation of our dataset, namely, that it is based on 49 economically developed countries that participated in the PISA study. However, there is a significantly positive effect of service sector trade. Patterns of global migration do follow linkages in the increasingly globalized network of service sector trade.

Likewise, the *trade network* tends to produce reciprocating ties, but here we see a positive effect of 'PISA alter', which means that service sector trade ties are directed toward countries with higher PISA scores (and rankings in M1) (0.113*). A striking result, however, is the negative coefficient of 'GDP alter', indicating that the better another country performs economically, the lower the propensity for ego to establish a tie in the trade network. Yet, we should keep in mind that this effect is conditional on the interdependency among our three networks: Here we find robust significant effects of student mobility ties on service sector ties (1.649***) as well as on ties in the migration stock network (0.113***). While there is an additional effect of reciprocated ties in the student

network (0.32*), reciprocity in the migration network tends to reduce the main effect of nonreciprocated ties in the migration network (-0.344**). Consequently, these three networks are highly interrelated. The positive effect of service trade indicates that student exchange, albeit partly dependent on the choice of the traveling individual, might follow already institutionalized patterns of exchange. Accordingly, migration follows the service trade patterns as well, although with a noticeably smaller effect. The opposite is also true, with student exchanges and migration patterns strongly influencing the service trade flow as well.

We regard educational performance as the outcome in the last equation (*Behavior*). "Linear shape" and "quadratic shape" are important to control for simultaneous growth processes in the overall population. However, according to our results, neither PISA rankings nor PISA scores are influenced by the alteri in the network. For each network, we estimated the effect of average similarity. A positive effect would indicate that ego becomes similar to the average PISA ranking or score of those countries that ego is connected with. We conclude from these results that national systems of secondary education might be exposed to top-down influence exerted by international organizations. Even though countries might adapt their own policies due to PISA results, their scores do not converge toward other countries that they are tied to in global networks with respect to the actual performance of the education systems.

Conclusion

In this study, we analyzed globalization from the vantage point of domestic secondary education systems and their performance. We measured globalization by networks of student exchange, general migration stock, and service sector trade. In so doing, we tried to separate the effects of educational performance on *selection* into the respective network ties from the *influence* of these ties on educational performance. We expected that countries connected in these networks become similar in PISA scores and rankings. The starting point of our study was the idea that globalization affects national institutions, in our case education systems, which then results in a change in the performance of secondary education as measured by PISA scores and rankings.

Following the literature on globalization, we regarded these networks as channels of influence. The benchmarking of education systems provided by the PISA study intensified competition and increased the pressure on national policymakers. If imitation of or learning from other countries are ways of coping with this competition, the underlying social networks can provide information on more successful countries. Indeed, if researchers argue that countries increasingly influence each other due to globalization, they must specify the specific forms of social interaction between countries as conditions of influence. Our focus on these networks assumes horizontal interdependencies, that is, we regard countries as equal 'peers' that deliberately establish contact among each other. Of course, the outcome of this network formation process is not an equal distribution of network ties but a highly structured topology. In many cases, just a few countries are at the core of the respective network and have an extraordinarily high number of incoming and outgoing ties (Windzio et al. 2019).

According to our empirical results, however, there is neither a considerable selection of network ties according to PISA scores or rankings, nor any indication of social influence. Thus, we conclude that the performance of domestic systems of secondary education does not depend on their embeddedness in global networks. This does not mean, however, that education systems themselves were not responsive to the influence of globalization. Some countries responded quite sensitively. They quickly implemented reforms when they found themselves with rankings that were far below their expectations (Martens et al. 2014). Yet, simply reforming educational institutions and doing so in order to increase their performance are two very different matters. In the end, the results of our study are rather pessimistic about the effects of globalization on the actual performance of secondary education systems. Perhaps, in some cases, countries' reforms are implemented to gain legitimacy so that the implementation is more of a performative act (Steiner-Khamsi 2012) and 'myth and ceremony' (Meyer and Rowan 1977). In so doing, countries gain legitimacy as well as better access to resources from the environment. As we know from sociological neo-institutionalism, this does not mean that the *performance* of the organization's technical core, which generates levels of educational performance in our case, is improved as well.

Contrariwise, organizations often establish buffer zones that regulate transactions with the (institutionalized) environments but at the same time protect and conserve their technical core (Thompson 2004).

In this chapter, a potential causal effect between PISA rankings and migration or student mobility patterns cannot be established. It is possible that the real-time lag between the reputation change of a country and its effect on individual decisions regarding migration destinations is not covered in our data.

Additionally, globalization in the field of secondary education is perhaps not driven by horizontal interdependencies but by top-down influence exerted by IOs, as shown in previous research. If so, then the global diffusion of the 'best ways to educate' will not be driven by bottom-up evolutionary processes of tie creation or by tie dissolution in networks between countries but by the focused and ongoing activities of IOs.

To conclude our answers to the questions explored in this chapter, we can confidently say that migration, student exchange, and service sector trade are highly interrelated; however, these interrelations do not depend on nor correlate with PISA rankings or scores. This finding supports both Wallerstein's World Systems Theory—since Wallerstein emphasizes the interdependencies of countries, which proved to be stable in this analysis—and Meyer and colleagues' World Society Theory—which emphasizes the influence of IOs over horizontal influences. Meyer and colleagues not only demonstrate the influence of world society but also emphasize the additional effect of vertical interdependences such as IO pressure as a reason for structural isomorphism. Wallerstein, on the other hand, emphasizes the relative stability of international interdependencies like trade and migration, an effect that we could observe here as well.

While vertical interdependencies might influence national politics, we cannot observe horizontal interdependencies influencing the outcomes, which in our case is the *performance* of secondary education. Vertical interdependencies, such as pressure and influences from IOs, here in the form of PISA rankings, may affect policymakers but do not seem to affect the education system's performance to the same extent. Vice versa, we cannot confirm whether education systems' outcomes converge toward

an isomorphic 'PISA-friendly' format, due to the influences of horizontal interdependencies such as increasing migration patterns or student mobility.

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5

International Organizations in Education: New Takes on Old Paradigms

Dennis Niemann

Introduction[1]

The diffusion of education policies is a central topic in this volume. As outlined in the introduction by Windzio and Martens (Chap. 1), not only do states tend to orient their education systems toward global models, accepted standards, and best practices but also the international community emulates overall trends. Transnational and international actors play an increasingly important role in shaping global models of education. The way in which education is ideologically framed on the

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international level could have important consequences for domestic education systems, since national education reforms are heavily influenced by international developments and policy recommendations stemming from international actors (see Martens et al. 2010). Within a world society, no state is an isolated island (Meyer et al. 1997). As part of a globalized educational subsystem, states are encouraged to respond to initiatives from the international level and act in accordance with the accepted or appropriate behavior. This also means that internationally defined and disseminated standards provide templates for organizing domestic education reforms.

Certain international organizations (IOs)—understood and used interchangeably with the term "intergovernmental organizations" (IGOs)—became central players in the global discourse on education (Niemann and Martens 2021). IOs, therefore, exceed the role of mere instruments for powerful states to use in the pursuit of their national interests and are more than just state-controlled arenas for multilateral coordination and cooperation. IOs are depicted as independent policy entrepreneurs and their agency in education policy stems from their status as legitimate, impartial, and expert entities (Martens and Niemann 2013). This actor-like status also exhibits IOs' own possible interests and preferences regarding policies, which neither necessarily reflect the interests and preferences of their member states nor do they reflect the IO's original mandate. IOs are able to make their own decisions regardless of the wishes and virtues of their members. Generally, IOs can be considered autonomous actors if their actions and influence are not fully controlled by their member countries (Hasenclever and Mayer 2007). Understanding IOs as complex bureaucracies provides additional explanations as to why they could develop a life of their own and become policy entrepreneurs (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). This role of IOs makes them vital actors in shaping global education policies and grants them leverage in defining what constitutes proper education policy measures.

In sum, IOs can be independent actors in the field of education and can hold their own ideas about which policy goals should be pursued. With this idea-driven agency in mind, it can be assumed that IOs will be interested in disseminating their policies and influence the behavior of

others (be it of states, substate departments, individuals, or other international institutions). This is closely linked to a soft governance approach whereby IOs refer to their moral authority and legitimacy. In addition, ideas are not universally accepted and different interpretations regarding a certain topic may compete with one another. Ideas regarding education can be rooted in different traditions, historical configurations, economic paradigms, or cultural spheres (see Chap. 1). For instance, one traditional idea regarding the purpose of education in Western Europe was that national identity could be fostered by teaching a common national history, which was then contrasted with those of other European neighbor states.

Ideas are also embedded in IOs. In establishing a set of ideas that constitute a leitmotif in terms of certain policies, complex organizational entities like IOs are influenced by different endogenous and exogenous factors. These factors include member state composition, staff, global developments, disruptive external shocks, and the like. Since the population of IOs is by no means homogeneous and given that IOs do not share the same institutional background, they are also not expected to hold the same ideas about education. Considering that there are several IOs active in the field of education—Niemann and Martens (2021) identified thirty education IOs as of 2018—and given that there is more than one idea as to what constitutes the most effective and appropriate education policy, it is inevitable that these IOs also have various and (sometimes) competing ideas. Consequently, they may compete with one another for influence, legitimacy, and ultimately for political success.

In this chapter, I trace the leitmotifs as defined in the introduction to this volume of four globally operating education IOs over time and demonstrate how they interpret the purpose of education. I argue that during the first phase, which lasted until the late 1990s, the international education landscape was characterized by competition between major IOs embracing antipodal leitmotifs regarding the purpose of education. However, in a more recent phase, we can witness more of a cooperative, comprehensive approach; IOs involved in the field of education have started to take a more integrative, ideational approach whereby cooperation on educational projects or joint positions has intensified. Looking at the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Sustainable

Development Goals (SDGs), we can see that these meta-developments were central drivers of ideational integration. Both global roadmaps for development emphasized the importance of a holistic view on development processes. In addition, with increased focus on evidence-based policies and empirically driven assessments of education, the different IOs pursued an integrative approach toward education policy in terms of ideational framing, whereby fundamental worldviews became less important in framing the purpose of education.

This chapter is organized as follows: First, I elaborate on the importance of ideas in education and highlight the different leitmotifs regarding the purpose of education as outlined in the introduction to this volume, that is, a utilitarian economic interpretation versus a humanistic citizenship view of education (Chap. 1); I also discuss how this affects globally operating IOs. Secondly, I analyze how four globally active education IOs—the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the International Labour Organization (ILO)—ideationally frame education purposes over time and demonstrate how this was linked to programmatic actions. Here, I also describe how the IOs competed at certain times and why some IOs were perceived as more dominant in the realm of international education policy. By elaborating on the pattern of cooperation and contestation between IOs, I finally conclude that nowadays they tend to cooperate and coordinate. Also, the IOs apply a more integrative and ideational approach by incorporating both utilitarian and humanistic leitmotifs.

The Development of Education Ideas Within IOs

A necessary condition for IOs to become influential (soft) governance actors includes their ability to formulate and disseminate their own education policies. In order to do so, they need to have defined concepts of desired policy outcomes and specify what the purpose of education

should be. Whether something is seen as desirable is heavily influenced by ideas. And the proliferation of ideas could contribute to changes (or stability) in policy-making. Ideas shape policy institutions and, in turn, ideas are also shaped by them.

Since almost all IOs must rely on their capacity as policy advisors and opinion leaders, one key element of IO influence is the role and dissemination of ideas. Following Béland and Cox's definition, ideas are perceived as causal beliefs that "provide guides for action [and help] to think about ways to address problems [and] posit causal relations that guide people's decisions and preferences" (Béland and Cox 2011, 4). Ideas are modifiers that shape policy discourse and can influence policy outcomes. This renders ideas as cognitive frameworks for interpreting causal relationships between problems and appropriate solution strategies (Goldstein and Keohane 1993). How agents act in the world is strongly determined by how they perceive their environment through ideational prisms. Furthermore, the perceptions of the actors' environments are neither stable nor fixed, as the interests of actors can only be seen as given or fixed in a world where information about cause and effect is perfectly accessible. If information is imperfect, the choices of action or behavior are always speculative to some degree. By acknowledging that information is always imperfect, actors make decisions based on uncertainty. Here, ideas come into play since ideas shape actors' preferences (Blyth 2003, 697).

Ideas are particularly important governance instruments for IOs. Their power stems from their capacity to define and interpret the issues at stake. IOs shape how the social world is constituted, and they also set the agenda for acting in this environment (Barnett and Finnemore 2004). Basically, IOs acquire ideas when they institutionalize and cultivate them within their organizational environment, but they also disseminate ideas, doing so through diverse channels such as reports, recommendations, declarations, symposia, and so forth. In consequence, an IO aligns its programmatic activities according to its (set of) ideas.

Taken together, the perception of the purpose of education is central in assessing IOs' education ideas. In short, a polarity of ideas with regard to the purpose of education can be identified between two general leitmotifs (see Niemann and Martens 2021). As outlined in the introduction to this volume, the goal of education can first be framed from a utilitarian

perspective, which emphasizes the positive economic effects of investment in education. In this regard, education substantially contributes to the formation of human capital. Secondly, education ideas can also be approached from a humanistic citizenship leitmotif, which is rooted in a social liberal tradition. From this perspective, education is essential to modern societies as it establishes or maintains the political and social integration of a society (Nagel et al. 2010). Because both leitmotifs are at opposite poles of a continuum, they resemble ideal types. In addition, they are complementary rather than mutually exclusive. Subsequently, actors like IOs blend both perspectives into one ideational framework; however, one leitmotif usually dominates and is prioritized over the other. Nagel et al. (2010) have also demonstrated that both interpretations can either be applied to the individual or the collective level.

IOs' fundamental ideas regarding education are assumed to be reflected in what they publish: position papers, policy recommendations, declarations, detailed policy analyses, and the like. Hence, in this study the utterance of ideas is conceptualized as causal statements of IOs in a discourse on the purpose of education. By analyzing publications of the World Bank, the OECD, UNESCO, and the ILO from different time periods with regard to the education ideas as outlined in the introduction to this volume, I assessed how these four global IOs framed the purpose of education over time. IO documents were analyzed and coded according to the education ideas that were put forward. The selection only included documents that resemble major policy outputs of the IO, like mission statements, overall programmatic outlines, and principal policy guidelines in education. Information in the text was categorized according to predefined sets of codes derived from theory (Mayring 2003). This means that statements in documents were interpreted pursuant to theoretical categories of the relevant research variables, that is, education ideas. In addition, expert interviews with representatives of IOs were conducted to identify the predominant education leitmotif that supplements the findings in the documents. In using this triangulation approach, the weaknesses of document analysis are alleviated by the additional information collected through expert interviews and vice versa.

According to the differentiation of leitmotifs, we expect IOs with a primarily economic purpose to promote a human capital approach in

education with a focus on the economic utility of education for personal development as well as national growth, whereas IOs with a general rights approach emphasize the humanistic values of education for both the individual as well as the collective level.

Analyzing the Evolution of IOs' Education Ideas

In this chapter, the global discourse on education purposes is analyzed. Hence, only IOs that operate worldwide were selected to have their ideational take on education analyzed. Unlike regional IOs, whose education programs are strongly influenced by the characteristics and idiosyncrasies of the respective region (see Chap. 7), it is expected that globally operating IOs also claim global validity for their program and ideas. Hence, distinctive "cultural spheres" (Chap. 1) are not a decisive factor for analyzing the education ideas of global IOs.

Of the population of thirty education IOs, six IOs operate on the global level: UNESCO, the ILO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Bank, the OECD,[2] and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (Niemann and Martens 2021). With the exception of the OECD, all IOs are part of the United Nations system, for example, as specialized agencies. The six global education IOs can be distinguished according to their basic mandates and other such characteristics that are assumed to have consequences on the conceptualization of education ideas and how education policies are framed. While the three UN-IOs and the ILO focus on specific policy areas (education, refugees, children, and labor rights), the World Bank and the OECD focus on economic policy. Compared to other types of IOs that initially did not deal with education, economic IOs were late-comers but constantly expanded their activities in the field of education

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[2] Clearly, the OECD is an IO with restricted membership (economically developed democracies) and hence the classification of the OECD as a "global" IO can be challenged. However, in education, the OECD's scope and influence in terms of its education activities extends well beyond its member states. The IO provides services for any state that is interested in joining the OECD's education program (Niemann and Martens 2021).

(Niemann et al. 2021, forthcoming). From the sample of analyzed IOs, the general trend of economic IOs becoming involved with education topics is reflected in the World Bank and the OECD. In this chapter, UNESCO, the ILO, the World Bank, and the OECD are analyzed with regard to their ideational framing of the purpose of education.

The development of the education ideas of the four IOs is described against their historical background. It is shown that IOs' idea portfolios are not static, rather they are dynamic and influenced by both endogenous and exogenous factors. However, the core of each IO's view on education purpose remains stable over time. It can be observed that while the nucleus of education leitmotifs remained constant over time, other ideational layers were added to the portfolio. Today, all four IOs feature a relatively holistic set of education ideas.

The World Bank: Development Assistance from the 'Knowledge Bank'

Over time, the World Bank[3] has become heavily invested in education, even developing its own programs to promote its vision for appropriate education policies. In short, as an independent specialized agency of the UN, the Bank transformed from a development aid agency to an active policy advisor that produces and disseminates knowledge; it also demonstrates best practice examples in the field of education. This takes place against the ideational background of viewing education as a means to fight poverty and boost human capital, productivity, and capacities for self-development. While the Bank's concrete foci of development policies in education varied over time, the principal mission of the Bank remained constant: to provide development aid in order to reduce poverty and foster human development. Like any other organization, the World Bank and its education program is also shaped by intra-organizational frictions

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[3] The World Bank Group consists of five sub-organizations (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), International Finance Corporation (IFC), International Development Association (IDA), Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID)). "World Bank" refers to the IBRD and IDA. In education, the IBRD and IDA are the most relevant institutions, but the IFC is also incorporated, especially when it comes to involving the private sector in education funding operations.

and diverging preferences among different subdepartments (Fontdevila and Verger 2020). However, the Bank's main publications outlined a coherent discursive approach in education, and its education leitmotif can be characterized alongside the cornerstones that revolve around a utilitarian understanding of education. This understanding of education developed against the historical background of the Bank, where it was both weakened and reinforced at different stages.

In a first phase spanning from the IO's inception to the late 1960s, the Bank conceptualized education as something strictly functional for development and poverty reduction. It exclusively focused on vocational training and did not view general (nonvocational) education as an important instrument for achieving its aims in development assistance. In October 1963, the first series of operational directives for the Bank's education approach were launched, which aimed at investing in creating manpower and filling the gap of missing technicians and engineers to operate modern machinery (Heyneman 2003). In fact, the Bank's very first education loan was in 1963 to Tunisia for a program in vocational training (World Bank 1999, 23). The economic-leaning idea had already become institutionalized at the early stage of its education program. By addressing the engineering problem, the generation of human capital was prioritized. However, the ideational framing of the World Bank regarding education in the 1960s rested on the assumption that education does not directly contribute to a state's overall development nor to poverty reduction; instead, it was seen as a necessary condition for facilitating the on-site operation of direct development aid projects.

The Bank's education concepts and activities were substantially broadened at the end of the 1960s under the presidency of Robert McNamara (in office 1968–1981). By acknowledging education and other social policies as contributing to the economic development of states, the Bank also altered its lending strategy and operational activities by improving the productive capacities of the poor (Mundy and Verger 2015). The new framing of education in this phase established the Bank's fundamental idea that improvements in education directly translate into economic well-being and overall societal improvements. In the 1970s and 1980s, the idea of enabling countries to help themselves became prevalent. The focus of the Bank's education program was moved to early childhood

education and basic education because these were the areas believed to be particularly relevant for laying the foundations for sustainable economic development (Zapp 2017). Accordingly, the organizational infrastructure within the World Bank was established to fund education projects beyond vocational education, where education research was upgraded (Heyneman and Lee 2016, 9).

By the early 1980s, the predominantly neoliberal architecture was also implemented in the Bank's education program and shaped how the purpose of education was framed. By almost exclusively focusing on the development of human capital for enabling economic growth, other views on education were sidelined in this period. The Washington Consensus was of particular importance in framing the Bank's education policy agenda of utilitarianism: a reduction in public sector spending, the liberalization of markets and privatization of public enterprises, and a focus on the "rates of return" of education (Mundy and Verger 2015). From the mid-1980s, a shift toward lending for elementary-level education projects took place within the Bank's strategy, though still from a perspective of investment (Mundy 2010, 339).

The legitimacy of the World Bank and its work in education came under pressure in the late 1980s to mid-1990s due to the identification of undesired outcomes resulting from the implementation of neoliberal policies (Bonal and Tarabini-Castellani 2009). The neoliberal paradigm was shaken and challenged. Despite this, the Bank's education ideas were still in line with neoclassical economic thinking when a Post-Washington Consensus began to emerge in the 1990s (Mundy and Verger 2015, 13), though a broader understanding of development had emerged within the Bank so that deficiencies in education, health, and other areas were acknowledged (Vetterlein 2012, 40). The Bank also began to cooperate with UNESCO and UNICEF, which ultimately led to the 1990 Education for All Conference.

Under the presidency of James D. Wolfensohn (1995–2005), the World Bank was redesigned as the "Knowledge Bank". An evidence-based focus on policies was established whereby the Bank aimed at providing advice to governments based on empirical findings. Accordingly, the Bank restructured its internal management and operational portfolio; in addition, it heavily invested in research, particularly in the field of

education, and became a major generator of empirical data and analyses (Zapp 2017). The IO sought to become a neutral policy advisor so that it could guide decision-making in education through knowledge production and identification of best practices. Still, utility considerations and the economic development perspective were paramount in education since the economic perspective on education outcomes was dominant in analyzing education policies (see World Bank 1999). The reorientation of the Bank also created new opportunities for joint efforts with other IOs. For instance, the "Knowledge Turn" was followed by the Global Knowledge Conference in 1997, where the Bank brought together participants from all over the world and linked them all to global communication (Zapp 2017, 4).

This knowledge-centered approach of the World Bank was strengthened in the mid-2000s when emphasis was placed on the systematic research of education performance. In addition, the World Bank linked various educational studies, which included national, regional, and international research. The dialogue with recipient states intensified and the Bank introduced a holistic systematic approach; the IO took a closer look at the peculiarities of individual developing countries or regions and increasingly allowed for different approaches in developing education policies. Accordingly, the World Bank currently depicts itself as the "Solution Bank".

For the World Bank, education became central to the development agenda. The principal aim of the Bank in education has been to "help developing countries reform and expand their educational systems in such a way that the latter may contribute more fully to economic development" (World Bank 1974, i). Although the Bank currently emphasizes education as a human right (World Bank 1999, Interviews World Bank A, C 2018) and recognizes the limits of the market model for education (Robertson 2012, 198), the purpose of education in the Bank's discourse asserts an economistic leitmotif, which brings the utility of education to the fore. The World Bank's Education Strategy 2020 of 2011 emphasizes education as a basic human right but the strategy still falls under an economic paradigm in that it promotes the global standardization of curricula, private–public education partnerships for designing and conducting education projects, and the decentralization of national education

systems (Enns 2015). In the view of the Bank, education affects how well individuals, communities, and nations fare. Countries need more highly educated and skilled populations. Moreover, individuals need more skills to become more productive, to be able to compete, and to thrive (World Bank 1999, 5). The level of acquired "skills in a workforce […] predicts economic growth rates of a states" (World Bank 2011, 3) and learning is essential for human capital development (World Bank 2018).

In conclusion, the utilitarian-driven leitmotif regarding the purpose of education was always central to the Bank's education discourse: education should serve the purpose of fostering the economic development of states and societies. However, the notions have changed from viewing education as instrumental for training technicians, to a strict neoliberal human capital approach in the 1980s, to the rather holistic and evidence-based understanding of education nowadays, which emphasizes the positive effects that high-quality education can have on both economic *and* social developments. The economic core of the Bank's education belief system became supplemented with other more holistic views on education. Alternative ideational concepts of education were acknowledged but eclipsed by the paramount significance of the economic view on education. While the World Bank's Education Strategy 2020 recognizes the limits of the market model for education development and ostensibly states that education is a human right (World Bank 2011), it still reflects an economic paradigm in education and basically promotes the global standardization of curricula, private–public education partnerships for designing and conducting education projects, and the decentralization of national education systems.

The OECD: A Forum for Reconstruction Became a Trendsetter in Global Education

A similar pattern to the World Bank can be identified when examining the education ideas of the OECD. Initially, the OECD was perceived as the "economic counterpart to NATO" in that it provided channels for its member states to consult and coordinate in order to achieve economic prosperity (Martens and Jakobi 2010, 3). Like the World Bank, the

OECD was created without a formal mandate in education. Over the course of its existence, however, the IO successively extended its thematic scope to issues of education. I show that the OECD framed education as a fundamental precondition for prosperity in individuals as well as in national economies. While the OECD is also an IO with a background in economic policies, it does not have the same explicit developmental focus as the World Bank.

Today, the OECD is widely considered one of the most influential education IOs. This is surprising because the OECD lacks any legislative teeth (Istance 1996, 95) and never planned to be an IO that provided factual development assistance to its members. Instead, it had only planned to be one that provided a forum to enable policy cooperation and discourse among states (Wolfe 2008, 208). Being an IO that exclusively relies on soft governance techniques, the OECD became an influential "knowledge broker" in education (Niemann and Martens 2018) by disseminating its ideas on what a desired outcome of education is and how national education systems should be organized. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a standardized large-scale assessment of education outcomes, was the main carrier of the OECD's education ideas and served as a powerful influence on states' policy-making. Despite the prominence of PISA within the OECD's education branch, the IO also covers topics that go beyond primary or secondary education and focuses extensively on issues related to higher education or vocational training (Seitzer et al. 2021). Although an IO with restricted membership rules, the OECD claims global validity through PISA that determines the best practices in education worldwide, and influences education reform processes that did not even participate in the PISA study (Niemann and Martens 2018). This process takes place by ideationally linking education improvements to economic advancements. The history of the OECD's activities in education sheds analytical light on the evolution of this view.

In its early years (1948–1960),[4] when the topic of education was not directly on the IO's agenda, the OECD's endeavors reflected the fundamental task of improving its member states' scientific and commercial

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[4] At this time, the OECD was the Organisation for European Economic Co-operation (OEEC).

performances in the face of pressing challenges at that time, for example, the reconstruction of Europe after WWII, a need for economic stabilization, and an increasingly tense confrontation with the Soviet Union (Woodward 2009; Tröhler 2014). The founding treaty of the OECD set the tone that "economic strength and prosperity are essential for … the preservation of individual liberty and the increase of general well-being" (OECD 1960). Accordingly, the OECD's persistent mantra can be summarized as follows: if the economic situation improves, the social situation is assumed to also improve.

This view is also continuously reflected in the OECD's education work. At the beginning, from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s and at the height of the leading paradigm of Keynesianism, the OECD addressed education in the context of scientific advancement. Over time, the emphasis of the OECD's education perspective progressively shifted toward social equity objectives and became closely linked to issues related to the labor market (Papadopoulos 1996). In consonance with the core tenet of Keynesianism, the OECD advocated increased state intervention in multiple policy areas (Armingeon 2004). This principle was also applied to education due to the assumption that stronger state intervention and centralization was beneficial for the overall outcome. With the establishment of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) in 1968 and the Education Committee in 1970, education policy was more formally institutionalized within the OECD and underscored the relevancy of education topics for the IO (Martens and Wolf 2006). In this period, the education perspective of the OECD was slightly decoupled from the overarching agenda of economic growth, and education developed into a more emancipated, self-contained issue within the IO.

In the mid-1970s, the OECD again turned its attention to education as an essential generator of economic growth (Rubenson 2008). In this phase, the social and equity components of education policy "receded to the background, giving way to economic concerns" (Papadopoulos 2006, 25). Eventually, this topical turning point gave rise to a reinterpretation of education and the economic perspective returned. This perspective was considerably strengthened in the 1980s, when the OECD's education initiatives were increasingly fueled by neoliberal interpretations. The

OECD focused on "how to adjust education to changing economic requirements in the context of stagnating budgets" (Mundy 2007, 28) and moved to a neoclassical supply-side orientation (Sellar and Lingard 2014). Eventually, social and equity concerns were dominated by utility considerations.

Similar to other IOs (e.g. the ILO—see below), the end of the Cold War was a decisive watershed for the OECD. At the dawn of a new era, the IO looked somewhat anachronistic in its traditional role as a defender of Western values versus a competing bloc (Woodward 2008, 33). The OECD needed to redefine its own mission. Ultimately, this also had a substantial effect on the IO's activities in education. By referring to upcoming challenges due to globalization processes, the OECD increasingly emphasized the development of human resources to counteract emerging negative effects (OECD 1996; Henry et al. 2001). The idea of preparing education systems for future challenges has become a foundational part of the OECD's stance on education. Education was defined as a driving force for growth and development, and the OECD was committed to improving the quality of its member countries' education systems (OECD 2010-2011). The OECD proactively worked on strategies that dealt with the role of education in times of intensified globalization and in light of the emerging knowledge society. It did so by conducting reviews, producing empirical comparative data, and scrutinizing its member countries' education systems. Therefore, the surveys of the OECD progressively took the economic implications of social policies into consideration (Armingeon 2004, 226). The empirical data was supposed to enable policy actors to draw inferences from the returns of human capital produced through education. For instance, a strong positive correlation between economic effects and educational background was pointed out (OECD 2009, 5).

Together with the intensified research, a focus on the institutionalization of education took place. Most prominently, PISA was established. In 1997, the PISA resolution was adopted, and beginning in the year 2000, the standardized PISA study has been conducted every three years and has substantially contributed to the OECD's status as a leading IO in the field of education—particularly since the IO started to interpret PISA findings by itself in 2006. Furthermore, after the establishment of the

Directorate for Education in 2002 and the Global Forum on Education in 2005, it became clear that the OECD's work on education occupied a distinctive niche within the IO. The established bureaucratic structures enabled the OECD to become an increasingly independent producer and disseminator of knowledge in the education field (Morgan and Shahjahan 2014, 198).

In terms of the ideas of the OECD, the advancement of education systems should contribute first and foremost to human capital formation and secondarily to the progress of social citizenship (Robertson 2005, 157). The OECD views human capital as "a major driver of a country's trend productivity, not least through its impact on innovation" (OECD 2010c, 18). The economic-focused education policy framework was settled mostly in the 1990s, when the aspect of equity was detached from issues of redistribution; instead, it was linked to the aspect of human capital in a globalized world. Education was increasingly heralded as "the policy key to the future prosperity of nations" (Henry et al. 2001, 30). Particularly from the OECD's perspective, education is a resource for innovation and to manage economic challenges. At this point, the theory of human capital is used to comprehend the OECD's policy framework in education (OECD 1996, 1998).

However, the predominance of economic interests within the OECD's education approach has always been put into perspective by the inclusion of the social dimension—though the social dimension has been subordinated to economic considerations. For instance, the OECD noted that education serves the provision of social cohesion and overall well-being, including health issues (OECD 2010b). Remarkably, social cohesion refers to economic factors; in order to create more social cohesion, education should enable individuals to advance economically. National education systems "need to equip people with knowledge, skills and tools to stay competitive and engaged" (OECD 2010–2011, 3). The findings of the OECD's infamous PISA analysis confirm the positive returns on employment, earnings, well-being, and contributions to society for the individual as well as for the economy at large (OECD 2010a, 58). Education was meant to provide support for the economy, as the economy is responsible for securing and fostering the well-being of the whole society. Concerning this matter, social dimensions were also included in

the OECD's leitmotif of education—however, under an economic-centered framework. The OECD deviated further from the strict economic notion of the education purpose with its 2030 learning compass, where societal well-being was defined as a key role of education.[5]

Taken together, the education leitmotif of the OECD was twofold. On the one hand, individuals benefit from education since they are enabled to increase their quality of life with better employment and higher economic returns. On the other (macroeconomic) hand, states also substantially benefit from education by fostering economic growth and strengthening social cohesion and the welfare state. Alternatively, the economic-centered purpose of education posed by the OECD was reduced to the point where the only real objectives were for students to gain better job opportunities for individual well-being and to the calculus of states to gain maximal returns on minimum inputs.

UNESCO: A Specialized Education IO in Need of Respecialization

Unlike the World Bank or the OECD, education has a lifelong and central relevancy for UNESCO. This is no surprise given that the specialized agency of the UN was explicitly established to deal with education, science, and culture. And unlike the IOs with an economic-oriented background that tend to focus on the utilitarian value of education in terms of economic outcomes, UNESCO has a different ideational take on the purpose of education. UNESCO, like the ILO, always emphasized the positive effect of education on individual well-being and social integration processes. The foundation for this understanding can already be identified in UNESCO's original mission, which was an instrumental approach to secure peace through education and to declare access to education as a universal human right. In addition, the IO's central concern in education policy has always been about the right to education and to ensure that this right is respected and delivered (Interview UNESCO C 2019).

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[5] https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/learning-compass-2030/in_brief_Learning_Compass.pdf, last accessed 10/22/2020.

Regarding its modus operandi, UNESCO was always a programmatic IO that set normative stimuli and cooperated with global, regional, and local stakeholders as opposed to an IO with an all-encompassing field presence (Lerch and Buckner 2018, 32–33). UNESCO also generates its own data on education, especially through its Institute for Statistics, where it draws on this data when making decisions regarding its program. However, the norms and values that the IO has incorporated are considered more important for UNESCO's policy program (Interview UNESCO A 2019). UNESCO's general conference is held biannually, and more than 190 member states decide upon new priorities for the IO's program. Unlike the World Bank or UNICEF, each state has the same voting power, which makes it more egalitarian, on the one hand, but also more vulnerable to vetoes and prolonged decision-making, on the other hand. Hence, UNESCO is regarded as a highly politicized organization (Interview UNESCO B 2019) that is closely tied to the demands of its member states and less autonomous than, for example, the OECD. The biggest challenge for UNESCO was (and still is) the discrepancy between its wide objectives in education and its tight budget (Mundy 1999; Menashy and Manion 2016).

UNESCO's history of how it frames education has been comparatively stable; however, it has not been immune to global trends and general developments. Its purpose of education shifted over time to some degree, and new views were incorporated into UNESCO's ideational portfolio. First of all, the utilitarian view on education became strengthened. Additionally, the view that education was a means to gain economic benefits grew within the IO. Also, in response to the initiatives of economic IOs and their positive reception by national education stakeholders, UNESCO incorporated ideas like human capital generation and the applicability of acquired skills into its education leitmotif. Yet, above all, the principle that education is a human right that enables societal integration and peace is the most important. The historical developments of UNESCO illustrate this point.

After its inception in 1945, the IO's main goal and efforts in education were to eradicate illiteracy, especially among adults (Jones 2007). This means that the education purpose focused on the individual and the ability to live a self-determined and prosperous life. Following the adoption

of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the UN General Assembly in 1948, UNESCO supported free and compulsory basic education (Jones 2007, 523).

Because internal and external challenges became more diverse in the developed and developing world due to economic and technical progress in the 1970s, UNESCO attempted "to construct a single, universal vision of global educational futures" by calling for alternatives to formal schooling in its "Learning to Be" report (Mundy 1999, 37). Throughout the early period of the Cold War, UNESCO aimed at socializing children and adults to have greater international awareness by teaching global values like human rights and diversity (Lerch and Buckner 2018, 29). The central mission of UNESCO's educational approach was still to secure peace.

From the mid-1970s, however, UNESCO was also affected by the gradual replacement of the Keynesian economic paradigm with neoliberal views, and the significance of UNESCO began to decline. More and more (notably Western) states began to align their welfare state policies with neoliberal ideas. Social investments in education were no longer considered primary policy tools.

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the IO faced a major crisis. At the height of the Cold War, UNESCO was massively criticized, mostly from Western countries and particularly from the United States, for being a politicized and mismanaged IO. This was in part because UNESCO had increasingly aligned itself with various social movements led by states from the Global South that called for a profound restructuring of the world economic order in favor of developing countries and was thus challenging Western interests (Menashy and Manion 2016, 322). Tensions rose and ultimately led to the withdrawal of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Singapore in 1984–1985. For UNESCO, this not only meant a significant drop in its budget by around a third but also a significant loss of legitimacy. As Jones put it: "the designated 'lead agency' in the UN system for education, UNESCO … was incapable of exercising leadership in any of its multiple areas of responsibility" (Jones 2007,

527).[6] Due to this crisis, Mundy argues that UNESCO's work in education did not provide the IO with the necessary legitimacy and authority; furthermore, between 1984 and 1988, no major impulses were added to its education activity portfolio (Mundy 1999, 39, 42).

Another aspect of UNESCO's decline was the rising importance of other IOs in the education field. With UNESCO's legitimacy fading and the quality of its education work declining since the 1970s, IOs like the World Bank, the OECD, and UNICEF stepped in (Burnett 2011). This resembled a shift from cooperation to competition, as previously UNESCO had relied on operational funding from the World Bank and UNICEF (among others) to conduct on-site projects and UNESCO's expertise in education had been welcomed by other IOs (Jones 2007, 528). Starting in the 1980s, both funding agencies began to develop their own expertise in education and established their own specialized education initiatives.

After troublesome years, UNESCO's leading role in education resurfaced with the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, where UNESCO made a strong case for universal basic education. UNESCO was able to "re-enter a more public dialogue with its multilateral partners …and… rebuild its role as a mediator between developing country 'needs' and the resources available from donor governments" (Mundy 1999, 44). With the World Education Forum in 2000, where UNESCO once again was the lead agency, the general position was reconfirmed that education is not only a fundamental human right but also "an essential ingredient in the promotion of a global culture of peace, sustainable development, equity, and social cohesion" (Menashy and Manion 2016, 323). With both initiatives, UNESCO synthesized cooperation with the World Bank and other IOs.

In the context of the SDGs of 2016, UNESCO reemphasized its view that educational development should contribute to social justice and equality (Vaccari and Gardinier 2019, 72). "These times are calling for a new humanism that marries human development with the preservation

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[6] Although the United States rejoined UNESCO in 2003 (UK in 1997 and Singapore in 2007), the relationship remained rocky. In 2011, the United States suspended its payments again in response to the acceptance of Palestine as a member and, together with Israel, left UNESCO for the second time in 2018.

of the planet and that provides equal access to all to the benefits of education" (UNESCO 2014, 7). The SDGs, particularly SDG4 that explicitly deals with education, also set new priorities and strongly influenced UNESCO's work in the field of education. The general approach of the SDGs as a whole introduced to UNESCO a more holistic view on education and linked the topic of education to other issue areas, first and foremost to climate change (Interviews UNESCO A and C 2019).

UNESCO's ideational view on the purpose of education became more consistent over time. Throughout its existence, UNESCO was successful in providing a normative framework that saw the various dimensions of human rights as interdependent and indivisible (Jones 2007, 528). The initial focus of UNESCO included peace as an overall outcome for education, but later the IO linked education and conflict with an additional interpretation of peace as a necessary precondition for individuals' educational success (Lerch and Buckner 2018). UNESCO emphasized that education strengthens "the foundations for international understanding, co-operation and peace and the protection of human rights" (UNESCO 1991, 4). Hence, the focus in the context of education and conflict shifted from a collective interpretation to a more individualistic one. This was also reflected in other areas of the IO's education leitmotif. UNESCO strongly emphasizes the social value of education for integration but also for individual economic development.

Basically, scientific humanism was the leading idea of UNESCO since its establishment and shaped how education was framed; education was understood as a lifelong process where the social dimension of cultural (re-)production was included (Menashy and Manion 2016, 322). The IO therefore focuses on a humanistic and holistic understanding of education, where the self-development and the well-being of individuals and society are dominant rather than the development of skills for the labor market (Interview UNESCO A 2019). In its 2014 mission statement, UNESCO reemphasized that education "contributes to the building of peace, the eradication of poverty, and sustainable development and intercultural dialogue through education, the sciences, culture, communication and information" (UNESCO 2014, 13). UNESCO stresses that universal norms and duties help individuals to become members of society, as they transport values, history, and traditions to ensure social and

cultural cohesion (UNESCO 1996, 9, Interviews UNESCO A, B 2019). Hence, social cohesion and social justice play an important role when it comes to specifying the purpose of education for UNESCO.

While other IOs, especially the OECD, frame education in the line of competencies, UNESCO connects citizenship values of education to the individual, viewing them as rights-holders. For UNESCO, the acquisition of skills was strongly associated with enacting social change and equality (Vaccari and Gardinier 2019, 78, 79). Education is not only the transmission of knowledge but also an avenue to self-empower people. Generally, it should be ensured that education programs prepare people to become responsible members of a global society and empower them to become active citizens (Interview UNESCO A 2019). Hence, for UNESCO, there are not only economic returns from an investment in education but there are also societal returns (Interview UNESCO C 2019). And regarding the SDGs, UNESCO put forward the strategic objective that "[e]ducation, learning and skills are both enablers and drivers of inclusive and sustainable development and it is widely acknowledged that no country can improve the living conditions of its people without significant investment in education" (UNESCO 2014, 17). However, UNESCO also stressed that making education more inclusive for different (marginalized) social groups contributes to fighting poverty and to the broader goals of social justice and social inclusion (UNESCO 2008).

The ILO: Linking Decent Work and Decent Education

The ILO is an IO that is primarily concerned with employees' rights and other job-related issues, but it is always addressing education topics too. Because of the ILO's focus area, education has been associated with vocational training and individual skill formation. Education policy initiatives of the ILO were usually coupled with topics of training and development, particularly for countries in the Global South.

Generally, the ILO is a norm-setting organization in education that reflects a soft governance approach without having the ability to enforce decisions. While ratified recommendations are a powerful and binding

tool, most of the ILO's work in education comprises analyses as well as on-site studies, regional monitoring, and nonbinding best practice advice. In the field of education, the ILO has a long history of cooperating with other actors that hold the same ideational mindset. For example, UNESCO and the ILO have been strategic partners in the field of education for a long time. As early as 1948, both IOs agreed to collaborate on technical and vocational education (Mundy 1999, 31).

The ILO's primary mandate is to protect working people, to promote labor and human rights, and to promote social justice (Hughes 2005, 413). Like UNESCO, the ILO emphasized a holistic and humanistic leitmotif in education and did not bring utilitarian economic views to the fore. Although the economic dimension of education issues was always existent in the ideational portfolio of the ILO, it never overshadowed the social citizenship interpretation. In contrast to the World Bank and the OECD, the ILO's understanding of economic education ideas was to focus on the benefits for the individual and not on the whole economic development of states.

The ILO's humanistic, social take on the purpose of education is also reflected in the IO's history and its view on education over time. Since its inception in 1919, the ILO was concerned with broader social welfare policies (Strang and Chang 1993) and highlighted the social significance of education for the improvement of quality of life (Steffek and Holthaus 2018). In its Declaration of Philadelphia from 1944, the ILO defined one of its tasks as being to support "the assurance of equality of educational and vocational opportunity" (ILO 1944).

Since the 1950s and 1960s, technical assistance programs of the ILO in cooperation with domestic stakeholders became more important, particularly in developing states in Asia and Africa. Consequently, the ILO engaged in educational program activities (Strang and Chang 1993, 241; Interview ILO A 2019). Successively, the ILO expanded its initiatives on labor protection to also cover "the domain of human rights and tie these to the pursuit of freedom and economic progress" (Hughes 2005, 414). This gradual shift also has some important implications for the ILO's work in education and training because with this altered emphasis, matters of education were pulled into the ILO's sphere of responsibility. As the ILO stresses the importance of equal opportunities as a basic human

right, it necessarily implies the relevancy of it for education as well. Equal opportunities can best be achieved by ensuring access to high-quality education for all children and adults in the view of lifelong learning. Here, the holistic and humanistic leitmotif of the ILO in education was evident: "Education … should be directed to the all-round development of the human personality and to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural and economic progress of the community, as well as to the inculcation of deep respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms" (UNESCO and ILO 1966, 4).

While the ILO remained a central education actor with its technical reports and approaches to support development in the 1970s and 1980s, the upcoming neoliberal zeitgeist made it difficult for the IO to maintain its significance in the international system (Haworth and Hughes 2012, 205). A new framework approach was required that would also influence the ILO's work in education. After the end of the Cold War, the ILO started to address how market liberalism and intensified globalization processes affected social rights and sought to integrate universal labor standards into international trade agreements.

Eventually, with the 1998 *Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-Ups,* the ILO postulated "Core Labour Standards" (CLS) and expanded beyond issues directly related to work. The ILO directly referred to basic human rights and societal values that needed to be enhanced (Hughes 2005). The CLS "were framed as truly global, a set of rights which does not need national government approval" (Römer et al. 2021). Due to this framework, the right to education was emphasized by the ILO and the function of education as a means for individual self-development was stressed. Hence, the topic of education was decoupled from the direct linkage to the work environment, where it became a more independent topic area of the ILO.

More importantly, the ILO's Decent Work Initiative of 1999 affirmed the understanding that social norms and values must be reinforced; workers should be enabled to benefit from economic growth due to the necessary skills and opportunities education provides (Hughes 2005). Among other things, the ILO stipulated that education systems should be designed to enable knowledge transfer and skill formation, especially for disadvantaged socioeconomic groups. The ILO later argued that

education is a central pillar for "employability, employment of workers and sustainable enterprise development within the Decent Work Agenda" (ILO 2008, 1). While the overall focus was still on vocational training, the general education idea of the ILO became apparent in the Decent Work Initiative: education enables people to "achieve full personal development and social inclusion through work participation" (Deranty and MacMillan 2012, 391). Hence, by focusing on the individual, the purpose of education goes beyond enhancing economic productivity. Due to the realization that workers need decent work, education became a primary objective of the ILO and the IO came to recognize "that education, training and lifelong learning are contributing factors to personal development, access to culture and active citizenship" (ILO 2004, 1).

The key education ideas of the ILO are reflected in the fact that the IO generally follows a human rights approach and denotes the importance of universally valid norms. Against the background of the ILO not seeing labor as a commodity, the term human capital is critically evaluated and not regarded as central to the ILO's own view (Interviews ILO A, B 2019). Instead, enhancing human capabilities was put to the forefront of the ILO's understanding of education (Interviews ILO B, C 2019). In this context, the perspective on the individual becomes apparent in the ILO's education idea. Central to the IO is the view that education should qualify individuals for the labor market by activating skills (Interviews ILO A, B, C 2019). This skill building is not solely focused on technical skills but also understood as acquiring soft skills for professional transitions within the labor market. (Interview ILO C 2019). In this regard, the purpose of education for the ILO has a strong emphasis on enabling individuals to cope with job-related challenges but also on the promotion of lifelong learning. However, for the ILO, the goal of education is more than just labor market preparation; it also prepares people for community life and related social tasks (Interview ILO A 2019).

Another dimension of the ILO's educational work is reflected in the context of the supply-side of education systems: teachers. A large share of the ILO's activities in education has always dealt with the improvement of the work environment and employment conditions for teachers. On the one hand, teachers are employees whose interests should be represented by the ILO. On the other hand, the ILO also acknowledges that

improving the job conditions of teachers and higher education personnel has important consequences for the education system as a whole (Interview ILO A 2019). If teachers are better trained, the general quality of education improves.

It is important to note that the perspective on the economic benefits of education is not neglected by the ILO. Improvements in education systems could lead to economic growth, but the ILO stresses that education developments in the economic sector and the labor market must be viewed in tandem: "Skills are fundamental to, but not sufficient for, gaining decent jobs: linking skills with employment opportunities and decent work is critical" (ILO 2012, 2). If the focus is solely on providing better access to higher education but the national job market is not readily developed for a highly skilled labor force, the general economic improvement is nullified.

In connection with individual skill formation, an education purpose that promotes social cohesion, social justice, and integration is also deemed important to the ILO (Interviews ILO A, C 2019). Recent developments in the ILO's education concepts indicate that the purpose of education should extend beyond the labor market and increasingly aim at promoting active citizenship.[7] Even more, the ILO has established the flagship program "Jobs for Peace and Resilience", where skill formation is conceptualized as the cornerstone of the strategy (Interview ILO B 2019).

These examples underscore that the ILO's leitmotif regarding the purpose of education became more diverse over time. The strict link to jobs and the labor market was weakened, while a perspective that acknowledges a broader purpose of education was institutionalized. Against the background of accelerating globalization processes, which bring about new challenges for employability and skill formation, the ILO emphasized the interconnectedness of different relevant aspects of education: skill formation, equal opportunities, economic development, and social cohesion. However, the view of the ILO in education still prioritizes the perspective of individual workers. Therefore, improvements in education are expected to improve the situation of individuals.

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[7] See: Future of Work reports and position papers: https://www.ilo.org/global/topics/future-of-work/lang%2D%2Den/index.htm, last accessed 10/22/2020.

Conclusion and Discussion: A Reflection on Integrative Ideas

When comparing the ideational framings of the education purposes of the four IOs, we can identify several differences but also some shared views that existed early on. All IOs consider education and access to education as a basic human right. While UNESCO and the World Bank stated it first, the OECD and the ILO also emphasize the importance of education as a fundamental right of each individual. At the beginning of their educational activities, the two economic IOs (the World Bank and the OECD) were strongly associated with economic interpretations of education topics, reflecting their original field of expertise. Later, they broadened their ideational portfolio in education and also embraced views that did not necessarily focus on maximizing productivity and human capital. Instead, interpretations of the education purpose related to individual well-being and social cohesion came to the center of their leitmotifs. In addition, the IOs with humanistic education ideas (the ILO and UNESCO) expanded their ideational views on education by acknowledging the role of education in fostering national economic growth.

However, it has been shown above that the four globally operating education IOs prioritized different ideas on education. Basically, a dualism between economic utilitarian views (World Bank and OECD) and idealistic humanistic (UNESCO and ILO) views can be identified. This dualism was embodied in the IO's education programs from the beginning and was translated into concrete actions and policy recommendations. An initial ideological rivalry between the "old dogs" (UNESCO and the ILO) and the "new kids on the block" (the World Bank and the OECD) can be observed. Since the latecomer education IOs from the economic sphere (the World Bank and the OECD) had more resources readily available and were backed by national governments, the well-established IOs (UNESCO and the ILO) saw them as competitors. Contestation between both types of IOs was also amplified by fundamentally different leitmotifs regarding the purpose of education. The globally dominant view on the purpose of education oscillated over time

between the utilitarian and the humanistic citizenship perspective; depending on the leading economic paradigms and international developments of the time, the view on education accordingly shifted from one pole to the other, with education IOs being associated with one or the other.

While during some periods, like in the 1980s, the ideas were presented as mutually exclusive and contestation prevailed between the IOs, nowadays an integrative approach toward education ideas can be observed within the population of global IOs. By the end of the 1990s, this competition of ideas became less distinctive and dominant. This easing polarity could also be attributed to the IOs' activities and their ideational interpretation of education. In the two decades after the turn of the millennium, the IOs pursued an integrative approach in defining what the aim of education should be based on, which included empirical assessments that were less biased by ideational assumptions. While still viewing education either primarily as an economic endeavor or as a social right of citizens, the four education IOs analyzed in this chapter nonetheless acknowledged the opposing position and tied it into their own ideational leitmotifs. For example, in its 2018 World Development Report, the World Bank emphasized the integrative power of education, stating that national education systems should aim to educate students so that they become more refined human beings within society (World Bank 2018). On the other hand, UNESCO acknowledged in 2014 that one of the most important things education could accomplish includes skill development for the job market, so that individuals can contribute to the economic development of their country or society (UNESCO 2014). In contrast, the previous ideas remain valid. In 2018, UNESCO and the ILO stated in a declaration that "education is not a commodity" (ILO and UNESCO 2018). This underscores the prevalent framing of education as a human right. Hence, when analyzing the education ideas of individual IOs, the trend of general convergence must be revised. Also, the examples of the World Bank and the OECD show that some decoupling and showcasing took place. While both IOs ostensibly referred to holistic education ideas, including aspects of social cohesion, a utilitarian framing is predominant in their ideational portfolio when

communicating their position on education. The economic utility of education outcomes is superordinate to all else.

While this chapter offered a comparative analysis of the changing priorities in the education leitmotifs of four global IOs, it certainly falls short in assessing the actual impact of the changing discourse. It was not in the scope of this chapter to link altered ideational framings to concrete policy actions taken by individual IOs. In this regard, the potential decoupling between ideas and on-site activities of IOs, which was coined by Weaver (2008) as "organized hypocrisy", was excluded from this analysis. Fontdevila and Verger (2020) have demonstrated that there is some discrepancy between the World Bank's "talk" and its "actions" when it comes to supporting the implementation of education programs.

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6

Finding the Poster Child: Reference Patterns in OECD Country Reports

Helen Seitzer

Introduction[1]

Universal compulsory education is a crucial aspect of today's welfare state legislation. With only a few exceptions, most countries around the world have at least implemented compulsory primary education (Chap. 2). However, this is not the only aspect of formalized schooling that most countries around the globe have in common. For quite some time now, researchers have observed an increasing similarity in education systems (Boli et al. 1985). A prominent theoretical approach used to explain this phenomenon is Meyer and colleagues' *neo-institutionalist* theory, which

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offers an explanation for globally shared institutional structures. The acceptance and adoption of standards and norms by major players in world society create pressure for other countries to implement these standards as well (Meyer et al. 1997). Nonetheless, the conditions of formalized schooling still differ between countries, for example, in terms of duration and modality (Chap. 3). Consequently, researchers have been not only asking how it is that education systems around the world have come to resemble each other but also where these features originated from, who is influencing this pool of standards, and which aspects of formalized schooling remain distinctive between countries (Meyer et al. 1997).

To answer the question, where the global standards established in education policy could come from, one has to ask who is influencing world society and driving the implementation of set global standards on a national level. One big influencing force is International Organizations (IOs). Interest groups like IOs, think tanks, and policy experts have increasingly gained influence in setting standards in world society and therefore on policy diffusion. Extensive data collection for evidence-based policymaking through International Large-Scale Assessments (ILSAs) along with policy advice in the form of policy reports have significantly simplified the process of identifying 'what works' in education and contributed to the perception of IOs, like the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), as 'knowledge brokers' of policymaking and drivers of policy diffusion (Niemann and Martens 2018). The comparison of education systems through the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and country reports increases the use of references to foreign education system characteristics during policy development process in hopes of finding solutions to local problems in foreign education systems. In theory, this helps policymakers to identify 'best practice' models, place outcomes into perspective, and justify domestic reforms (Steiner-Khamsi 2014).

However, the OECD reports and policy recommendations are coined by a neo-institutional model of education inherent to the OECD, emphasizing aspects like school and regional autonomy, governing at a distance, and the implementation of global tests and standards. With this observation comes the concern of a one-size-fits-all distribution of a

Western-rationalized education system that suppresses local influences and ignores local labor market needs (Zhao 2020). Despite the criticism that the OECD's overall approach to education is not only influenced by economic factors but also a Western-rationalist perspective, it is not entirely transparent which (Western-rationalized) education systems serve the OECD as reference models, or if there is such a thing as a single 'ideal model'. As a consequence of this lack of clarity, one could ask where exactly standards, policies, and the recommendations thereof come from; and how one country is informed of another country's education system, which might hold beneficial features. However, these questions are rarely asked in a comparative perspective but studied through country case studies.

In this chapter, I intend to close this gap and review the developmental trajectory of education policy recommendations in OECD publications. By analyzing the reference patterns within OECD country reports on education, I seek to understand if Western countries are indeed at the center of OECD policy recommendations and, if so, which countries are especially central. In addition, I seek to understand if there are specific education systems that are increasingly pushed toward a Western model, or if all countries are equally subject to that influence. Is the OECD strictly comparing Western and non-Western education systems, or is there a clear reference or recommendation path from only select Western countries toward the global periphery? Or if this not the case, are regional comparisons more common within the country reports?

To answer these questions, I will examine country reports on education by the OECD. Specifically, I will examine a network of country reports and the countries mentioned within them. This will display which countries are used as examples for policymaking in other countries' reports. First, I will assess visually if there are regional clusters detectable. Then, I will explore if there are more references within the clusters or between them. Therefore, establishing if the OECD has a region or country they perpetually use as an example for other countries. Furthermore, I will test the network statistically using an exponential random graph model. Consequently, the contribution of this chapter lies in the disaggregation of OECD references, detecting the most central education system, and regional reference patterns in OECD reports on education.

Ranking, Reporting, and Referencing

As stated before, the isomorphism of institutions like formalized education is not surprising. The adherence of countries to world society standards has just as much to do with the social standing of these countries in world society as it does with improving their citizens' welfare (Ramirez et al. 2016).

The OECD can be regarded as the strongest driver of policy diffusion to date (Martens et al. 2014). The organization not only evaluates education systems through studies like PISA but also publishes a multitude of reports on different aspects of countries' education systems. The results of these studies and reports are often used to highlight 'best practices' to rank countries within league tables based on their performance but also to shame countries depending on their results (Tingley and Tomz 2019). These rankings are highly influential, as the strong reactions of some countries in the form of policy reforms indicate (Pons 2012).

Even before the commencement of PISA, the OECD published country reports, making policy recommendations based on their statistical analysis of the status quo. The targeted and effective publicity of these reports pressures countries to implement reforms according to the global standards, constituting the OECD's soft power (Addey 2017; Bieber 2016; Bieber and Martens 2011). Even though the reports assess within-country aspects and are discussed among country delegates, they still heavily draw on the OECD's perspective. Centeno (2018), for example, states that the OECD secretariats have the decision-making power, as the reports are published under the secretariats' names (instead of the individual authors') and country delegates have to agree on the publications. But, since the OECD is officially working on behalf of the country officials, there tends to be minimal pushback, especially as country delegates perceive the OECD as working for them (Centeno 2018, 125). Not only does the OECD have a uniquely strong impact, but its headquarters are indeed located in western Europe. Statistically speaking, most of the scientists employed there might, more often than not, be born and trained somewhere in Europe or a country with similar academic traditions. This might cause a cultural bias, a phenomenon that can affect everyone.

Therefore, the suspicion that the OECD is spreading a Western model of education is not unreasonable and this concern has only become more pronounced with the introduction of PISA and its reports (Zhao 2020). Aside from Hong Kong, Shanghai, South Korea, and Japan, the top performers of PISA are all located in Europe.

Another area of controversy regarding the OECD's policy recommendations concerns the perceived origin of ideas and standards as well as the strictness thereof. So far, research claims that the original 'model education system' was developed in Europe, in a Western society (Meyer et al. 1997; Anderson-Levitt 2003). Consequently, the outcomes, student achievement, and knowledge are tailored to prepare students for a Western-style capitalist labor market and society. While some countries are struggling to implement these standards, one of which is the participation in international large-scale assessments like PISA, it is said to unfairly benefit those countries whose education system is already built on these standards (Zhao 2020). In addition, the idea of education as a means to improve the workforce and thereby the national economy is a concept that originates in a capitalist, neoliberal society (Rutkowski 2007). The norms and values attached to this perspective on formalized education have an impact on the curriculum and the overall emphasis of formalized schooling in society (Steiner-Khamsi 2013; Anderson-Levitt 2003). The question here is whether these values apply to all cultures around the globe, or if there are other emphases that the education system should incorporate, especially in developing countries.

To identify these standards and norms, however, a certain level of comparison is necessary. In fact, comparison and references to foreign political systems has a long history. As Alasuutari et al. (2018) show in their study on British parliament debate records, referencing of foreign policies has been occurring since the 1800s. A more recent development is the notion of a 'model policy'. Early references simply state examples of foreign systems, while recent policy references in British parliament refer to specific policies, indicating the idea of a model or blueprint policy to learn from (Alasuutari et al. 2018). Luhmann's theory on self-referential systems offers an explanation for this phenomenon: He states that countries need to define themselves in demarcation to other countries, thereby creating a feedback system allowing them to redefine, experience, and

rebuild their own identity. This, in turn, aids in implementing local regulations, which are distinct from the (national) 'other' (Luhmann 1990). His theory indicates that the comparison of education systems and their outcomes might be a more naturally occurring process than expected at first glance. This theory also accounts for a more local reference pattern instead of an overarching global model. However, the critical aspect regarding the dominating Western origin of policies and norms remains, especially if Western education systems are frequently referenced as examples.

References in an academic context usually refer to the citation of other academic works in a publication. In our context, however, it denotes the mention of a country in another country's report. These references are usually used as examples. This process allows us to trace potential influence: If one country is mentioned frequently or positively in another country's report, the probability of some kind of knowledge transfer increases. At the same time, by including a source for their recommendations and citing certain education systems as successes, the OECD's claims that certain reforms could improve a given education system are legitimized. References can, therefore, also be seen as a validation instrument (Steiner-Khamsi 2021). The references along with the publication of PISA results allow certain countries to gain a reputation as 'reference societies': countries whose education systems are regularly referenced as role models by other countries (Waldow et al. 2014; Adamson et al. 2017). These reference societies can change, as Silova (2006) observed: In post-Soviet states, Soviet references were removed and replaced with European references after the collapse of the Soviet Union, not only marking political changes but also the implied political orientation. Interestingly, this change only affected the discursive level and not the actual education system (Silova 2006). In addition, prejudice and culture play a significant role for reference societies: While some countries like Hong Kong and Shanghai are praised for their high PISA performance, they are rarely observed as reference societies. Teaching practices in Asia and the West are rumored to be significantly different, which in turn prevents these education systems from spreading, despite the excellent PISA scores (Waldow et al. 2014).

As with global standards, a controversial issue that frequently resurfaces in this debate is the origin of these reference societies, since most are located in Europe (Schriewer and Matinez 2004; Silova 2006; Steiner-Khamsi 2021). Even though single country reports and the use of external publications in national policymaking have been studied extensively (e.g. Baek et al. 2018; Adamson et al. 2017), the OECD's recommendations and references often remain vague and are rarely dissected and compared globally.

The Influence of World Society

As stated before, since education systems around the globe share certain characteristics such as classroom structures, curricula, and various administrative aspects like ministers, researchers have theorized as to how these commonalities came to be (Anderson-Levitt 2003, 5). The most commonly accepted theory of a shared world society describes a latent set of policy and norm development that is influenced by countries, IOs, and other actors. This implicit space of norms can be seen as an arena for policy diffusion: Countries legitimize themselves by adopting similar standards not only in education policy but also regarding broader concepts such as human rights and democracy (Meyer et al. 1997). This shared action allows for the dissemination of specific policies as well as ideas and understandings regarding education, its institutional structure, and its function within society. The implementation of global standards then increases interactions between countries and strengthens international relations due to seemingly shared ideologies. Very commonly, the standards adopted by world society originate in policy reports or papers regarding countries in the Global North. The OECD contributes greatly to the overall content of discussion in this space and therefore heavily influences the 'pool of accepted ideas' from which countries can choose education policy reforms. This creates homogeneity among countries that are part of world society. And while the OECD's reports are limited to countries commissioning them, world society is influencing all countries simultaneously. The OECD's recommendations, therefore, not only influence its member countries but also reach an increasing number of

non-member states globally (Breakspear 2012). Important to note here is the agency countries have in this scenario but also the agency the OECD has in informing world society. The adoption of policies is action taken by countries alone but the distribution of information, which policies should be adopted, is the OECD's doing. The OECD influences world society standards by recommending specific aspects of education systems to many countries simultaneously, thereby increasing the diffusion of specific policies, creating a standardized education system around the globe.

On the other hand, education has traditionally been a local or national subject but is now heavily influenced at a global level (Sellar and Lingard 2014). In a traditional sense, education systems are initially derived from local, cultural contexts and are dependent on the local meaning of education, its tasks, and its functions within society. Although formalized schooling is already a form of standardization on the local level, global standards are much more critically debated. While some common institutional structures are observable (Anderson-Levitt 2003), some studies argue the acceptance of global standards is more of a political act and requires a level of universality, precision, and rationality that only few standards possess (Steiner-Khamsi 2013). Instead, countries implement standards only to a certain degree, retaining their cultural originality.

The debate on institutional isomorphism and the worldwide standardization of norms naturally leads to the question, how culture affects the expansion of standards and fosters or mediates the influence of world society. The definition of 'culture' and its influences on individual and institutional behavior are important but also controversial issues in social sciences (Anderson-Levitt 2012). While some approaches to cultural influences define rigid 'fault lines' separating cultural spaces and defining potential 'breaking points' (Huntington 1996), other approaches define culture as a set of common characteristics, such as religion, gender roles, language groups, and civil rights. The *cultural spheres* concept introduced in Chap. 2 defines culture as a valued two-mode network. If two countries share a cultural characteristic, they establish a link in a network. This approach allows for fuzzy boundaries, where ties between countries are stronger the more cultural characteristics they share. This network also allows for the definition of five cultural clusters, which will be included

in the analysis further on. As discussed in Chap. 2, the exposure through this cultural network determines the introduction of compulsory education. To be more specific, the membership in certain cultural clusters, namely, *Eastern European* and *WEIRD* (western, educated, industrialized, resourceful, democratic) (Henrich 2020), increased the risk of introducing compulsory education.

Since formalized education is crucial for socialization and has developed over time in different ways depending on the local culture and history, it is also said to reproduce the culture of the origin country or region (Anderson-Levitt 2012). However, the standardization of education through the influence of IOs, like the OECD, fosters a narrow curriculum that only prepares students for a Western labor market and does not allow room for regional-specific education with regional-specific outcomes. This ultimately reproduces Western culture and homogenizes institutional forms as well as culture. Therefore, the standardization of education is often called Westernization or Americanization (Koh 2011; Alasuutari and Kangas 2020). Historically, political systems used to orient themselves toward historically or culturally similar countries (Bermeo 1992). This push toward a Western education system by instituting a 'global model' within world society undermines not only local influences but also local comparisons.

The question remaining is whether OECD references, seeing as they are pathways of influence, are restricted to a Western origin. Is the OECD undoubtedly favoring a Western model of education?

Where to Look: Referencing in National Policymaking

Several previous studies have investigated the origin of education policy reforms, mostly looking into single countries (e.g. Baek et al. 2018; Dobbins and Martens 2010). The data of various country reports supplied by the OECD provide excellent material for national policymakers to distinguish their national agenda from other nation-states—or to use them as an example for the reform implementation. It seems to be

common practice for policymakers to consult experts before attempting to implement a reform, regardless if their advice was directly employed into policy action or not. This is naturally an excellent area for references between countries (Rautalin et al. 2018; Waldow et al. 2014).

Referencing foreign policies is not a phenomenon limited to education policy or the time after PISA, as discovered by Alasuutari and colleagues. British policy debates contain a relatively stable number of references to foreign systems, even historically (Alasuutari et al. 2018). Referencing and policy borrowing do not necessarily occur because reforms from elsewhere are better but because the very act of borrowing has a salutary effect on the relations between countries (Steiner-Khamsi 2006).

Finland, for example, served as a reference society after the first few PISA rounds, having achieved the highest performance out of all participants. Since then, Hong Kong and Shanghai have taken over that rule. However, despite the ranking, the choice of education systems as reference societies depends heavily on the interrelation of the respective nation-states and local traditions. Despite outstanding PISA scores, the Shanghai education system served as a negative reference point for several countries. The negative references are based on local culture—the (recent) European tradition of student-centered education stands in sharp contrast to Hong Kong's teacher-centered practice (Waldow et al. 2014). Nevertheless, Shanghai schools are praised for following the current performance standards of education.

Further studies found differential effects for referencing depending on the policy field and the subject in question. Furthermore, national references often seem to entail multiple countries depending on the policy context rather than just one, even though regional references often include blanket descriptors ('crisis-countries', 'well-off countries') (Pi Pi Ferrer et al. 2018). In addition to empirical evidence, both historical and cultural contexts seem to influence references as well (Sung and Lee 2017).

In general, references to other countries within policymaking processes seem to be quite common. The externalization of policy problems has become somewhat common in policy transfer research (Schriewer and Holmes 1990).

There are a few things to take away from studies on referencing in education policy: (1) The phenomenon is quite common in all policy

fields and generally seen as a pipeline for influence between countries. It also affects academia, politics, and newspapers alike. (2) Countries are not the only ones that make references throughout policy documents. In fact, IOs are also considered influential in the creation of reference societies. While PISA certainly aided Finland and the Nordic countries in becoming reference societies, meaning they are the reference country for almost all other countries, PISA is not universally powerful. (3) Other aspects like cultural context play a role in the making of reference societies as well. What is missing in this research branch is the analysis of references within OECD documents. Even though not necessarily as powerful as the PISA results, other OECD published reports still bear great influence, as the OECD's 'best practice' models offer 'blueprints' for policy reform. The contribution of this chapter therefore lies in the disentanglement of OECD references, that is, in identifying the most central education systems or regional clustering in reference patterns within OECD reports.

Data

The data consist of 296 reports on countries' education systems that have been published through the OECD's publishing service between 1961 and 2019. The reports are published regularly on topics like Higher Education, Regional Development in regard to Education, Early Childhood Education and Care, and other aspects of formalized education. Reports are written by OECD staff in collaboration with experts on the subject within the country. Thus, as stated before, the content of these reports does not exclusively reflect either the OECD perspective or the perspective of country experts. However, studies were able to observe that the OECD does exercise strong control over the reports' contents (Centeno 2018).

The reports are reoccurring publications containing statistical and in-depth analyses, discussing the status quo of a country's education system. They are organized in standardized series, discussing, for example, the status of the Early Childhood Education and Care system in place, Higher Education Management and Planning, Regional and City

Development, or the overall reform efforts taken by countries in education since the last report. This tool provides policymakers with evidence for policymaking, showcases improvements, and makes recommendations on the grounds of other country reports or publications. Early reports often contained multiple countries in one publication, but the recent expansion and extensive data collection allow for 400 pages of figures and tables for each country almost every year.

To provide an example: In a report on Chile's education system in 2017 the OECD stated, "The centrally managed student allocation system in the Netherlands is another good option to keep in mind" (OECD 2017: 102), while discussing student allocation systems to different schools. Further on, they state that "[i]n the Netherlands, the Girls and Technology programme (Meisjes en Techniek) encourages girls to choose technical education and professions" (OECD 2017: 106), in a highlighted box along with more examples and citations to pinpoint options on how to close Chile's growing gender gap in science, technology, and math courses. These references are assumed to be always positive, unlike policymakers or scholars, the organization would severely damage their own reputation by highlighting negative examples. While there might be a bias toward OECD members, due to more information present, this is not a concern, as there are still reports by non-OECD members; similarly, non-OECD members are referenced to.

The publications in question were collected in 2019 from the OECD's online library[2] and the OECD Archive in Paris. The final dataset consists of all country reports tagged with the label 'Education' by the OECD. A total of 296 country reports were published solely on education between 1961 and 2019. Sixty-five different countries commissioned country reports during that time. The documents were cleaned of tables and figures to avoid distorting the analysis.

A bibliographic analysis was performed, filtering the reports for references to other countries. Usually, bibliographical analyses on references means tracing the origin of other cited publications. Here, only mentions of country names are counted as references. These mentions allow us to trace which countries are most likely used as an example for which other

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[2] https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org.
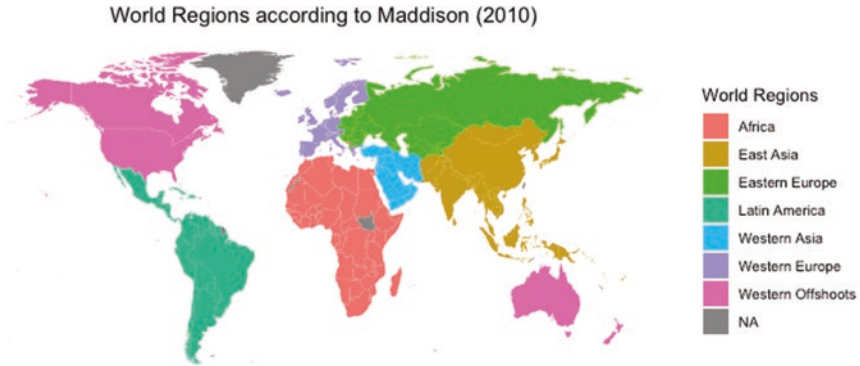
Fig. 6.1 Regional country groups according to Maddison

countries' report. This allows the building of a network between country reports and cited countries. This network includes a total of 129 countries, as some countries did not commission reports but were still cited. For the graphical analysis, self-references were removed as were all references below 10 mentions and above 200 mentions per country and per report, as they were suspected to be computation errors. The references were aggregated at the report level.

For further graphical analysis, the network was inspected after including the world regions developed by the Maddison Project (Fig. 6.1).[3] Finally, an Exponential Random Graph Model (ERGM) for the regional groupings was implemented to show which countries were most often cited from outside their regional cluster and which clusters mostly cited other countries within the regional group.

Results

A total of 129 unique countries were referenced in the reports. The countries with the highest indegree—which means they were most frequently referenced—were Finland (a total of 1729 mentions), Germany (1685), Sweden (1407), and Australia (1300). Most references for Finland came

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[3] http://www.ggdc.net/maddison/oriindex.htm.

from Sweden, Norway, the United States, South Korea, and Japan. The country report with the most references of one specific country in a report was a report on Tajikistan, having referenced Kazakhstan a total of 381 times in one single report. The next most frequent references were from reports on Great Britain (specifically) mentioning England (291). The following three most frequent mentions were all from reports on the United States that referenced Singapore, Finland, and Germany. As one would expect, OECD countries that commission reports themselves are much more frequently referenced than countries that have not issued reports. This glimpse into the reference frequency hints toward an interesting development: There might be a regional reference pattern, as reports on Sweden and Norway often reference Finland, reports on Tajikistan references Kazakhstan, and reports on Great Britain discuss England specifically.[4]

Figure 6.2 shows the network with a stress majorization layout, placing the nodes with an optimal distance to each other: Nodes with many ties are placed in the middle, while isolated nodes are placed on the outside of the graph. The more ties that exist between two nodes, the closer together they are placed. This allows for a preliminary visual interpretation of possible reference patterns.

The network is a two-mode network: Country reports (circles) can only have outgoing ties and references (triangles) only have ingoing ties. The colors distinguish different regional clusters as described earlier. The tie strength signifies the frequency of a particular report referencing a particular country.

What is interesting to observe in this network is that there is a clear distinction between countries in the center, which are frequently referenced and those that are on the periphery of the graph. While Western European countries and Western Offshoots (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the USA) are frequently referenced and, therefore. at the center of the graph, African countries are not and are spread far out on the edges of the graph. Some of the Western Asian, Latin American, and

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[4] Great Britain does not have one education system but several, depending on the political unit, therefore these regions were separated. It also demonstrates the OECD's priority of England over Wales or Scotland.
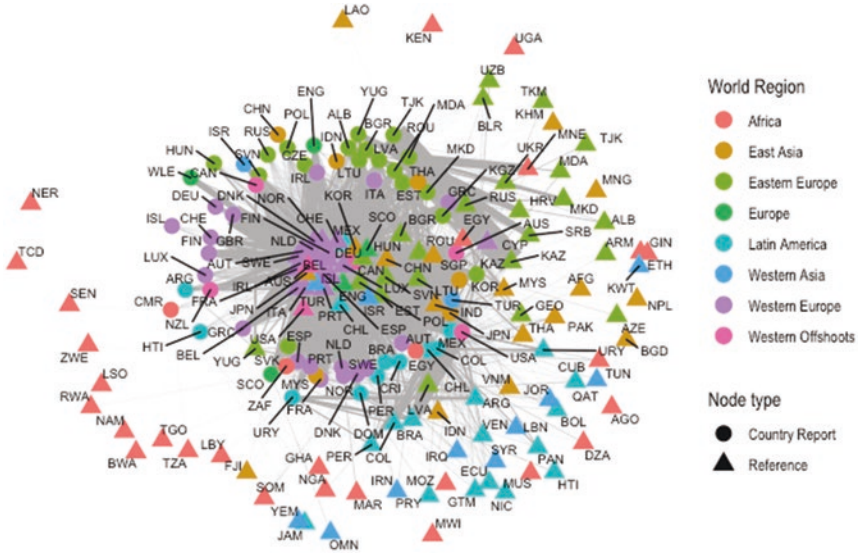
Fig. 6.2 Network of references

Eastern European or Asian countries are referenced often, while others are referenced much less. Their reference pattern is not as obvious. It seems as if the OECD does have a preference for referencing European countries relatively often. At the same time, there seems to be a geographical preference: Countries of the same region often cite reports of their neighbors, as the color pattern suggests. This indicates, at least within the OECD, regional references are equally as important as the reference to 'ideal cases', such as Singapore. But the fact that the references are not exclusively distributed within single clusters or to specific countries show that the suspected dissemination of a Western model might not be as strong as initially expected.

This observation is even more pronounced when only including reports published after the introduction of the PISA study in 2000. Even though Western European countries are in the center of the graph (see Fig. 6.3), just like before PISA's introduction, the regional clustering is more apparent. Especially the East Asian and Eastern European countries are often mentioned in reports from the same regional cluster. The countries with the most references after the year 2000 are Finland (949), Germany
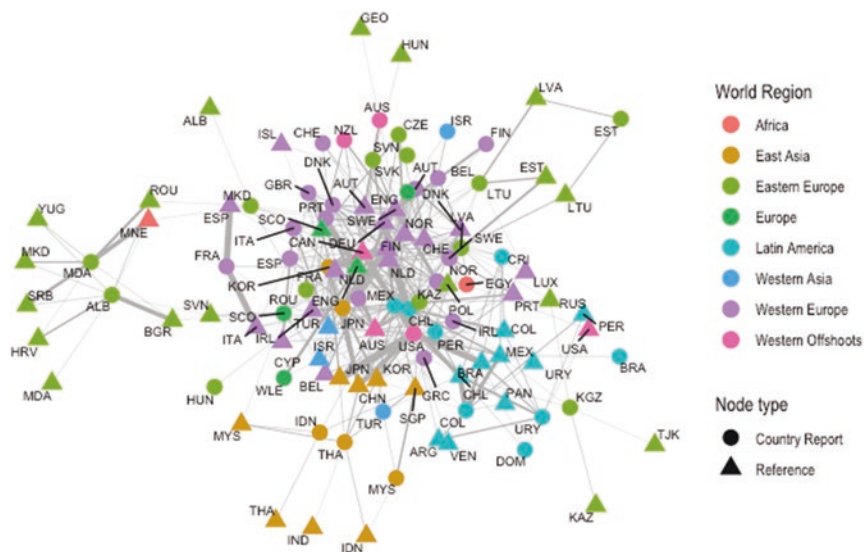
Fig. 6.3 Network of references after 2000

(798), Australia (742), and Canada (594). There seems to be favoritism toward European countries as reference points instead of toward PISA top performers. Germany, for example, did not score very high in the first PISA test round. Furthermore, despite being a top performer, Singapore was only referenced 226 times—a rather unexpected result. Chile, on the other hand, is referenced 482 times, despite consistently ranking below the OECD average. These results already indicate that the OECD does not have one single poster child but that there is not a general global model at play either.

To support this finding of unexpectedly frequent regional references with statistical results, Table 6.1 shows the results of a bipartite exponential random graph model (ERGM) that predicts the probability of tie formation between a report (network 1) and a country cited (network 2) in the network. In general, ERGMs allow the estimation of the likelihood of tie formation given all present ties in the network as well as node attributes. For example, it is possible to estimate the probability of citations of a country by a respective report, dependent on both countries'

Table 6.1 ERGM model for homophily within regional and culture clusters

	Model	
	(1)	(2)
Edges	−3.624***	−5.458***
b2factor East Asia	0.450***	0.556***
b2factor Eastern Europe	0.077***	−0.715***
b2factor Europe	1.950***	1.715***
b2factor Latin America	1.181***	0.527***
b2factor Western Asia	0.590***	0.743***
b2factor Western Europe	0.289	0.414**
b2factor Western offshoots	0.519	−0.017
Nodemix OECD 0-1	3.692***	3.242***
Homophily OECD	4.207***	3.862***
Homophily Africa	0.197***	0.209***
Homophily East Asia	0.270***	0.282***
Homophily Eastern Europe	0.207***	0.250***
Homophily Europe	0.645	0.880**
Homophily Latin America	0.169***	0.220***
Homophily Western Asia	0.389	0.345***
Homophily Western Europe	0.247	0.233***
Homophily Western offshoots	−0.222	1.871***
2-star culture		0.522***
3-star culture		−0.093***
4-star culture		0.008***
Nodemix culture 1-1		1.127***
Nodemix culture 2-1		3.161***
Nodemix culture 3-1		2.854***
Nodemix culture 4-1		3.208***
Nodemix culture 5-1		3.086***
Nodemix culture 1-2		1.792***
Nodemix culture 2-2		2.054***
Nodemix culture 3-2		1.176***
Nodemix culture 4-2		1.752***
Nodemix culture 5-2		1.807***
Nodemix culture 1-3		1.902***
Nodemix culture 2-3		2.109***
Nodemix culture 3-3		1.002***
Nodemix culture 4-3		2.509***
Nodemix culture 5-3		1.383***
Nodemix culture 1-4		1.636***
Nodemix culture 2-4		0.893***
Nodemix culture 3-4		1.172***

(continued)

Table 6.1 (continued)

	Model	
	(1)	(2)
Nodemix culture 4-4		0.983
Nodemix culture 5-4		1.768
Akaike Inf. Crit.	6270.791	5716.667
Bayesian Inf. Crit	6395.675	6001.125

Note: *p < 0.1; **p < 0.05; ***p < 0.01

(referencing and cited) membership status in the OECD. This shows if non-OECD members are more likely to be informed of OECD members' education system practices than other non-OECD members.

The coefficients are untransformed; they therefore represent the log odds of tie formation. In the present model, I included the Maddison's World Regions as described above, to estimate the likelihood of being cited given a countries' geographical location. Then, I estimate the impact of OECD and non-OECD membership on referencing and finally include five cultural clusters, derived from the 'cultural spheres' network from 1962 described in Chap. 2. Cluster 1 of the cultural spheres comprises mostly *WEIRD* countries,[5] cluster 2 *Spanish-Catholic*[6] countries, cluster 3 *Eastern European*[7] countries, and cluster 4 *Predominantly Muslim*[8] countries while cluster 5 includes mostly *African, not predominantly Muslim*[9] countries. The second model shows a slightly

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[5] 1: WEIRD: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bangladesh, Canada, Switzerland, Germany, Denmark, England, Finland, Fiji, France, United Kingdom, India, Ireland, Iceland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Nigeria, Netherlands, Norway, New Zealand, Scotland, Singapore, Sweden, United States, Wales.

[6] 2: Spanish-Catholic: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Spain, Guatemala, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Peru, Portugal, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela.

[7] 3: Eastern European: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Belarus, China, Cyprus, Czechia, Estonia, Georgia, Greece, Croatia, Haiti, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Latvia, Moldova, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Thailand, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Yugoslavia.

[8] 4: Predominantly Muslim: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Guinea, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Cambodia, South Korea, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Malaysia, Niger, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Senegal, Somalia, Syria, Chad, Tunisia, Turkey, Yemen.

[9] 5: African, not predominantly Muslim: Angola, Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Kenya, Laos, Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi, Namibia, Rwanda, Togo, Tanzania, Uganda, South Africa, Zimbabwe.

better model fit, controlling for culture clusters seems to enhance the model fit and provide more information than only controlling for geographical region.

The first effect of the model (edge) simply describes the log odds of tie formation. The following b2factor effects of the table describe the log odds of being referenced, based on the network attribute (here the World Regions, as described earlier) in contrast to the reference category *Africa*. All effects are positive, except for *Eastern Europe* in model 2, with countries from *Europe* showing the highest coefficients. European countries are referenced more often than countries from all other regions, making it somewhat a 'reference-region'. Latin America has a surprisingly large coefficient in model 1 as well. However, there seems to be a cultural component: When including controlling for the culture cluster as seen in model 2, the effect of being located in Latin America on the frequency of being cited reduces. This indicates that the culture, or belonging to a specific culture cluster influences the citation frequency as well.

Nodemix terms describe the log odds of a tie between a report and a referenced country based on the given node attributes. OECD members are coded with 1, non-members with 0. As expected, there are more reports on non-OECD member countries citing OECD member countries more often, since there are more reports on OECD-members then there are reports on non-OECD-Members.

The differential homophily effect describes the log odds of ties from a report to a reference country, if both countries have the same attribute level. The homophily effect for (only) OECD countries confirms the assumption that OECD countries are being used as reference countries more often than non-member states.

For all World Regions, the differential homophily effect is surprisingly small but positive. Consequently, there is a tendency for citations to countries within the same World Region as the country of the report. These effects are larger for *Europe*, *Western Asia*, but especially *Western Offshoots* in model 2 compared to the other regions, illustrating that reference countries are more likely to be within the same World Region as the country that is receiving the recommendation.

The in-star effects describe the log odds of having between two and four incoming ties from the same culture cluster. The log odds of two incoming ties from the same culture cluster are positive, describing a

greater probability of two incoming ties from the same culture cluster than from other culture clusters. The three in-stars effect is negative, meaning there are less chances of three references forming the same culture cluster. Overall, the effects are relatively small.

The last effects describe the log odds of ties between reports and references from the denoted culture cluster. Here it is especially interesting, how the overall effect sizes are distributed. Citations to countries in cluster 5 are the reference category here. References to countries in culture cluster 1 (*WEIRD*) are generally relatively prevalent, the effects are significant, positive, and relatively large. Especially in reports from cluster 2, cluster 4, and cluster 5 (*Spanish-Catholic, Predominantly Muslim: Turkey, Egypt, Albania, but also South Korea* and *African, non-Muslim countries*). Cluster 2, *Spanish-Catholic* countries, tends to be cited from reports on countries in the same cluster most often than from reports on countries in other clusters. Cluster 3, *Easter European*, hosts popular reference countries as well, especially from cluster 2 and cluster 4.

These results are in line with the earlier results, showing that there is a tendency for referencing within the same cultural as well as geographical region. In addition, there is a strong preference for references to *WEIRD* or *European* countries.

In summary, first, the regional pattern from Fig. 6.2 seems to express positive homophily effects for World Regions, there is a tendency for references within the same region—especially for the *Western Offshoots* but also for *Europe* and *Western Asia*. Second, *European* countries are the most referenced. Additionally, OECD countries are referenced more than non-member states. Third, culture seems to matter in these reference patterns. Cluster 2, *WEIRD*, and cluster 3 *Eastern Europe* are referenced the most in reports from other culture clusters. Cluster 2, *Spanish-Catholic,* has the highest effect for within-cluster citations. Some cultural and geographical regions are, therefore, more prone to receive recommendations based on the countries' culture and location, while others receive recommendations in line with a 'global model' without the preference for regional examples.

Therefore, one cannot assume the OECD has one 'model education system' or one poster-child after which all recommendations are modeled; instead, there seems to be an awareness within the organization that

countries are suitable as reference societies to the countries receiving the recommendation. Despite general perceptions, it is safe to say there is no 'one global model' of an education system. However, there is a preference for countries mostly located in Europe, warranting the criticism of scholars that the OECD is driving toward a 'western European' model of education.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I analyzed OECD country reports on education against the backdrop of the criticism that the OECD fosters and spreads a Western model of education. European countries are used as examples for system structures elsewhere in the world. The results indicate a higher frequency of references to European countries as opposed to non-European countries. However, it must be taken into account that OECD member countries are mostly located in Europe, and a higher number of reports are accordingly commissioned by these countries. Nevertheless, there is a surprisingly unclear pattern of references. To gain a better understanding of the rather confusing pattern, regional clusters were included and later cultural clusters. This revealed an increased preference for regional references in addition to a high number of references to European countries, though mainly Finland and Germany. The Westernization of education is just as much a Finlandization, a Europeanization, or even a 'localization' of education policy. Referencing geographically close countries seems to be just as important as referencing the best performing systems, such as Finland. However, Finland's success with PISA might be easily referenced as an example without clear indication what aspects of the Finnish education system are to be used. Instead, this could be a projection for success of an education system, making the reference to Finland more a reference to success than to a specific education system characteristic.

While the reference patterns have no clear central nodes, there are indeed 'favorites': European OECD-members. This is not surprising, as there may be more information available, but it warrants the warning that the OECDs' recommendations are leaning toward a Western,

European model of education. Interesting to note is the referencing preference between the regions: Some regions such as Europe, Western Asia, and the Western Offshoots seem to prefer references to regionally close countries, while others such as Latin America or Eastern Asia do not. Culture seems to matter within this pattern as well. Aside from the preference for the countries in the WEIRD cluster, it is less clear which countries are most referenced. These results confirm Western or European countries are referenced the most from their own geographical or cultural region as well as from other countries.

While there are similar institutional structures of education systems around the world, the results of this study imply that these standards and norms might travel differently than the way often portrayed. The standardization of education, even though 'Western-oriented', is much more dependent on the geographical closeness of countries. When studying the path of education policy diffusion, new insights might arise in the context of geographically, religiously, linguistically, or ethnically similar countries as well as those that are historically tied to one another. The diffusion chain of policy borrowing but especially of referencing might be much shorter than expected. In addition, this observation supports the idea of externalization in the sense of Luhmann's self-referential systems (Luhmann 1990) as opposed to the acceptance of a global model in world society's terms (Meyer et al. 1997). PISA might be a global comparison of decontextualized student achievement but the comparison of actual policies by the OECD might be much more oriented toward closely related countries. Especially upon closer inspection of the first graph on references, it seems more intuitive that geographically close countries are tied more closely, as most of them share similar institutional and cultural traits. Externalizations in the form of references between those countries are therefore much easier to understand. And while Finland is without a doubt the OECD's poster child, given that it holds the highest number of references across all time, it is not the only country with a consistently high number of references. Since the homogenization of education systems is not a latent idea but rather reality, a common model is still being circulated, though it might be diffusing along different pathways than initially anticipated. To understand the regionally dependent preference for regional citations, even in reports published by a transnational

organization, it might be worth including more factors into the analysis such as openness or cultural traits.

Furthermore, it might be important for upcoming research on the diffusion of education policy, but also on the OECD, to consider regional influences instead of focusing solely on global influences of the OECD. In addition, inspecting reference societies not through the OECD's lens but through country reports or policy papers from other sources might reveal different results. It is also worthy to note, that the overall notion of the OECD's influence on a global model of education is not as strong as expected. The regional recommendation pattern from the OECD warrants a closer look into the diffusion of policies, as this might provide insights into the pathways of these policies instead of assuming a global influence through a world society.

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7

International Organizations and Education in the Islamic World

David Krogmann

Introduction[1]

As education policy evolves into an increasingly internationalized field, the impact of international organizations (IOs) on national education policies is becoming more and more relevant. While research has been concerned with some of the more influential organizations in education policy, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), other IOs have largely flown under the radar. There are a number of education IOs of predominantly Muslim member

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states that have not been reviewed systematically in almost 40 years of their existence. This chapter maps the existing education organizations in the Muslim world. The analysis presented here revolves around two main questions. First, which organizations consisting of predominantly Muslim member states are active in the field of international education policy, and how, if at all, do they cooperate? Second, which education leitmotifs and ideas do these organizations promote, what kind of discourse do they construct around education policy, and are aspects of it crucial for a particular 'cultural sphere' as defined in the introduction to this volume?

In answering these questions, this chapter also provides insights into existing discourses within a particular 'cultural sphere' proliferated by international organizations and how they are constructed as alternatives to or even contradictions against globally dominant discourses of education policy. It does so by focusing on the content of these discourses, rather than the mechanisms and power structures along which they are constructed. Using qualitative content analysis, this chapter explores the themes and ideas underlying the various activities of Muslim education IOs. For this purpose, the most relevant among Muslim education IOs are the Islamic World Education, Science and Culture Organization (ICESCO, formerly known as Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (ISESCO)),[2] a branch of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Arab League Cultural, Educational, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO) and the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS).

These three organizations are largely comprised of states with predominantly Muslim citizens and make frequent references to Islam in both their official statements and their publications. They also occasionally cooperate with each other, and there is a significant overlap in their membership. More precisely, all member states of the ABEGS are also members of the ALECSO, all of which are in turn members of ICESCO. In this chapter, I therefore refer to them as Muslim or Islamic education IOs, borrowing from Wayne Nelles' term "Islamic multilateral

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[2] In 2020, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization was renamed Islamic World Education Science and Culture Organization. As all documents reviewed in this chapter have been published before 2020, they will be referenced using ICESCO's former denomination ISESCO.

institutions" (Nelles 2006). Special attention will be given to the ICESCO since it is the largest Muslim education IO. As such, it enjoys a unique status, not least because it explicitly promotes the religious dimension of education. The frequent references to religion, which informs both ICESCO's goals and the means it chooses to achieve them, separate the organization from its more universally oriented counterparts. Whereas organizations like the UN agencies are secular by nature, ICESCO is distinctly nonsecular.

Following a few remarks about the existing literature on Muslim international organizations in the next section, this chapter will first briefly introduce leitmotifs and ideas in education policy. It will then examine data generated from publications produced by the ICESCO, the ALECSO, and the ABEGS, presenting recurring themes found in these documents. The analysis will assess the proclaimed goals of the organizations for education policy, as well as their means of choice to achieve them, both of which are assumed to be informed by underlying ideas on how education should be conceptualized. After giving some space to the discussion of the results, the chapter concludes with a brief outlook on the challenges for further research in this field.

The analysis finds that Muslim education IOs participate in a distinct discourse that revolves around the synthesis of traditional values drawn from Islamic philosophy and the demands of a modern global labor market. Furthermore, it calls into question the effectiveness of said organizations in resolving the assumed conflict between traditional Muslim education and a "Westernized" world, as Muslim education IOs face shortages in budget and staff.

Contextualizing Education Leitmotifs in Muslim IOs

A large part of the motivation for this chapter stems from the fact that we know almost nothing about Muslim education IOs, despite them being around for more than four decades. Literature on these organizations is exceptionally limited, adding some weight to Wayne Nelles' claim that

"the international community as a whole has not well analyzed, engaged with, or understood Islamic multilateral institutions" (Nelles 2006, 123).

Nevertheless, three basic points have been made by scholars in regard to the organizations examined here. Firstly, being one of the few scholars to have published on Islamic IOs, Nelles notes that most of them share a "profound concern" in regard to their cultural identity, namely, that Western culture, as well as globalization, puts serious pressure on many Islamic countries wanting to preserve their cultural and spiritual roots (Nelles 2006), something that many Westerners have "never come to terms with" (Nelles 2006, 122). Currie-Alder (2019) argues that strengthening the common cultural identity among Muslim countries has been one of the key motivations behind the foundation of various multilateral organizations in the Muslim world. Baghdady discusses the fundamental conflicts between the values proliferated by Western models of education and what he calls "Arab and Islamic cultures" (Baghdady 2019, 257), arguing that some Muslim-majority states have been resistant to accept foreign cultural norms and objectives in education. Secondly, connected to this conflict, spiritual development or self-refinement seems to be a much more important educational objective for many Muslim countries, especially in the Arab world, than for many Western countries, when compared for example with individual prosperity or economic growth (Findlow 2008). This is not to say that economic growth, skilled human capital, and other economic objectives of education policy are irrelevant for the organizations covered here. Rather, previous comparative work on national education policy in the Gulf region suggests strategical and situational "re-drawing of structures, priorities, collectivities and paradigms" as the main feature of education policy (Findlow and Hayes 2016, 125). Some nations, at least in the Gulf region, tend to use international input in education strategically to reach their economic goals (Hayes and Al'Abri 2019). Finally, Muslim education IOs do not enjoy the same level of trust as, say, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) or the OECD. For example, Kayaoglu finds that the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and, by proxy, ICESCO, is often viewed as "inefficient, weak, and useless, and thus a disservice to Muslims" (Kayaoglu 2015, 3).

These points, while scarce, set a few expectations for the analysis. It is especially interesting that the findings provided in this chapter fit well with the arguments made by Nelles and Findlow. Moreover, my findings are in line with the idea that discourses on education policy comprise aspects related to the reproduction of culture within the respective 'cultural sphere': It seems that, indeed, cultural identity and spiritual refinement rank a lot higher on the Muslim education IOs' agenda than in other regional organizations.

A large part of the following analysis is concerned with leitmotifs in education policy. Therefore, it is necessary to elaborate on what a leitmotif is, which types of leitmotifs we find in education policy, and why they matter. A leitmotif is, defined in the simplest way, a dominant recurring theme in a given medium. Leitmotifs are constituted by a set of different ideas about education policy. I rely on Goldstein's and Keohane's definition, according to which an idea is simply a "belief held by individuals" (Goldstein and Keohane 1993, 3). For my purpose, this definition will be expanded to include not only beliefs held by individuals but also those held by IOs. Leitmotifs and ideas inform and guide education policy. They provide the framework for more specific goals that the Muslim education IOs might propose. How IOs frame education when they participate in discourse on specific education policy tells us how they think about education in general, which in turn informs their aims. This is important because for most education IOs, education is not a goal in itself but a means to an end (Martens and Niemann 2013). For example, an IO might pursue better learning outcomes to increase people's ability to participate in society, or to enhance their competitiveness in the labor market. As outlined in the introduction to this volume (Chap. 1; Nagel et al. 2010), this chapter differentiates between economic utilitarianism as well as social cohesion on an individual and collective level as the four main categories or leitmotifs under which education ideas can be subsumed. For the analysis of ICESCO, and to a lesser extent, ABEGS and ALECSO, a certain distinction or uniqueness can be expected in their education ideas. This is because the primary connection among ICESCOs member states is religious orientation, implying that both the social and the economic purposes of education policy may be adapted or expanded to include cultural-religious ideas.

Much of what is presented below depends on qualitative content analysis of documents published by the examined organizations. Qualitative content analysis is the process of deducing meaning from the analysis of documented conversation of any kind (Schreier 2014). Three main criteria have been applied when selecting the documents, namely, relevance, availability, and time of publication. For my purpose, the most relevant documents are those that have a strategic component, that is, that set a more general vision on what the organization's education policy aims to achieve. This is because generally these documents clearly state their perceived purpose of education, rendering the analysis straightforward. Examples for relevant documents include strategic plans for the future, handbooks on education policy, or the charters of the IOs. Unfortunately, availability of documents is a huge concern when dealing with smaller IOs like the three cases presented here. Especially in the cases of ABEGS and ALECSO, the number of documents publicly available in English is limited. Therefore, any document excluded from the analysis has an immediate trade-off resulting in a smaller (and possibly insufficient) database. This means that one cannot apply criteria for relevant documents too rigorously when dealing with these organizations. In total, 26 publications have been examined for this chapter. The documents have been coded along the dimensions laid out in the theoretical framework using the qualitative analysis software MAXQDA. Altogether, 550 data points provide the basis for the following analysis.

Similar, Yet Unique: Three Muslim Education IOs

The organizations covered in this chapter have a limited presence in the global public and academic discourse on education IOs. Thus, it seems adequate to preface the analysis with a general outline of the ICESCO, the ALECSO, and the ABEGS. I briefly introduce these three organizations and provide an overview on how the organizations are set up, what their goals are, and what they do to reach them. Note that the ICESCO and the ALECSO are not exclusively tasked with education policy.

Therefore, their charters and statutes encompass several goals in other policy fields, which are irrelevant for my purpose and only included if they provide insights into the organizational leitmotifs.

ICESCO: Education Policy for the Ummah

The Islamic World Education, Science, and Culture Organization, formerly known as Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, is perhaps the most relevant Muslim education IO. Established by the member states of the OIC in May 1981 and officially founded in 1982, its membership has expanded from 28 founding members at the constituent conference to 54 member states today. As an official branch of the OIC, only OIC members can join the organization. ICESCO is comprised of states from all over the world with varying sizes and capabilities as well as resources. The Union of International Associations (UIA) classifies the ICESCO as an "intercontinental membership organization" (UIA 2019a), which means that its "membership exceeds that of a particular continental region, covers at least 10 countries, and is equitably distributed over at least two continents" (UIA 2019b). As such, ICESCO is a very diverse organization in terms of the regional origin of its members. Most of its member states are situated in Africa and the Middle East, but there are exceptions like the Republic of Indonesia (joined in 1986) or the Republic of Guyana (joined in 2014). Interestingly, a number of states in the ICESCO only have a minor share of Muslim citizens, such as the Republic of Togo (est. 14% Muslim population[3]).

Goals in Education Policy

The ICESCO's 2017 strategy paper "Development of Education in the Islamic World" outlines its current objectives for education policy. These objectives are based on perceived challenges that the ICESCO members face in today's world. According to the organization, the "major

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[3] CIA World Factbook (2010): Togo.

shortcomings in the education system of the Islamic World" (ISESCO 2017b, 29) include high illiteracy rates of up to 70% in some member states, poverty and huge income inequality, as well as great imparity in education between genders. In addition to these general problems, the ICESCO also identifies a number of more specific problems with education policy in many of its member states, such as deficient educational curricula, poor teacher training, insufficient spending on education, and low enrolment rates in all stages of the educational system (ISESCO 2017b, 30). Based on its perception of these problems, the ICESCO proposes some major objectives for education policy, which correspond to earlier publications (ISESCO 2014, 2016a) and to the charter of the organization (ISESCO 2015a). The societal objectives of the ICESCO for education are to

> contribute to the development of educational systems […] to build peaceful, knowledge-based and prosperous societies (ISESCO 2017b, 7), and to
> ensure the transition of Muslims from being dependent and passive consumers to being active international role players, developers and producers of knowledge in such a way as to allow the Islamic world to regain its leading role in building human civilization. (ISESCO 2017b, 7)

These statements also illustrate the difference between an objective and a leitmotif, in that the first part of the sentence represents the objective (e.g. "contribute to the development of educational systems") and the second part describes the purpose behind the objective (e.g. "to build peaceful and prosperous societies").

Furthermore, there is also an economic component in the educational objectives of the ICESCO. Education is supposed to not only create a knowledge-based society, but also help alleviate poverty and enable economic development of the member states. The summary of the ICESCO's proclaimed educational objectives is worth quoting in almost its full length here, since it is quite encompassing:

> The objective is to reshape the roles of education in achieving sustainable development and facing present and future developments and requirements, … enabling Islamic countries to engage in knowledge societies and

contribute to knowledge production, thereby marking its presence in the writing of humanity's cultural history in its new form. (ISESCO 2017b, 13)

Thus, the ICESCO's educational objectives have both a social and an economic dimension. On the one hand, the economic development of the member states is only possible if the labor forces of the respective countries are equipped with adequate skillsets to enable them to participate in a global labor market. On the other hand, education should also ensure that Muslims all over ICESCO's members are aware of their cultural roots and their responsibility for a cohesive and peaceful knowledge-based society. However, the distinction between goal and education ideas becomes blurry in statements that highlight the cultural roots and religious tradition and at the same time proclaim the Islamic world's ambition to regain a leading role in human civilization and to participate in the writing of humans' cultural history. Proclaiming a particular kind of individual whose religiously influenced culture thrives toward a leading role in human civilization is an example of the importance of cultural spheres in global educational discourses. The objectives reflect the general ideas of the organization within the founding charter, which has been amended a number of times since its inception in 1982. The next chapter deals with them in detail.

Leitmotifs and Education Ideas of ICESCO

The ICESCO, like most education IOs, treats education as a multi-purpose endeavor. In this view, education is crucial for skill formation, self-fulfillment, collective wealth, and the proliferation of collective social rights and duties. At the same time, the ICESCO has a clear focus, meaning that some education ideas are more important than others. In general, the ICESCO recognizes that education is an important tool for economic development on both the individual and the collective level. On the other hand, education has a significant social, especially cultural and religious element. While the economic element is, at times, clearly visible in the analyzed documents, the cultural and religious focus is what makes the organization unique among education IOs with a global reach.

The ICESCO believes that an education policy that is suitable for the international Muslim community (the "Ummah") in general and its member states specifically has to be mindful of and informed by Islam and Islamic values. The significance of Islam for the organization's policy is made clear from the very first sentence of its charter, which states that Islam is "a religion of peace and tolerance, represents a way of life and a spiritual, human, moral, cultural and civilizational force" (Charter of the ICESCO, Preamble). Thus, if ICESCO is to successfully achieve its educational objectives, they have to be rooted "within the framework of the civilizational reference of the Islamic world and in the light of the human Islamic values and ideals" (Charter of the ICESCO, Art 4 (a)). Looking up to Western education systems as the singular source of inspiration for reforms in the Islamic world is counterproductive, according to ICESCO, because they are "alien to its cultural and civilizational references and incompatible with its socioeconomic context" (ISESCO 2017b, 16).

This sentiment can be found in every document published by ICESCO. Frequent references to religion are made in all reviewed documents, for example:

> ISESCO hopes that this book will be yet another tool needed in enhancing the level of education in the Muslim world, … within the framework of Islamic values that spur the Ummah to achieve greater civilizational progress and advancement. (ISESCO 2002, 6)

> This [document] has been developed in accordance with the specific needs of Muslim communities and in line with Islamic teachings which regard education and learning (pursuit of knowledge) as an obligation for each Muslim. (ISESCO 2016b, 7)

> [ISESCO aims to] preserve and enhance our common Islamic heritage to increase the awareness of the Muslim Youth of the values of Islam. (ISESCO 2005, 2)

The relationship between Islam and ICESCOs education policy is twofold. First, as noted before, its education objectives have to be mindful of

Islamic culture and heritage; otherwise they cannot be achieved within the Ummah, because Islam is not only a religion, but "represents a way of life" (see above). Second, Islam also informs the education leitmotifs of ICESCO, since it provides a sense of what the ideal society to be achieved via quality education looks like, as well as an own legal system with the Sharia. Of course, not all member states of ICESCO refer to Sharia law in their legal systems. ICESCO, however, frequently does (see, e.g. ISESCO 2009, 2). The prominent role of Islam results in a vision of education focusing on spiritual self-refinement, collective norms, and duties drawn from a common cultural and religious background shared by all ICESCO member states.

This vision is further illustrated by a certain sense of a larger-than-life "Islamic civilization". While the notion of Islamic civilization is already present in the Charter, it is more explicit in later publications. The 2009 Khartoum declaration states the "renewed commitment and strengthened resolve" of ICESCO to "preserve and enhance the common Islamic heritage to increase the awareness of the Muslim children and adolescents of the values of Islam, and instill into them a sense of pride in the achievements of the glorious Islamic civilization" (ISESCO 2009, 2). Other documents stress the need to "allow the Islamic world to regain its leading role in building human civilization and spreading good and peace among humankind" (ISESCO 2017b, 7) and to "consolidate the civilizational identity of the Muslim world" (ISESCO 2017b, 25).

Second to spiritual refinement and collective religious participation, there is the leitmotif of economic development through quality education. In particular, ICESCO identifies the "need to harness the potential of human resources in Islamic countries and equip young people with basic skills for working life and professional integration […] in order to improve living conditions and economic development" (ISESCO 2017b, 69). However, compared to other global education IOs such as the OECD and the World Bank (Niemann, this volume), human capital and economic growth seems to play a relatively small role in the discourse proliferated by ICESCO. The statement quoted above is in that way not representative of the general trend. The documents reviewed for this chapter rarely mention "human resources" or "human capital". In fact, the charter of the ICESCO does not refer to economic growth or the

labor market at all, while the cultural purpose of the organization is very prominent. Economic growth is mostly presented as part of a larger bundle of educational objectives in ICESCO publications. Interestingly, ICESCO documents refer mostly to "socio-economic development" rather than just economic development (ISESCO 2002, 2009, 2017b).

This is not to say that ICESCO does not view economic development as an important benefit of quality education—it very much does. Rather, ICESCO attempts a delicate balancing act in "combining deep-rooted authenticity and enlightened modernity" (ISESCO 2017b, 12). ICESCO is aware that its member states desperately need improvements in education to reap the benefits of globalization and not be marginalized by it. However, its member states fear that they may lose their identities and cultural roots over the desperation for better education if they mindlessly assume Western education models, as many countries around the world have done (ISESCO 2017b, 16-18). Connected to said fears, the challenge of globalization is another prominent motif in ICESCO's publications. While most IOs recognize that globalization is not only a chance but also a challenge for many countries, ICESCO seems especially worried about its impact. ICESCO summarizes the challenge as follows:

> Any new educational strategy in the Islamic world has to deal with globalization in such a manner as to take advantage of its positive aspects, … while protecting the Muslim identity against the danger of melting into another culture in conflict with the religious, intellectual, social, moral and cultural components of the national Islamic identity. (ISESCO 2017b, 16)

Among the "positives of globalization" anticipated by ICESCO are intercultural dialogue and increased understanding between different countries and regions of the world, both of which are collective social undertakings. Mutual respect and understanding through intercultural dialogue enabled by globalization and modern communication technology will contribute to world peace and the advancement of human civilization. In fact, in a globalized world, "positive cross cultural fertilization and interaction is the only framework under which cultures can prosper" (ISESCO 2017b: 16). This notion is also reflected in a speech by Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwaijri, then Director General of ICESCO, held in

2015, in which he noted that "infusing the contents of education curricula, science, culture and the media with then inherent tolerance of religious values is the right approach to building peace and promoting dialogue between the followers of religions, cultures and civilizations" (ISESCO 2015b, 13).

In sum, ICESCO discourse focuses a lot on the social dimensions, at both the individual and the collective level, while recognizing that there is a need for economic development. However, economic development is second to spiritual self-refinement and only needed insofar as it enables people to lead a good life and alleviate them from poverty.

Activities in Education

Having established the education ideas present in the analyzed publications, one should expect that these ideas are also reflected in the activities of ICESCO. ICESCO engages in a number of activities that are somewhat "typical" for large education IOs, such as organizing workshops, meetings, and conferences with stakeholders in the field, for example, the member states' ministers of education. Furthermore, ICESCO activities include publishing material on education policy, funding local projects, setting up educational centers, or participating in discourse via social media. Content-wise, these endeavors cover a wide range of both social and economic topics. This is especially evident from the workshops that ICESCO organizes, often in cooperation with other IOs or nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). For example, in 2018, ICESCO organized workshops on "professional methods to counter Islamophobia", on "recommendations for the development of a curriculum promoting the values of peace, harmony and tolerance", on "The Role of Crafts in Developing Community-based Economics in the Member States [sic]" and on "Integrating University and Private Sector Development [sic]", among others (OIC 2018). Further workshops include topics as diverse as environmental impact assessment, the protection of landmarks in Jerusalem, or financial support for women entrepreneurs in Chad. Most of these topics clearly reflect the leitmotifs covered above. Additionally, several workshops and training sessions demonstrate ICESCOs strong

cultural focus. For example, ICESCO organizes training sessions in "traditional embroidery with gold and silk for women (Tahrira and Qasab)" (OIC 2016, 16) or "New Cultural Roles of Civil Society in Promoting and Disseminating Good Governance Culture".

Lastly, it is worth noting that ICESCO's budget also tends to provide greater financial means to social than to economic measures (ISESCO 2019, 83), although a lot of measures in education policy, such as combating illiteracy, can be read as both an economic as well as a social project. While the budgetary items are sometimes ambiguous, there is a striking difference between the financial means attributed to skills and vocational education ($450.000) and those attributed to, for example, "traditional education" ($1.000.000). One interesting finding on ICESCO's most recent budget report is the $450.000 reserved for "the school of values and coexistence" (ISESCO 2019, 83). What ICESCO means with this illusive term is an education system "that aims to build a system of values in the minds of children and instill it in their daily behavior … with respect for human rights, racial and cultural diversity and coexistence; drawing on the Islamic view that calls for taking care of the environment, healthy nutrition and human health and rationalize the use of natural resources endowed to people by Allah" (ISESCO 2019, 73). While this is not a very specific objective, it reinforces the importance that ICESCO assigns to what it views as the cultural roots of its member states in traditional Islamic values. In conclusion, this short analysis of ICESCO's activities shows that the elements presented above as ICESCO's leitmotifs are present in both the organization's day-to-day business as well as its budget.

ALECSO: Education for the Arab World

The Arab League Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization is a Tunis-based sub-institution of the League of Arab States. Founded in 1970, ALECSO is comprised of 22 member states today, most of which are situated in the Maghreb region and the Middle East. Similar to ICESCO, ALECSO's main task is the coordination of member state efforts in the fields of education, science, and culture. Many ALECSO

member states are also member of ICESCO. We can, therefore, reasonably expect some similarity between the objectives and ideas of both institutions, given that they operate in the same fields.

Education Goals

ALECSO's perception of the challenges its member states are facing is largely similar to ICESCO. Key internal issues to be tackled are poverty, illiteracy, and inequality between genders. External challenges are posed by the danger of the deterioration of traditional values through "Western" cultural influence, the fierce competition in labor markets through globalization, as well as military threats. This last point seems weirdly out of place in an education document, as ALECSO refers to the challenge of "the foreign occupation of Palestine and Iraq, and the Golan Heights occupied by the Zionist entity, and conspiracies against some of the other Arab countries" (ALECSO 2008, 39).

According to ALECSO, its main overall objective in reaction to these various challenges is to promote "intellectual unity in the Arab World, through education, culture and sciences, and enhancing the level of culture in order to keep up with, and positively contribute to, universal civilization" (ALECSO 2017, 4). For higher education, this idea has recently been challenged significantly in national policies of the member states (Hayes and Al'Abri 2019). It remains to be seen if and how these challenges will find their way into the discourse produced by ALECSO.

For education policy specifically, ALECSO names an extensive list of objectives, among which a few stand out (ALECSO 2017, 4). These "key priorities" are to "guarantee quality education for all as a human right", to "provide learners with the tools for the acquisition, analysis, production and use of knowledge", to "strengthen capacities in education-related policy formulation, planning and management" and finally to "strengthen the Arab States' capacities in terms of data collection and use, and monitor best practices and experiences" (ALECSO 2017, 7).

Leitmotifs and Education Ideas of ALECSO

ALECSO's education ideas are similar to those found in the published documents of ICESCO, where we find a "mixed bag" of supposed purposes of education, with an emphasis on societal advancement and both collective and individual spiritual refinement. On the one hand, ALECSO is aware of the economic problems of the Arab states. One of ALECSO's declared "essential leverage points" (ALECSO 2008, 39) is "enabling the learner to master the tools of knowledge … and to acquire the skills and experiences necessary to increase his productivity and enhance his role as contributor to change and development" (ALECSO 2008, 40), because "human capital is the critical factor in moving forward to achieve prosperity" (ALECSO 2008, 6). This idea is also present almost word for word in other publications (ALECSO 2017, 7). "Education is the corner stone in the preparation, training and mobilization of the abilities of human capital" (ALECSO 2008, 6), and both individual and collective prosperity heavily depend on education as a driving force and an enabling system.

On the other hand, we find once again that ALECSO gives special attention to social purposes of education. ALECSO demands that "the philosophy of education be changed, so that building the student's personality becomes an essential axis in the educational process […]; he can develop his/her spirit of citizenship and belonging, and be educated in human rights, tolerance, coexistence and dialogue" (ALECSO 2008, 9). For the individual, the key social purpose of education must be "developing the learner's abilities and meeting his various needs, particularly his physical and leisure needs, to increase his options for self-achievement" (ALECSO 2008, 40). This change in philosophy should be based on "the teachings of True Islam, as well as respect of other cultures and religions, in accordance with faith and conviction of the right to disagree" (ALECSO 2008, 40). In terms of collective social purposes of education, ALECSO holds traditional values and norms as essential elements of the curricula when building a cohesive society. It argues that solidarity and individual responsibility constitute the basis for the social contract upon which the member states' societies are built. Arab societies can only prosper when

their citizens are educated and know their rights and duties as well as the religious and cultural foundations upon which these are based (ALECSO 2008).

Lastly, there is a sense of regional identity that is supposed to be proliferated and strengthened by education policy, the concept of Pan-Arabism. Pan-Arabism implies a certain cultural uniformity shared by Arab people in the Middle East and the Maghreb region, which should also be reflected in the state system of these regions. Born over a century ago out of sentiments against British and French rule in the region, Pan-Arabism is anticolonial at its core and therefore emphasizes Arab autonomy (Reiser 1983). The specific expression of Pan-Arabism ranges from intergovernmental cooperation to calls for a united Arab nation. Indeed, Pan-Arabism lies at the roots of the foundation of the Arab League itself. For ALECSO education policy, this idea means that education has an additional purpose—"the purpose being to strengthen the pan-Arab [sic!] sense of belonging and feeling" (ALECSO 2008, 40). Quality education must provide a sense of regional identity so that Arab citizens have a point of reference. This goes hand-in-hand with "increasing awareness of the major Arab issues" (ALECSO 2008, 40). It is interesting to see this idea spelled out explicitly because of the heavy implications that the term carries. One could interpret this as an added emphasis on the importance of Arab identity for ALECSO's education ideas.

Activities in Education

ALECSO, as an education IO, seems to follow a rather hands-off approach to pursuing its objectives. Compared to ICESCO, which actively intervenes in education policy with its own projects, such as workshops and training sessions that it hosts, ALECSO is focused on spreading awareness. ALECSO focuses on problems regarding education policy in member states, where it collects data, provides information to policymakers, and offers a platform of coordination. Indeed, ALECSO's declared code of conduct is to serve "as a house of expertise in the Arab World in all that relates to education, culture, science and communication" (ALECSO 2017, 10). The most important branch of ALECSO in

this regard is the ALECSO Observatory, which was created as part of the Plan to Develop Education in the Arab World (2008). This institution is largely in charge of ALECSO's education policy research. It monitors the state of education in the Arab world, provides advice to policymakers, collects best practices, gathers and organizes data, and publishes a vast body of literature. The organization has, for example, published eight bulletins and reports on the general state of education, nine books and manuals relating to Arabic language education, a 24-part encyclopedia on great Arabic writers as well as roughly 30 books with synchronized learning material for Arab schools (ALECSO 2017). Furthermore, the organization publishes various bi-annual journals on education.

ABEGS: Education Policy for the Gulf Region

The Arab Bureau for Education in the Gulf States was set up in 1975 by seven member states from the gulf region, namely, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Oman, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Qatar. All of these states are also members of the ALECSO and the ICESCO. ABEGS's raison d'être is similar in nature to ALECSO and, to a lesser extent, ICESCO. As per ABEGS's website, its task is to "promote cooperation and coordination in the fields of culture, education, science, information and documentation" (ABEGS 2019a), which is almost congruent with ALECSO's mission, albeit with a narrower regional focus.

Education Goals

ABEGS has published a number of comprehensive strategic goals along which it operates. The four key aims are, without any particular order, "developing the younger generations to promote citizenship values, developing educational policies and spreading the best practices, develop- ing the Arabic language and the learning of it, as well as consolidating the roles of family and society in education" (ABEGS 2019a). These aims go hand-in-hand with ABEGS' mission, which the organization summarizes as "coordination of education development operations to reflect the

Islamic nature of the region, to promote unity among its citizens and set educational plans based on modern scientific foundations" (ABEGS 2019b, 9).

Leitmotifs and Education Ideas of ABEGS

The above quote points to further similarities between ABEGS and the two other Muslim education IOs. On the one hand, the religious and cultural heritage of the region provides an important foundation without which a proper education system for the Gulf states cannot be realized. On the other hand, educational plans for the future should be based on "modern scientific foundations". This statement implies that ABEGS is well aware of the balancing act that it is tasked with—the synthesis of traditional values drawn from Islamic philosophy and the demands of economic development in a global labor market.

For the individual, quality education should entail that "young people can acquire behaviors which help them uphold their rights and duties as citizens, be in touch with their countries internal issues, while remaining positively open to up-to-date information in various fields, utilizing this information to help themselves and develop their countries" (ABEGS 2015, 52). Once more, there is a focus on social rights and duties for individuals. Interestingly, a shared declaration of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and ABEGS, the Sharm El Sheik Statement from 2015, puts the focus on sustainable development and prosperity, where social cohesion comes as second priority:

> We reaffirm that it [education] is a basis for the realization of other rights and essential for inclusive, equitable and sustainable development, as well as prosperity in the Arab states. … We notably commit to the principle of education as a public good and a building block for prosperity, well-being, social cohesion and sustainable development. (UNESCO 2015, 1)

ABEGS's education ideas are thus a bit more balanced between social and economic concerns.

Activities in Education

The ABEGS Strategy 2015–2020 lists 23 initiatives with 92 individual projects to be implemented until the year 2020. Among these are seminars, training sessions for stakeholders, the organization of regular coordination meetings, and a large number of publications. In fact, ABEGS claims to have published "hundreds of books and translations in various educational, scientific and cultural areas", which lead to its publications receiving "considerable interest and growing appreciation among people as valuable resource of educational Arab thought" (ABEGS 2019b, 29).

Cooperation Between the Three Organizations

Given the similarity of ABEGS, ICESCO, and ALECSO, both in terms of education ideas and member states, cooperation between the organizations is expected to a certain degree. Indeed, the organizations claim to cooperate on a lot of issues. In an attempt to institutionalize said cooperation, ICESCO has hosted a series of meetings between the three IOs. Most recently, they met in Rabat in 2017 at the 4th Forum of International Organizations. ICESCO Director General Dr. Altwaijri noted in his respective opening speech that "we must increase synergy and enhance cooperation between ICESCO, ALECSO and ABEGS" and that "the steadily growing scope of cooperation …, and the rising trend of our accumulated expertise and accomplishments are proof that we are on the right track" (ISESCO 2017a, 2).

While these statements point to the existence of cooperation, it remains obscure which specific forms coordinated efforts by the three organizations assume. In other words, it is clear that ICESCO, ALECSO, and ABEGS do cooperate with each other, but less clear *how* they do so. Both of the most recent progress reports published by the OIC (2016, 2018), which thoroughly track ICESCO activities, do not mention joint action with ABEGS or ALECSO, and neither do ICESCO's tri-annual newsletters. Without further evidence, it seems that cooperation between the three organizations is more rudimentary than the statement above

implies. To add to that observation, cooperation between but also within these organizations might be hindered by conflicts between the member states. Given the religious differences between some of the larger member states as well as their economic competition induced by geographical proximity, conflicts occur quite often. As Kayaoglu notes, "one can conclude that even fairly minor coordination issues can become extremely complicated when they involve differences in religious interpretation. ICESCO, like the OIC, is not strong enough to override the objection of a powerful member state in the name of the collective good" (Kayaoglu 2015, 125).

Conclusion

The key findings from the analysis presented above can be summarized as follows. Firstly, ICESCO, ALECSO, and, to a lesser degree, ABEGS are quite clear in their emphasis on social purposes of education over economic ones, confirming expectations set by the literature (Findlow 2008). At the same time, all three organizations are aware of their member states' need for quality development policies, which education is a large part of. Secondly, there is a distinct cultural and/or religious element in the education ideas of the Islamic education IOs, which manifests itself in the references made to Islam and to a larger-than-life Islamic civilization. This means, thirdly, that Islamic education IOs engage in a balancing act quite similar to the Southeast Asian case presented elsewhere in this volume (Chap. 8). On the one hand, global labor markets require standardized education in order to be tapped into. On the other hand, "Westernized" education may be detrimental to the proliferation of traditional cultural-religious roots that the Islamic education IOs are committed to protect. This is challenging because global education policy is often secularized, while ICESCO is clearly not a secular organization. That is also what makes ICESCO a special case among global education IOs, in that most other global IOs are distinctly secular.

Indeed, the Islamic education IOs face a number of challenges that may seriously hinder their effectiveness in carrying out their designated missions. Differences in religious interpretations between Shia and Sunni

countries respectively are an obvious example. As ICESCO, for example, commits itself to "publicizing the correct image of Islam", it remains unclear what "true Islam" constitutes. For ICESCO, this is further complicated by geopolitical tensions between large member states, such as Saudi-Arabia and Iran. Its relatively small budget only adds to these problems.

In sum, this chapter has undertaken a first mapping of Muslim international organizations in education policy. I have argued that Muslim education IOs engage in the production and reproduction of their own distinct ideas on how education should be conceived of, thereby, attempting a synthesis of traditional cultural and religious values drawn from Islamic philosophy and quality education for development purposes. Going forward, there remains a lot of potential for further research to expand upon these findings, especially since the analysis relied on a rather limited number of available documents for the ABEGS and the ALECSO. While it may be too early for a final verdict, the evidence hints at a connection between the globalization of education policy and the emergence of competing regional-cultural ideals of education. In a globalized world, some regional organizations may feel the need to protect their cultural roots against "Westernization" of education systems, possibly forming countermovements against global education IOs. While Samuel Huntington's *Clash of Civilizations* has been received very poorly in Western International Relations, and understandably so; a more subtle mechanism of a similar kind could be at play here. Some form of contradiction in their approaches toward education policy seems to exist between the different "civilizations" in the perception of the organizations reviewed here, as elusive and broad as this term may be. To acknowledge the fuzzy boundaries between different global cultures, Windzio and Martens (Chap. 1) introduce the concept of "cultural spheres" and Besche-Truthe et al. (Chap. 2) propose an appropriate methodology that accounts for this fuzziness in diffusion analyses. Is this a conflict between the regional and the global, or do these cultural spheres just indicate cultural difference, but coexistence, even though disagreement on the "writing of humanity's cultural history" will sometimes lead to tense relations between cultural spheres? ICESCO, for instance, regards "Westernized" education as a threat, rather than as a role model, but it is yet by no

means clear what the implications are for the future global cultural development and the relations between the cultural spheres. Lastly, it remains to be seen whether there is any evidence for this development in other regions of the world before larger-scale conclusions can be drawn. Further research is needed to provide a more complete picture of the interactions between the global, regional, and local levels of education policy.

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8

Regional Ideas in International Education Organizations: The Case of SEAMEO

David Krogmann

Introduction[1]

Over the last decades, various regional International Organizations (IOs) have emerged as relevant yet largely uncharted actors in international education policy. One of them is the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO). The underrepresentation of regional organizations in contemporary research on international education policy is striking, especially when considering that SEAMEO has been a major player in education policy in Southeast Asia for decades.

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Despite being founded in 1965 (SEAMEO 1965), it has consistently failed to garner any attention from scholars of international education or international relations. By exploring the underlying leitmotifs and ideas that inform the discourse produced and reproduced by SEAMEO, the following chapter represents a first step toward filling this gap. How does SEAMEO conceive of education? I argue that SEAMEO follows a distinctly holistic ideal of education policy, stressing both the social as well as the economic purposes of education. While some of its inspiration may stem from the United Nations' (UN) post-2015 global sustainable development agenda in education policy, SEAMEO has championed a balanced approach toward education from its very inception. However, it has done and continues to do so with a distinct emphasis on the educational purpose of reinforcing the collectively shared cultural values and traditions of its member states, which it deems unique to Southeast Asia. The influence of regional organizations on education policy in their respective regions should not be underestimated. Indeed, the majority of international organizations active in education policy are regional organizations (Martens and Niemann 2021). Acting at the intersection of the *global* and the *local*, SEAMEO is uniquely connected with both globally oriented partner organizations, such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the national governments of its member states. Therefore, studying the organization's perception of education and its ideas on education policy provides valuable insights into conceptions of education in the region.

The case study presented here relies on qualitative content analysis to infer SEAMEO's ideas and leitmotifs in education policy from the organization's policy publications as well as from personal statements made by SEAMEO officials. Qualitative content analysis is a method for systematically analyzing qualitative data and deducing meaning from documents (Krippendorff 2004; Schreier 2014). Valuable objects for analysis can, in principle, include recorded communication of any form. Two main sources were used for the purpose of this chapter. First, 15 strategic education policy documents published by SEAMEO between 1970 and 2019 were deductively analyzed using a coding scheme based on the different leitmotifs in education policy presented in the introduction to this volume. Eligible documents for analysis were limited to publications

available in English to circumvent the considerable language barriers resulting from SEAMEO using multiple official languages. To organize the data, the software MAXQDA was employed. The 185 data points acquired through this process form the basis of the analysis. Complementing this first step, a semi-structured interview with a high-ranking SEAMEO official was conducted in February 2020. Before engaging with the data, however, the chapter provides a brief introduction to SEAMEO, covering its organizational setup, its member states, and its cooperation with other organizations. Based on four leitmotifs in education policy, I then explore the qualitative data drawn from the documents before discussing the results. The chapter closes with a short outlook on possible implications of the evidence from this analysis.

International Organizations in Education: Leitmotifs and Ideas

This chapter rests on a few core assumptions about the role of ideas and leitmotifs in the discourses proliferated by international organizations working on education. The first is that international organizations *matter*. They have a distinct influence on international education policy, which manifests itself in various ways (Barnett and Finnemore 1999; Hawkins et al. 2006; Bauer 2006). One of these ways is the diffusion of norms and ideas (Barnett and Finnemore 2004); it is through this process, among others, that international organizations have become relevant actors in global education policy. Through the activities of IOs, ideas concerning what education is supposed to look like or what purpose it should serve are distributed beyond national borders. Conversely, IOs also incorporate ideas proliferated by their member states, meaning diffusion is not just a one-way road, though it is rarely possible to trace a certain idea all the way back to its very origin. Nonetheless, as ideas are such a crucial part of what makes IOs influential in global politics, research on what these ideas and leitmotifs might be is imperative.

I use the terms "leitmotif" and "idea" in the following sections. A leitmotif is a recurring theme in a given medium and, in this context, guides

education policy. As established in the previous chapter, I follow Goldstein and Keohane's conceptualization in which an idea is a belief held by individuals (Goldstein and Keohane 1993). Leitmotifs, in turn, are comprised of sets of multiple ideas. This chapter attempts to uncover the ideas and leitmotifs proposed and reinforced by SEAMEO in its official documents. For this purpose, it relies on four basic guiding principles or leitmotifs in education (see the introduction to this volume, Chap. 1; Nagel et al. 2010).

Generally, education can be seen as a means to increase either the economic utility or the cohesiveness of a given society. These basic aims work on both the individual and the collective level. For individuals, education is supposed to enhance their skills for the labor market, thereby boosting their productivity and income. With respect to the social dimension, education is supposed to enable individuals to find self-fulfillment and develop their character to the fullest. On the collective level, education can be seen as a means to increase economic growth and provide skilled human capital. At the same time, it can also be an important tool for states and IOs to create an informed citizenry that allows its members to participate in the political process, to be aware of their rights and duties, and to achieve a cohesive, just society. These leitmotifs are of course ideal types. Also, they are not mutually exclusive, meaning that most of the time all of them will be informing the actions of a given education IO to some degree. Furthermore, the principles may be interlinked. On the individual level, skill formation and a successful career may contribute to self-fulfillment for citizens. On the collective level, a wealthy nation may have an easier time with citizen participation in the political process and in society in general given that people do not have to spend most of their time on their livelihood when there is a certain degree of wealth.

Seeing as ideas depend on the social context within which they are created and reproduced, it can be expected that region- or culture-specific ideas are at play within regional education IOs. While these ideas can be grouped into the same basic categories as global or transnational ideas, it is important to adequately contextualize them. For example, the idea that education is supposed to contribute to people's cultural awareness for a more cohesive society is part of a social-collective conceptualization of

education policy. Which culture people should be aware of, however, is region-specific. Indeed, education ideas concerned with culture only make sense in a regional context, as there is no "world culture". There is no universal consensus on cultural awareness as a desirable education outcome, so we may expect to find an emphasis on cultural education only in regional organizations.

For regional organizations, it is generally important to set foci for their work. Due to limited budgets and personnel, regional organizations require certain education policy objectives to be prioritized over others in order to be effective. The three Islamic education IOs covered elsewhere in this volume (Chap. 7) provide an example of this process, as they prioritize social and cultural purposes of education over economic ones. Subsequently, it should be expected that SEAMEO is similarly forced to set priorities. Due to the poor economic status of many SEAMEO member states, one may additionally expect that the organization conceptualizes education mainly as a policy field of economic development. Based on the available data, however, I argue that this is not the case.

Exploring SEAMEO: A Decentralized Approach to International Cooperation

SEAMEO is a regional international organization tasked with facilitating cooperation in education, science, and culture between its member states. Since its inception more than five decades ago, it has grown into one of the most relevant actors in international education policy in Southeast Asia. Its purposes resemble those of similar organizations around the world, which have been modeled after UNESCO, albeit with distinct regional contexts, such as the Islamic World Education, Science, and Culture Organization (ICESCO) and the Arab League Cultural, Educational, and Scientific Organization (ALECSO). The Yearbook of International Organizations classifies SEAMEO as a *regionally defined membership organization*, meaning that its "Membership and preoccupations [are] restricted to a particular continental or sub-continental region or contiguous group of countries, and [it] covers at least 3 countries or

includes at least 3 autonomous international bodies" (Union of International Associations 2020). SEAMEO membership reflects this typology, as all 11 of its current member states are located in the Southeast Asian region.

SEAMEO is closely affiliated with the more widely known Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), another regional international organization that covers a larger range of policy areas, often with an economic focus. The member states that constitute ASEAN are almost identical to those of SEAMEO, with the exception of Timor-Leste, which is a member of SEAMEO but not of ASEAN. As per its "core values", SEAMEO intends to be "ASEAN's strategic partner for the advancement of education, science and culture" (SEAMEO 2020a). This cooperation is realized via regular coordination meetings, joint projects in education and culture, and memorandums of understanding.

Although the education ministers of its member states make up the SEAMEO Council, which is the organization's highest decision-making body, and the SEAMEO Secretariat as the main administrative body is set up in Bangkok, SEAMEO's work is distinctly decentralized in nature. The practical work "on the ground" is carried out by 26 regional centers, which are spread across all member states. These centers operate as independent organizational units with their own secretariats, budget, and staff, and they report to both the SEAMEO Secretariat as well as the respective ministries of the countries they operate in (see Fig. 8.1). They cover fields as diverse as *Open and Distance Learning* (covered by the SEAMEO Regional Open Learning Centre (SEAMOLEC)), *Southeast Asian Regional Center for Graduate Study and Research in Agriculture* (SEARCA), or *Tropical Biology* (BIOTROP). In total, SEAMEO employs over 1,000 people across all its centers (Interview SEAMEO A 2020).

The decentralized nature of SEAMEO's organizational structure implies the possible existence of many different views and ideas since, in principle, every regional center may have its own distinct motifs. However, most of these centers do not deal specifically with education policy but rather focus on content-based implementation of policy in their respective fields. They do not engage in justifying or reflecting on education policy.
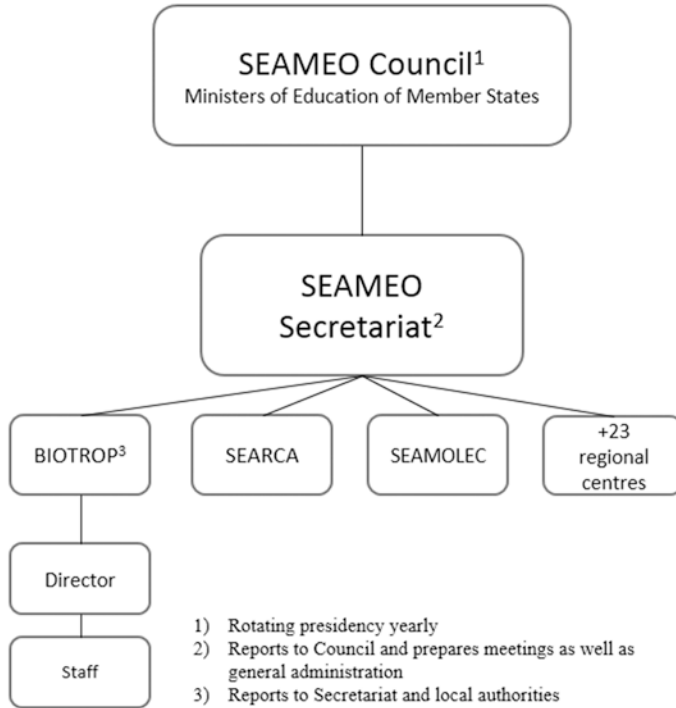
Fig. 8.1 SEAMEO structure. (Own account, data from https://www.seameo.org/)

SEAMEO's member states are very heterogeneous in terms of economic development. While some of them, such as Singapore and Malaysia, have been on the forefront of economic growth in the region, others are among the poorest countries in Asia. Thus, SEAMEO faces the delicate challenge of balancing the educational needs of its developing member states with those of its richer members when designing policy. This diversity gives rise to questions about distributional justice and the balance of power within the organization, both of which are somewhat alleviated through means of unanimous decision-making in the SEAMEO Council (Interview SEAMEO A 2020). Although policy decisions can be taken by qualified majority, decisions that face the objection of even a single member state are rarely adopted.

As the main international organization for education in the region, SEAMEO is notably well connected both with governments in the region as well as with partner organizations. It is also the main partner for global education IOs operating in the region. SEAMEO's joint projects include cooperation with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNESCO, and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). SEAMEO and UNESCO have been regular partners since the early 1980s, cooperating on a wide range of education projects in Southeast Asia. A recent example is the UNESCO Global Action Programme (GAP) on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) launched in 2014, which is implemented in the region by SEAMEO (SEAMEO 2020b). For UNICEF, cooperation with SEAMEO has notably increased since 2010 (Interview 1), with one instance being the Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics (SEA-PLM) program for grade assessment, which is funded by UNICEF. On the other hand, SEAMEO works with nongovernmental actors like the German Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and various universities from around the world. As noted by a SEAMEO official in February 2020 in reference to the UN agencies, "If the project is in Southeast Asia, they [UN entities] will contact SEAMEO. Normally, that's the way. … We are the project implementer" (Interview SEAMEO A 2020).

SEAMEO's Ideas in Education Policy

IOs often stress that all purposes of education are important and refer to a rather encompassing view on education. In most cases, however, different foci can be found in their documents, statements, and policies. The World Bank and the OECD, for example, pursue an economic focus in education policy (Chap. 5), whereas ICESCO stresses the social purposes of education policy (Chap. 7). SEAMEO, on the other hand, proliferates a balanced and holistic view on education. I refer to this view as holistic because according to SEAMEO, education is supposed to benefit individuals as well as society in regard to both economic and social needs. This is in line with recent definitions of holistic education (Mahmoudi et al. 2012). Concurrently, SEAMEO's education ideas do have their

own essence, in that education policy is seen as an important tool in preserving the cultural roots of the region in both individuals and society. By recognizing the cultural dimension of education, SEAMEO views itself as uniquely suited to tackle the challenges facing education policy in the region. IOs with a global focus, such as UNESCO, need a partner in the region if their policies are to be successful, because Southeast Asia is a unique setting for education policy and must be treated accordingly.

Education ideas can be grouped into four basic categories or leitmotifs depending on what they deem to be the primary purpose of education and education policy. Education policy enables individual skill formation and self-fulfillment but is also crucial for economic growth on the national level as well as social participation on the individual level. In this section, I argue that although SEAMEO's education ideas partly overlap with the UN's sustainable development agenda, in that it recognizes the social, cultural, and economic purposes of education, it does so with its own distinct references to Southeast Asian culture and regional values. This emphasis on regional culture represents the main difference between SEAMEO's conceptualization of education policy and the one produced by the UN.

The post-2015 global sustainable development agenda encompasses 17 sustainable development goals, of which Goal 4—quality education—is the most relevant for education policy. Goal 4 represents a commitment by the UN member states to "ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning" because "Education enables upward socioeconomic mobility and is a key to escaping poverty. Education helps reduce inequalities and reach gender equality and is crucial to fostering tolerance and more peaceful societies" (UN 2020, 1). This recent statement displays a holistic view on education, which is comprised of a balanced set of different ideas about what education should primarily achieve, such as social cohesion or economic growth.

SEAMEO, on the other hand, has championed this view on education since its inception back in 1965, referring to a better "quality of life" for the people of Southeast Asia as the main purpose of its existence. The documents reviewed for this chapter contain frequent references to this purpose, stating for example that "[SEAMEO] is mandated to enhance regional understanding and cooperation and unity of purpose among

SEAMEO Member Countries *in order to achieve a better quality of life*" (SEAMEO 2017a, xiii, emphasis added). In fact, out of the 15 reviewed documents, only 6 did not include statements on quality of life. It remains vague, however, what the term "quality of life" entails beyond the general notion that education and science are supposed to holistically improve every aspect of people's lives in the region. Therefore, it seems more fruitful to focus on specific statements made by SEAMEO on the social and/ or economic purposes of education.

In SEAMEO's founding charter, the signatory members explicitly note that the organization will "assist in articulating education to the economic *and* social goals in the individual Member States" (Art. I § 2b, emphasis added). Since then, this sentiment has found its way into most publications available for analysis. Below are some examples from different decades:

> The benefits of … education may be derived at various levels. At the personal level, individuals can improve their knowledge and skills for their own betterment, be this in terms of material or moral well-being. The contributions of the individuals could lead to greater productivity and better livelihood of a community …. (SEAMES 1973, 3)

> [A] large segment of the population … require[s] some form of educational service to improve their economic status and the quality of their social participation. (SEAMES 1981, 2)

> Education is very important in bringing a better quality of life of people in the region [sic!]. At the individual level, education offers the opportunity for a person to acquire new knowledge, learn relevant skills and pathways to realise personal aspirations. At the macro level, education is strongly linked to economic productivity, technological advancement, higher income, and lowered poverty levels. (SEAMEO 2008, 5)

> [Education] can maximise the development of knowledge and skills that enable individuals to attain holistic well-being, sense of responsibility and self-reliance. Ultimately, successful individuals are able to live harmoniously and further contribute to society. (SEAMEO 2017a, iv)

Unlike other education IOs, there are few instances in which SEAMEO documents would prioritize one aspect of education policy over others. This finding is consistent with statements drawn from an interview with a high-ranking SEAMEO official conducted in February 2020, in which the interviewee stressed that education must be treated as part of both social policy and development or economic policy. The interviewee also subscribed to the idea that education should be seen as a "holistic project" in which different purposes of education need to be fairly balanced. Therefore, neither the social nor the economic dimension is prioritized over the other in education policy (Interview SEAMEO A 2020, 10).

Indeed, it seems that in recent years SEAMEO has started to support this "holistic" nature of education quite explicitly (SEAMEO 2017a, iv), especially in the context of lifelong learning. For example, in its action agenda of 2017, SEAMEO proposed an association of lifelong learning with the objective of developing and implementing "holistic and comprehensive lifelong learning approaches" (SEAMEO 2017b, 36).

Since a holistic view on education encompasses all four basic categories of education ideas (Nagel et al. 2010), evidence of each of these idea groups or leitmotifs should be found in SEAMEO publications. The following section will assess the findings for each category found in SEAMEO's policy publications. When possible, instances where these ideas are highlighted separately instead of where they are intertwined with their counterparts are presented. A standard practice in the publications of education IOs includes listing all imaginable benefits of education when addressing readers; however, it is more noteworthy if an idea is presented separately from others.

Individual skill formation, referring to the development of personal abilities that help boost the productivity and economic livelihood of an individual, is especially present in earlier documents. Here, education primarily ensures equal opportunities in the transnational labor markets for individuals from all kinds of economic backgrounds and increases the general standard of living of people in the region. These ideas are present in publications as early as 1973 (SEAMES 1973, 1). In the context of nonformal education, education policy is "called upon to assist in raising standards of living and in improving the quality of life of the underprivileged" (SEAMES 1981, 4). Identifying the need to educate children and

youth that do not finish school or have never enjoyed regular schooling, SEAMEO notes that "a large proportion of out-of-school youth and adults do not possess marketable skills" and that occupational training needs to be expanded to empower "the urban and rural underprivileged in raising their standard of living" (SEAMES 1980, 10).

Overall, however, SEAMEO mostly refers to the collective economic benefits of education, if it deviates at all from its emphasis on holistic well-being. These collective purposes of education include economic development and human capital formation. Therefore, education policy needs to be a part of an economy's response to the ever-increasing globalization of national markets and the challenges posed by the transnationalization of human capital. As noted in 2008 by Prof. Dr. Bambang Sudibyo, the then Minister for National Education of the Republic of Indonesia and SEAMEO Council President, "In today's globalised world …, the people have to be able to respond to the global outlook and be ready to seize global opportunities" (SEAMEO 2008, 5). This idea is displayed in many recent publications (SEAMEO 2011; SEAMEO 2017b; SEAMES 1980). As a poignant example, note this statement from the 2011–2020 SEAMEO Strategic Plan:

> SEAMEO recognizes that the ever-changing labour market needs and fast-paced global development pose enormous challenges for Southeast Asia to sustain and upgrade the competitiveness of its human resources. (SEAMEO 2013, 66)

To effectively tackle globalization's challenges, education is the premier tool available to SEAMEO member states. In this context, SEAMEO views itself both as an enabler and a provider for its members, stating that it is "Southeast Asia's largest and most dependable service provider in human resource development" (SEAMEO 2008, 8), with its economic mission being "to nurture human capacities and explore the fullest potentials of people in the region" (ibid.). In sum, "SEAMEO firmly believes that regional strategies should be aimed at benefitting individual member countries while at the same time achieving integration for regional growth" (SEAMEO 2013, 66).

With respect to the social dimension of education, SEAMEO displays a distinct cultural element to its policy reasoning and its specific recommendations. This idea is based on the notion of the unique nature of the Southeast Asia region, which requires an approach toward education policy specifically tailored to and mindful of this nature. For individuals, education is viewed as a means to promote and attain personal development, a healthy life, and fulfilling participation in society. For societies, education has a huge range of purposes; it can be a catalyst for a healthy, equal, fair, and moral society and a prerequisite for cultural awareness of one's own culture as well as foreign cultures, thereby enabling intercultural dialogue.

Among the benefits presented, the most prominent relate to cultural-regional aspects such as local traditions, history, and language. As early as 1973, SEAMEO noted that "education can strengthen … nation building, preservation and development of cultural heritage and environmental improvements" (SEAMES 1973, 6). To this day, SEAMEO upholds the reproduction and appreciation of cultural roots as one of education's main social purposes (SEAMEO 2013, 2017a, 2017b). According to SEAMEO, a necessary condition for valuable intercultural dialogue both between and within different regions is a society that is aware and appreciative of its own culture. This is especially true for Southeast Asian societies because many of them are either multiethnic, multireligious, or, commonly, both. According to Prof. Dr. Sudibyo, "in … socio-cultural development, education takes greater significance in multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies. Education can help to raise awareness of commonalities and shared values among different communities" (SEAMEO 2008, 5). In this way, SEAMEO hopes to create and encourage a shared "unity of purpose" among its member states through education (SEAMEO 1999, 2011, 2013).

Furthermore, SEAMEO views education as a tool to produce and reproduce regional norms and values and to improve social cohesion within its member states. Special attention is regularly given to vulnerable communities and the ways in which they can be empowered by quality education, possibly resulting in a more cohesive and resilient society and providing equal opportunities to people from all kinds of backgrounds. In this context, "vulnerable communities" refers to those that

suffer from any form of systematic exclusion from the education system. This includes linguistic and/or ethnic minorities, people with special education needs, the economically disadvantaged, or those who live in remote areas without access to regular schooling (SEAMEO 2016, 5). In order to support these communities, SEAMEO has dedicated one of their 7 "priority areas" from 2015–2035 to addressing barriers to inclusion (SEAMEO 2017b, 2017c, 12). As an interviewed official stated, "the target of the ministers … is how to identify the marginalized learners—those who are out of school—and bring them back to school" (Interview SEAMEO A 2020, 2).

Overall, there is evidence of all four categories presented above: *skill formation, self-fulfillment, wealth of nations, and social right and duty*. In the policy publications, however, none of them are presented as being more important to the education ideal of SEAMEO than any of the other categories. This finding is once again consistent with personal accounts. When presented with different purposes of education that were similar to the aforementioned ones, the interviewed official refrained from ranking or weighing them against one another, instead stating that "they are all important … within our vision and mission" (Interview SEAMEO A 2020, 10).

What then distinguishes SEAMEO from other education IOs if not for a policy focus? From this analysis, it is precisely the holistic nature of SEAMEO's ideal of education that separates it from the bulk of global education IOs. More specifically, the fact that we can observe this "quality of life" approach so early in SEAMEO's publications is unique to this organization. As Niemann (Chap. 5) points out, most education IOs started their activities focusing either on the social dimension of education, like UNESCO did, or on the economic dimension, like the OECD and the World Bank did. SEAMEO, on the other hand, included both social and economic goals for education policy in its charter (see above) and its mission from its very foundation in 1965 onward, whereby both types of goals were granted equal significance. It has since been a consistent proponent of this holistic approach.

Being the largest and most relevant regional education IO in Southeast Asia, SEAMEO furthermore views itself as an advocate for the region's cultural uniqueness, which requires an education system that is mindful

of and specifically tailored to the nature of the region. This notion can be found in other regional international organizations, such as the Arabic education IOs ALECSO and the Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States (ABEGS) (Chap. 7); it is rooted in the belief that Western ideas of education dominate in global education IOs, such as UNESCO, and that these ideas as well as the policies informed by them cannot be as readily applied to Southeast Asia as they can to, say, Western Europe, since they do not take into account cultural-regional contexts. At best, this might render them less effective for Southeast Asia; at worst, they may downright fail in the region. What is needed in the region, then, is a well-rounded education approach made for SEAMEO countries. Two statements made by the SEAMEO Council in 2014 and 2016 with the Vientiane Statement and the Bandung Statement, respectively, call for this "revolutionary" approach to be implemented:

> We therefore call for a new paradigm for the development of education in Southeast Asia that will require changes to educational systems that are not only gradual and evolutionary, but also revolutionary while still being rooted in our shared values and traditions. (SEAMEO 2016, 3)

> We therefore call for action among the delegations and institutions represented here to work cooperatively in building the region's educational system that is dynamic and resilient amidst current challenges, even as they remain rooted in our shared values and traditions. (SEAMEO 2016, 7)

From these press statements alone, it remains unclear what these cultural roots, values, and traditions entail and what they mean for education policy in the region, apart from their perceived uniqueness. I believe the most comprehensive answer to this lies in the following quotation, worthy of repeating almost in its entirety:

> Culture refers to a people's traditions, history, values, and language that make up the culture of a group and which contribute to their identity. Integrated with education, it brings about awareness, appreciation, and understanding of one's national patrimony, which reflects, validates, and promotes the values, world views, and languages of the community's culture. Culture-based education … intends to respect all forms of knowledge

and ways of knowing and supporting indigenous people and various eth-
nicities as individuals and community members in educational practices.
(SEAMEO 2017b, 247)

As a result, it seems from these definitions that global standards of educa-
tion can never fully account for regional contexts. Consequently, culture-
based education must be designed regionally with the help of organizations
like SEAMEO. It is this role as a facilitator of quality education in
Southeast Asia that SEAMEO supposedly intends to fill. The challenge
for SEAMEO in doing so is framed as follows: It must balance its educa-
tion policy between its unique cultural background and a global labor
and goods market that is dominated by Western standards and require-
ments, all while maintaining a well-rounded and balanced approach
toward education. Quality education in the SEAMEO region must be
"proactive and future-oriented, yet rooted in the values and traditions of
the region" (SEAMEO 2017c, 1).

The Content of SEAMEO Education Policy: 7 Priority Areas

Having established the ideas and leitmotifs found in SEAMEO's docu-
ments, how does SEAMEO go about achieving these formulated policy
goals? Are these ideas reflected in the content of the organization's policy?
As the organization is very active on many fronts, the following section
focuses on SEAMEO's "7 Priority Areas" for 2015–2035. These areas
were established in 2015 to inform and set the agenda for the next two
decades of education policy in the region (SEAMEO 2017c). Table 8.1
provides a summary of the priority areas.

The first two of these priorities are targeted primarily at the aforemen-
tioned vulnerable groups and local communities, which may be excluded
from learning opportunities due to systemic factors. They explicitly target
these segments of the population to achieve a more cohesive and just
society with equal opportunities for all learners (SEAMEO 2017c, ii). It
could be argued that the same is true for Priority 3, because national
emergencies, such as natural disasters or wars, tend to hit vulnerable
communities much harder than others. Priority 4 is the only area with a

Table 8.1   SEAMEO's priority areas in education

	Title
Priority 1	Achieving universal early childhood care and education
Priority 2	Addressing barriers to inclusion
Priority 3	Resiliency in the face of emergencies
Priority 4	Promoting technical and vocational education and training
Priority 5	Revitalizing teacher education
Priority 6	Harmonizing higher education and research
Priority 7	Adopting a twenty-first-century curriculum

From SEAMEO (2017c)

strictly economic focus, aiming to provide the people of the region with suitable skills for the labor market and enabling workers' global mobility. Priorities 5 and 6 are formulated rather generally and it remains uncertain whether SEAMEO has a specific focus in mind here. They are essentially "meta"—or process-related—goals, in that they stress the need to reform the education system in the SEAMEO region using an integrated approach that sets region-wide standards, best practices, and frameworks across all member states. Finally, the justification for Priority 7 almost reads like a synopsis of the analysis presented in Chap. 7. By means of an adequate curriculum to be taught in the education institutions of the region, SEAMEO aims to achieve both its social and economic goals while accounting for its cultural roots and values. Thus, adopting a twenty-first-century curriculum means "pursuing a radical reform through systematic analysis of knowledge, skills and values needed to effectively respond to changing global contexts, particularly to the ever-increasing complexity of the Southeast Asian social-cultural and political environment" (SEAMEO 2017c, ii).

In order to effectively monitor implementation of the seven priority areas in the member states, SEAMEO uses a percentage-based target system. Education projects connected to the seven areas are reported during the yearly meeting of member state vice ministers of education. They are then recorded and given a contribution percentage value, enabling the Secretariat to track the progress toward all areas in the various member countries (Interview SEAMEO A 2020). Best practices and outstanding projects are highlighted and published in documents such as the 2017 report "7 Priority Areas—Implementation by SEAMEO Member Countries".

Generally, the priority areas fit quite well with the evidence presented in Chap. 7. This is especially true for Priority 7. Ideally, the analysis should be complemented by an assessment of SEAMEO's budget. After all, action (i.e. financing) may sometimes speak louder than words. Does SEAMEO allocate its budgetary items in a way that pairs well with its stated goals and ideals in education policy? Unfortunately, obtaining the budget for the SEAMEO Secretariat proved to be difficult. Furthermore, due to the decentralized structure of the organization, in which every regional center has its own budget co-funded by the state it is located in, the Secretariat's budget would not tell the whole story—unless one were to obtain all 26 regional centers' budgets as well.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that SEAMEO proliferates a holistic, encompassing, and balanced ideal of education in which both social and economic purposes of education are relevant on the individual and societal levels. Furthermore, there is evidence of a special, region-specific twist to SEAMEO's leitmotifs in education policy that manifests itself in the emphasis of cultural values and traditional norms rooted in the regional context of Southeast Asia. The importance of culture in education for people in the region requires a mindful approach toward education policy, which takes such elements into account in order to be successful.

Combined with the findings from the chapter on the Islamic education organizations (Chap. 7), the evidence hints at a more general development in regard to regional education IOs. Regional organizations, like SEAMEO, are keen on reaping the developmental benefits of globalization but at the same time are unwilling to sacrifice their cultural roots, values, or traditions for it. The result is a delicate act of balancing between these two worlds. Further research is required to solidify the theoretical implications of the data presented here. How is the distinct cultural element in both SEAMEO's education ideas as well as in those of other regional or cultural organizations related to globalization? Are these developments expressions of a "new regionalism" or "in-group orientation" in international politics? Is there a countermovement against

globally proliferated Western education ideals, or are these exceptional rather than representative cases for the interaction between the global and the regional? Future research needs to find answers to these questions if a coherent picture is to be established of how regional organizations react to globalization as well as to the dominance of Western ideals in education policy.

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9

Talking About Education: How Topics Vary Between International Organizations

Michael Windzio and Raphael Heiberger

Introduction[1]

Policymakers usually regard education as a domestic policy field, where responsibility rests either with the national government or, as in most federal states, is delegated to subnational units. That education policy is heavily influenced by transnational entities, and by international

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organizations (IOs) in particular, is a fairly new insight within the realm of academic research and also a new experience for some policymakers (Martens et al. 2010, 2014). Tracing the influences of these IOs in detail is challenging for several reasons, one being the great variety of IOs—currently around 30—that are active in the policy field of education (Niemann and Martens 2021). While many industrialized countries have responded to the results of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study over the years, it remains an open question whether and how other organizations influence domestic education policies, and, if so, which countries are affected.

This study takes one step back from such a causal analysis and instead aims at analyzing the programs and recommendations communicated by IOs in their major documents in a descriptive manner. If we assume that IOs are more or less powerful actors in the global world system and that they try to influence domestic education policies (Martens et al. 2007), then we should first attempt to understand their missions and preferred goals in the field of education. In line with the studies by Niemann (Chap. 5) and Krogmann (Chaps. 7 and 8), we analyze the goals and ideas of IOs where education is concerned but apply a different methodological approach. We created a comprehensive text corpus (over 40 million words) from documents published by the six IOs that were selected to be analyzed in this book (Chap. 1) and applied structural topic models (STMs) to analyze the basic topics these organizations are dealing with. We selected the IOs according to a two-dimensional classification that distinguishes between *derivative* and *dedicated* education IOs, on the one hand, and IOs with *open* or *restricted* membership criteria, on the other hand.

According to our results, the six IOs do indeed focus on different issues. As we will see, this is basically due to the outstanding degree of homogeneity of topics communicated in the documents of those IOs that are *dedicated* to the issue of education, but at the same time restricted in their membership. These IOs are the Islamic Word Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ICESCO) and the Southeast Asia Ministers of Education Organization (SEAMEO).

Theoretical Background

How can we explain why IOs communicate about education in different ways? This is an important question given that we know IOs can considerably influence domestic education policies. When the OECD published the results of its first PISA study in 2000, policymakers and researchers controversially discussed the comparisons of educational performance and their policy implications. Many countries took the opportunity to implement reforms after being disappointed with their poor performance. The OECD thus had a strong influence on their domestic education policies, even though the organization itself does not have any formal authority. Switzerland, for example, was receptive to the study because education reforms had been considered overdue for decades; however, they were difficult to implement in a federal system with many veto players (Bieber and Martens 2011). In Germany, education policy changed so dramatically after the PISA study that scholars even used metaphors such as "Turn of the Tide" (Niemann 2010) or "After the Big Bang" (Niemann 2014).

Not all countries in the world are members of the OECD, but its concepts and suggestions for economic development are rather general and might also be applicable for non-members. Similarly, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is well known for its focus on the role of education for economic and social development in the Global South but is not at all limited to these issues. Other organizations focus on particular world regions or on countries where a particular culture or religion prevails.

Communication theories often regard communication as a system embedded in surrounding social systems (Luhmann 2000). Mass communication operates in specific ecologies where different media compete for niches to survive, maintain their communication, and get attention. Niche theory argues that the overall semantic space of communication at a given moment results from variation and selection within this competitive discourse environment. If a given ecology is unfavorable toward a particular communication, actors often seek to establish their own niche or try to fill existing, but alternative, niches (Riedlinger and Rea 2015).

For instance, a new niche was established when communication on the Internet started, and what we observe today is an increasing differentiation of niches that becomes apparent in various different online platforms that engage in tight competition for attention. Despite this fine-grained differentiation, the proliferation of certain niches such as YouTube is a challenge for traditional media. Not only the form but also the content of a newly emerged discourse niche might even displace previously dominant niches in the future (Ha and Fang 2012).

According to this niche competition argument, instead of there being just one discourse on education led by one dominant and universalistic IO, there might be different discourses in distinct niches. Such niche differentiation might be brought about by perception that the dominant and universalistic IO does not put sufficient weight on a particular issue, or the perception that the discourse of the dominant IO is somehow biased by a hegemonic ideology. This argument might be particularly applicable to the field of education because education is closely related to the intergenerational reproduction of culture. In the long run, the persistence of different "cultural spheres" (Chap. 1) also depends on how countries organize the form and content of their education systems.

We thus expect there to be considerable differences in how these IOs "talk" about education. To date, however, there is no standardized analysis of the most prevalent topics being discussed by these IOs. Education meets various functional requirements in a society such as generating literacy in the population, supporting ideas of legitimacy appropriate to the respective institutional order, laying the foundation of human capital investments, integrating migrants and their descendants into society, and preventing juveniles from becoming delinquent (Windzio 2013). It is likely that these and other functions of the education system are weighted differently in the discourses of these IOs. According to the "cultural spheres" argument (Chap. 1), which highlights the importance of education for the intergenerational reproduction of particular cultures, we expect that the most prevalent topics differ between the IOs depending on whether they are derivative or dedicated, open or restrictive. We thus classify active IOs in the field of education along the two dimensions *derivative–dedicated* and *open–restricted* (Chap. 1). An IO is *derivative* with respect to education if it mainly deals with more general issues, such

as economic development, while covering education as just one issue among many. A *dedicated* IO is one whose major topic is in fact education. Furthermore, the nature of IOs' membership rules can be *open* to any state or be *restricted* according to specific criteria such as geographical region or religion. Table 9.1 shows the categorization of the IOs and the number of documents considered in the analysis.

The International Labour Organization (ILO), the World Bank, and the OECD are organizations that are not primarily focused on education, whereby the latter IO is also restricted in its membership rules and essentially only includes economically developed countries. In contrast, UNESCO, ICESCO, and SEAMEO all have education as their main focus, but only UNESCO membership is open to any state. ICESCO only includes countries with a high share of Muslims and thus restricts membership to a particular religion, while SEAMEO membership consists of 11 Southeast Asian countries and is thus restricted to a particular world region. Given that there already existed an IO that supposedly handles the educational concerns of all countries in the world (UNESCO), there must be a reason why these member-restrictive organizations were formed and continue to be active today. We assume that this is because these IOs focus their communication specifically on their region, as in the case of SEAMEO, or on their particular culture and religion, as is the case with ICESCO.

In the following sections, we apply structural topic models to a large text corpus of IO documents in order to trace the major issues these organizations are talking about.

Table 9.1 International organizations (IOs) and number of documents by category

	Derivative education IOs		Dedicated education IOs	
Open to any state	ILO	217	UNESCO	220
	World Bank	609		
Restricted by criteria	OECD	509	ICESCO	15
			SEAMEO	33

Overall *N* = 1603
ILO: International Labour Organization
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SEAMEO: Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization
ICESCO: Islamic World Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, formerly ISESCO

Data

Preprocessing

As a first step in the creation of the text corpus, we defined a search string in order to restrict the selected documents to the issue of education by using the keyword "education." After the exclusion of clearly inappropriate documents, these keywords yielded a set of $N = 1603$ documents (see Table 9.1). The clearing of the text corpus included the removal of numbers, punctuation, and special characters. Subsequently, we identified English stop words and extended the set of stop words by 21 corpus-specific words (e.g., "chapter," "table," "director"). Words with less than three letters were deleted.

We then lemmatized the corpus by using the function *lemmatizestring* from the R package textstem. Finally, we removed tokens that appeared in less than three documents.

Structural Topic Models

To reduce the semantic space of the documents published by the six IOs to meaningful dimensions, we applied a recent variety of topic models known as Structural Topic Modelling (Roberts et al. 2014, 2016). Topics are directly derived from "bag-of-words" (meaning that word order and grammar are ignored) by probabilistic algorithms. The main idea behind all topic models is that words co-occurring in and across documents describe meaningful themes (or topics). All topic models are generative models of word counts using a two-step method of clustering. A topic is defined as a mixture of words, where each word has a probability of belonging to a topic (1st cluster step), and a document is a mixture of topics, meaning that each document is composed of multiple topics (2nd clustering). As such, the sum of the topic proportions across all topics for a document is one (also known as θ, the topic load of a document). In addition, the sum of the topic probabilities for a word across all topics is also one (also known as β, a word's contribution to a topic). Thus, the

more often words co-occur in documents, the higher the probability that they constitute a topic.

Compared to other topic models (Jordan and Mitchell 2015), STM allows for the improvement of the estimation of topics by using document meta-data as covariates. STM does not assume that the distribution of words is the same for all documents, but words in documents with the same covariates (e.g., year, source) have a higher likelihood of being clustered together and forming a topic. It has been shown that the inclusion of covariates improves the quality of topic selection substantially (Roberts et al. 2014, 2016), especially for documents covering longer time periods (Farrell 2016).

Validation

Although the proposed STM solves other technical issues, such as finding the optimal starting parameters and providing consistent results by a "spectral initialization" (Roberts et al. 2016), it does not solve the issue of selecting an appropriate number of topics, which is crucial for any further analysis. Comparable to efforts in cluster analysis to determine the optimal number of clusters, there is no "right" answer to the question of how many topics are appropriate for a given corpus (Grimmer and Stewart 2013); though there do exist better and worse choices. Given the importance of the question, a careful examination and consideration of different topic solutions is key to every scientific dimensional reduction technique.

Internal Validation

The idea of internal validation is to identify a model with topics that best reflect weighted bags of words that are used by interviewees. In other words, we test which topics (respectively the most defining words of a topic) best predict interviewees' responses (aka the text). For that general purpose, semantic coherence and exclusivity are widely used measures (Mimno et al. 2011; Roberts et al. 2016).

The *coherence* of a semantic space addresses whether a topic is internally consistent by calculating the frequency with which high-probability topic words tend to co-occur in documents. Coherence grows with the likelihood of a topic's most probable words co-occurring together. The authors who introduced this measure, Mimno and Blei (2011), validated it for academic writing. They showed that it had high correspondence with the judgments of National Institutes of Health (NIH) officials on a set of NIH grants (Mimno et al. 2011).

However, semantic coherence alone can be misleading since high values can simply be a result of very common words of a topic that occur together in most documents. To account for the desired statistical discrimination between topics, we may consider a second metric proposed by Roberts et al. (2014) and measure the *exclusivity* of a topic. Exclusivity provides us with the extent to which the words of a topic are distinct from it. Both exclusivity and coherence complement each other and are examined in concert to give us a first impression of where topics represent word distributions in documents and at the same time provide distinct dimensions.

The developers of STM recommend that researchers look for the "semantic coherence-exclusivity frontier"—namely, the specification after which allowing for more topics fails to produce models that dominate others in terms of semantic coherence and exclusivity (Roberts et al. 2014, 7). Thus, what we are looking for is when both indicators build a *plateau*, that is, they do not improve (much) with higher Ks. This gives us an upper limit for a reasonable K.

Figure 9.1 reveals a "jump" in *coherence* at $K = 70$. Before and after that jump it decreases with higher values of K. Looking at *exclusivity*, we see that it increases only marginally after values of K are greater than 50.

Figure 9.1 displays the distribution of exclusivity and semantic coherence. In general, we see that exclusivity gets better with a rising number of topics, but coherence gets worse.

In addition, we look at the *held-out likelihood*. This is "a measure of predictive power to evaluate comparative performance," in this case among models that allow for different numbers of topics (Roberts et al.
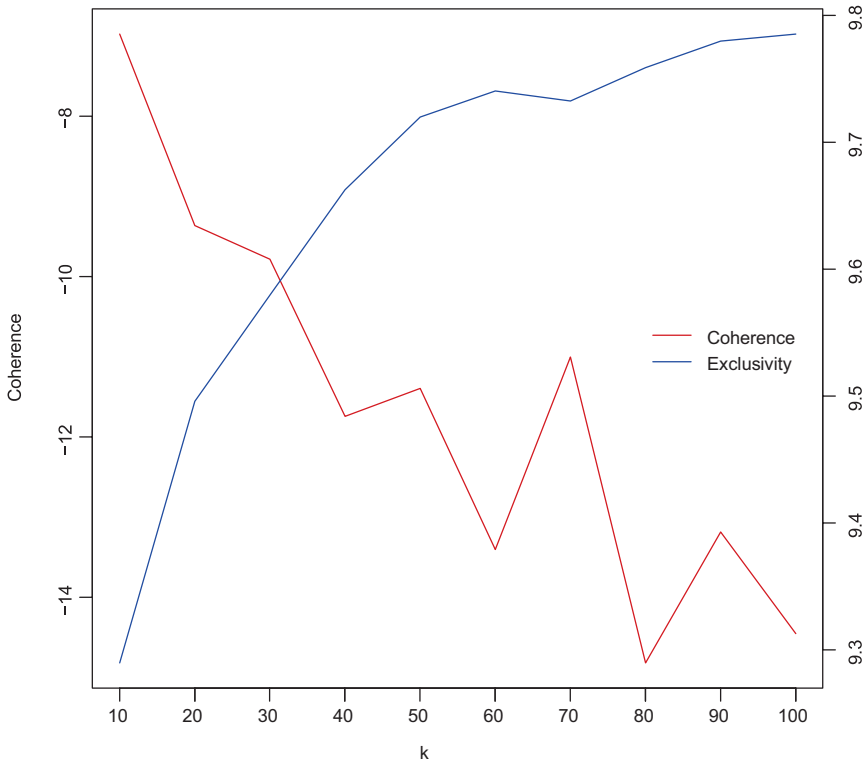
Fig. 9.1 Exclusivity and semantic coherence

, 22). To obtain the held-out likelihood of an STM, we first subset 10% of the documents in the corpus and hold out half of the words in them. We then evaluate the likelihood of the held-out words. Higher likelihoods indicate a more predictive model. In general, the log-likelihood of K is falling (more general topics, more predictive power). Thus, we are looking for some "breaks" in a straight line. Figure 9.2 shows a corresponding "plateau" to 1 around *K* = 70. That means the LL is not improving much between steps 60 and 70, where we would expect to see a linear falling curve.
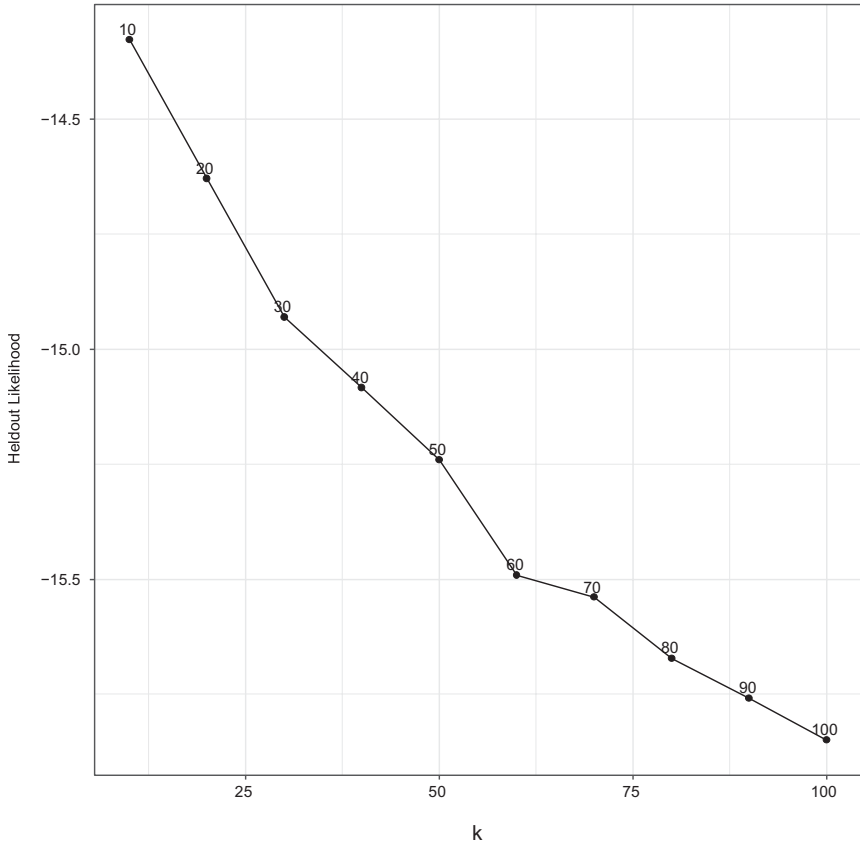
Fig. 9.2   Held-out log-likelihood

Robustness

In addition to internal validation, we may want to include a second pillar by checking robustness *across* K. It is probably the most important way to show that our choice of K is not changing the whole semantic space and hence our (descriptive) analysis.

For this purpose, we use an indicator developed for comparing clustering solutions called "Fowlkes-Mallows Index" (FMI). It basically tests the relation of true and false positives/negatives across cluster assignments, or in our case, the assignment of a document to a topic. We used the

max-approach to assign topics to documents, that is, *max*(*theta*) (maximum topic load) of a document defines its topic. The FMI may give us a straightforward way of measuring consistency by investigating the rate of change with regard to topic assignments across different Ks.

K on the x-axis represents the similarity of topic assignments for all documents between two consecutive Ks, that is, an STM with k-topics is compared to the next smallest STM with k = 10 (e.g. k = 10 and k = 20 are compared at the first x-tick).

Figure 9.3 shows the results for the FMI. We see consistent values above 0.7 for *K* = 70. This means that more than 70% of documents' maximum
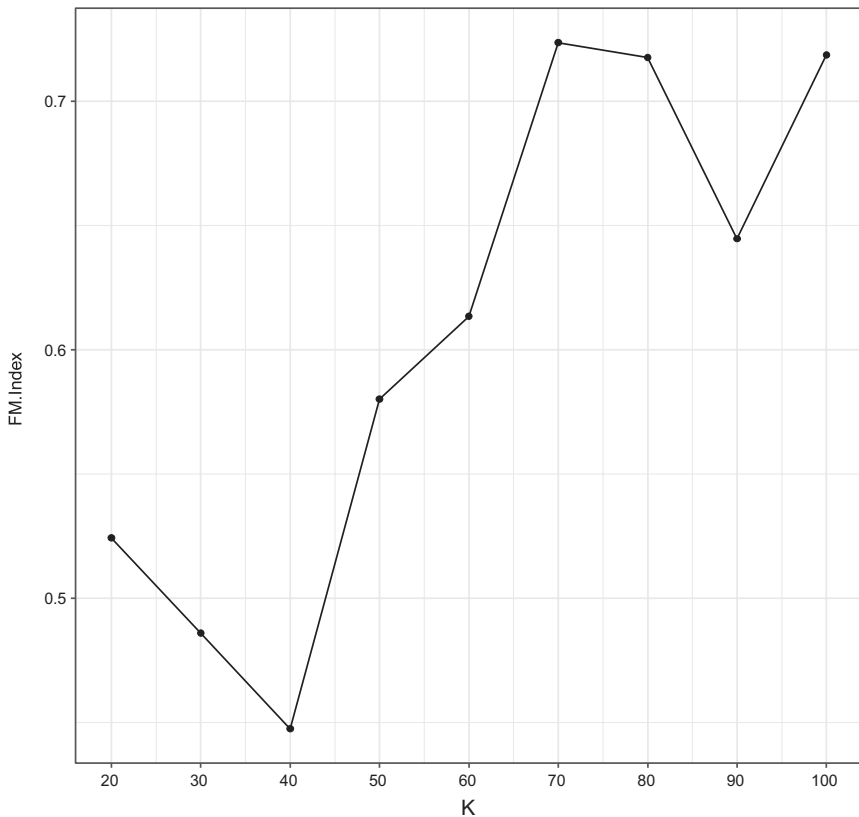
Fig. 9.3   Fowlkes-Mallows Index

topic assignments at $K = 60$ are the same at the next highest K. Thus, $K = 70$ again marks a local peak, this time in terms of "robust" topic assignments. In general, we note that the finer the semantic grid with rising K, the lesser the changes necessary to classify documents sufficiently.

Therefore, all validation results point to $K = 70$ as the most valid and consistent choice for the number of topics. However, we see in Fig. 9.3 that the choice of K is not changing the semantic dimensions (i.e., topics) in a drastic way.

Results

According to the diagnostics presented in the previous section, we opted for a solution with 70 topics. Each of these topics has a specific prevalence, that is, a specific share in the overall set of these topics. Taken together, all 70 topics make up 100% of the semantic space. Figure 9.4 shows the ten most important topics according to their topic prevalence and the five most important words that best represent the respective topic. For an understanding of what these topics mean, it is necessary to inspect the topic-word list in the Appendix. Topic 57 refers to the level of education of students and the OECD, whereas topic 64 refers to national policies related to countries' development. Topic 49 appears similar to topic 64 but focuses more on communities. Topic 13 focuses on the OECD, students, and policies in conjunction with schools. In contrast, topic 18 is more focused on teachers and their profession, while topic 53 is clearly centered on vocational training and the OECD. Topic 60 is also focused on teachers, but it additionally relates to recommendations and committees. Topic 26 is clearly related to labor training and the ILO, while topic 39 is centered on tertiary educational institutions (particularly universities) and topic 40 is again more focused on skills, training, and development. At first glance, topics 57 and 13 seem to be similar, but closer inspection reveals that topic 13 is limited to secondary education, whereas topic 57 also deals with tertiary education. As this example shows, it can sometimes be quite difficult to clearly discern the content of all 70 topics, but aside from such instances, the top ten topics of our analysis are actually quite easy to distinguish between since they are dealing with distinct

Top Topics

Topic 57: education, country, student, oecd, level

Topic 64: education, development, country, national, policy

Topic 49: project, development, knowledge, community, process

Topic 13: education, oecd, student, policy, school

Topic 18: teacher, teach, school, education, professional

Topic 53: train, education, oecd, vocational, vet

Topic 60: teacher, education, recommendation, committee, teach

Topic 26: labour, train, ilo, development, programme

Topic 39: university, high, education, institution, student

Topic 40: train, education, system, development, skill

| 0.00 | 0.02 | 0.04 | 0.06 | 0.08 |

Expected Topic Proportions

Fig. 9.4 Topic proportions of the ten most important topics, solution with 70 topics

topics such as performance levels of secondary education, teacher-related issues, tertiary education, vocational training, or labor-related issues.

More important for our research question is the relative importance of the 70 topics for the different IOs. Figure 9.5 shows pie plots with the three most important topics for each of our six IOs. The higher the proportion covered by the three topics, the more focused the documents of the respective IO are on fewer issues. Contrariwise, if an organization discusses a variety of different issues in equal proportion, then the topic heterogeneity and overall share of the three most important topics are relatively low. It is thus striking in Fig. 9.5 that for ICESCO and SEAMEO, at least three quarters of their communication are concentrated among the three most important topics. As argued in the theoretical section of this chapter, these dedicated organizations are focused on education. Even though UNESCO
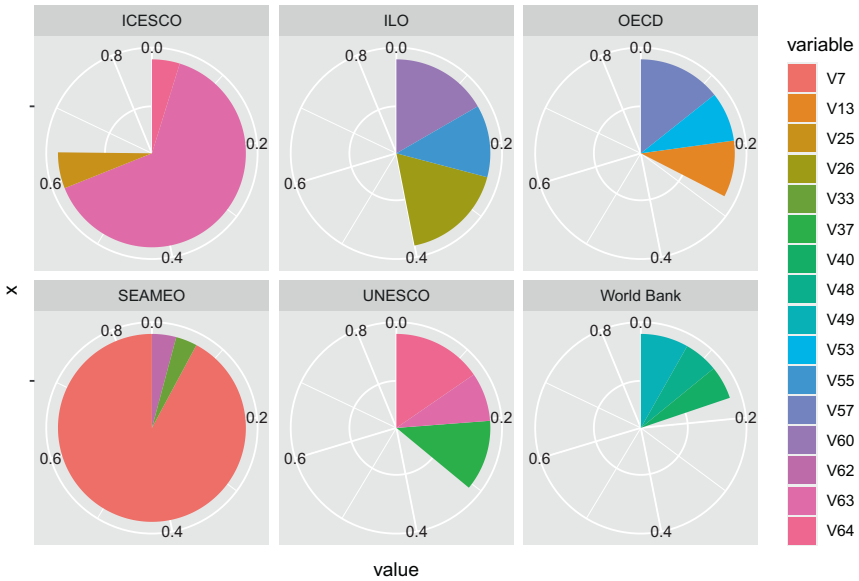
Fig. 9.5   Three most prevalent topics by organization

is a dedicated IO whose membership is open to all countries in the world, ICESCO and SEAMEO create and maintain their own distinct thematic niches, which implies that, in their view, UNESCO does not appropriately address these niches (see Appendix for an overview of all 70 topics).

A closer inspection of the content of these topics reveals that this does in fact seem to be the case. *ICESCO* devotes 54.7% of its communication to topic 63, which is about "Islam, culture, and the state." The remaining two most important topics make up only a small proportion of around 4–5%. Accordingly, the main focus of ICESCO is clearly on Islam, the social world, the state, and rights. The concentration of topics is even more pronounced for *SEAMEO*. Here, 78.6% of its communication is concentrated on topic 7, which is about "development, SE Asia" as well as on the countries Thailand and Malaysia. The remaining two most important topics make up around 3% each and focus on "early childhood and care" (topic 62), and "teacher and digital technology" (topic 33).

In contrast to ICESCO and SEAMEO, the three most important topics of the *OECD* make up only one-third of its overall communication

combined. At the same time, the distribution of the topic proportions is more equal: The most important issue has a share of 12.1% and is focused on "earnings, tertiary and non-tertiary" (topic 57). In the overall text corpus, this is the most prevalent topic (Fig. 9.4). In addition, topic 53, which makes up 7.2% of the OECD's communication, ranks sixth place among the most important topics in the overall corpus and is clearly focused on "vocational training and apprenticeship," whereas topic 13 ("assessment, average, and Latvia") makes up 8.3% and relates to schools, secondary education, and national averages. Even though the OECD is an organization with restricted membership, it is nevertheless rather broad and heterogeneous in its communication about education.

Much like the OECD, the three most important topics for *UNESCO* also make up around one-third of its communication. Topic 64 is its most important topic, accounting for 13.1%, and rather broadly addresses issues on "support national development" and training. In total, 10.3% of UNESCO's communication is again devoted to issues relevant to development, such as "problems of adult learning." Interestingly, UNESCO also communicates considerably (7.1%) on topic 63 ("Islam, culture, and the state"). As we have seen already, this is by far the most important topic for ICESCO (54.7%), and despite being remarkably less relevant for UNESCO, it nevertheless accounts for one of its three most important topics. This probably has to do with UNESCO's activities in fields such as the preservation of cultural heritage and culture in general.

The World Bank shows the highest heterogeneity in its topics compared to the other IOs, since only around 15% is concentrated on the three most important topics, which are topic 49 ("development projects and community"), topic 48 ("South Africa, development, and telecommunication"), and topic 40 ("vocational training and East Asia"). The ILO shows a concentration of topics: "labor, train, development, and worker" (topic 26, 15.1%), "selection of teachers" (topic 60, 14.2%), and "war, employment, and wages" (topic 55, 10.6%).

To sum up, what we can learn from this standardized analysis of the comprehensive text corpus is that our six IOs do indeed talk differently about education. These differences are best described by the *combination of two characteristics*, in the lower right cell of our 2 × 2 table (Table 9.1). If IOs *dedicated* to the issue of education are at the same time *restricted* in

their membership (e.g., through their focus on either a particular cultural sphere or world region), then they will tend to focus their communication on specific issues much more than either derivative IOs or UNESCO, which is a dedicated IO but not restricted in membership. Interestingly, the case of the OECD underscores that restrictions on membership do not necessarily imply that the communication is limited to just a few topics (Niemann and Martens 2021). Despite its membership restrictions, the OECD seems to communicate on a huge variety of issues rather than focus on just a few specific interests.

Conclusion

We began our study by describing the classification of our six IOs into a 2 × 2 table, defined by the dimensions *derivative–dedicated* and *open–restricted* (Chap. 1). If comprehensive, universalistic IOs such as the World Bank or UNESCO claim to represent the global world system, the mere existence of dedicated IOs with restricted membership is a puzzling occurrence in and of itself. Why do regional or culturally specific IOs exist? Universalistic IOs such as UNESCO and the World Bank do not restrict membership. Nevertheless, it seems that some groups of countries do not feel represented by them. UNESCO is not regarded as an appropriate representation of certain countries when it comes to the *cultural* aspects of education, while the World Bank's inaccessibility stems from its emphasis on the role education plays for the *economy*.

Our analysis of a huge text corpus of IO documents showed that the major topics communicated by the respective organizations clearly differ. The most important distinction is between ICESCO and SEAMEO, on the one hand, that is, the two IOs that fall in both the *restricted* and *dedicated* categories, and UNESCO, the OECD, and the World Bank, on the other hand. The former IOs show a rather homogeneous, highly focused content when it comes to their communication; there is basically one "big issue" they are dealing with. ICESCO's "big issue" is clearly the topic "Islam, culture, and the state," regardless of the fact that this topic is also somewhat important to UNESCO. Nevertheless, UNESCO deals with a variety of different issues and pays only minor attention to this particular

topic. Perhaps this is the reason why ICESCO exists: religion and culture might be so important in the *cultural sphere* of Muslim countries (Chap. 2) that they consider it necessary to have a specific IO for this purpose. As Krogmann (Chap. 7) has shown, preserving the Islamic religion and culture while at the same time strengthening the economic and political power of Muslim countries is the major goal of ICESCO. Unsurprisingly, as a universalistic IO, it is not part of UNESCO's major goals to "allow the Islamic world to regain its leading role in building human civilization" (ISESCO 2017, 7), even though "Islam, culture, and the state" do play a role for UNESCO as well. Our results are thus in line with the idea that cultural spheres are important in global education policies. However, it remains an open question how important and effective ICESCO actually is in shaping education policies as well as systems in its member countries.

The goals of SEAMEO are less clearly defined. It is focused on its member countries and thereby on the particular region of Southeast Asia. Education policy is considered important for the development of this region, but it is again an open question why countries in this region do not consider themselves to be well represented by the World Bank or UNESCO. In contrast to these two IOs, the other four show much more diversity in their major topics. Even though the ILO is focused on labor issues, its communication seems to be spread more evenly over different topics, and these topics address all countries in the world.

Education is a special policy field since it is related to the reproduction of national or regional cultures. At least with respect to ICESCO, it is quite reasonable to assume that the reason this IO exists is because of the importance of Islamic civilization in the eyes of its member countries. An interesting question is whether we would detect regional or culturally specific IOs in other policy areas as well. If so, we could ask similar questions: What motivates countries to create and maintain activities in dedicated IOs and to maintain and occupy specific thematic niches? Why do these countries not consider themselves well represented by the major universalistic IOs? Is education the only policy area in which, for example, culture is so important that specialized IOs become active? This might be an interesting research agenda for studies on IOs in other areas of social policy.

Appendix

No.	Topic	Coherence	Exclusivity
1	Assessment	Program tool policy question use assessment goal analysis identify module	Module yes please tool feed questionnaire saber analyze dimension interview
2	Privatization	Public private government sector fund pay finance country cost service	Private public voucher subsidy fee loan for-profit revenue charge pay
3	Latin America	Chile Mexico Colombia educacin state del Para los nacional quality	Salud anuales alianza financiamiento calidad gasto seguro poblacin estatal evaluacin
4	Neo-liberal growth	Growth world country service bank trade economy percent export access	Freshwater liberalization avg. debt barter export pop high technology dioxide wine
5	Costs in Africa	Education percent expenditure level high school primary cost sector secondary	Pbet drc francophone ababa Addis tte postbasic Madagascar recurrent Cameroon
6	Inclusion	Education student school child support immigrant need disability language special	Inclusive resilience disability impairment refugee mainstream adversity disable inclusion multicultural
7	Development, SE Asia	Education seameo Thailand country school Centre programme Malaysia development learn	Seameo tropmed seamolec oecdunesco recsam southeast searca thailands Brunei biotrop
8	ILO convention French	Des les dans que par qui convention travail pour Sur	Avait larticle avons ouvriers repos fabriques serait dautre dernire avaient
9	Region: Former SU	Education school student teacher review OECD republic high secondary national	Kazakhstan moes Lithuania Estonian Lithuanian canary Estonia gymnasium mone unt

(continued)

No.	Topic	Coherence	Exclusivity
10	Women in Arabic countries	Woman gender female labor country rate region MENA man girl	MENA Yemen Egypt Morocco womens Algeria Lebanon Saudi Oman Arabia
11	Latin America, non-tertiary	School education primary secondary percent teacher country student rate level	Wei Honduras Salvador Nicaragua Guatemala Ethiopia quintile enrollment Sierra Leone
12	PISA assessment China	Student performance Pisa country read OECD level school score science	Tableau kongchina gradient donnes shanghaichina bold enjoyment annualise slope macaochina
13	Assessment, average and Latvia	Education OECD student policy school secondary high system average national	Latvia eag outlook latvian httpdxdoiorgen spotlight talis latvias yearolds Riga
14	Methods of data collection	Datum indicator statistic use survey information analysis source system statistical	Datum statistic indicator statistical handbook classification UIS dataset collection internationally
15	Assessments dimensions	Problem student solve Pisa item read assessment text question literacy	Noncontinuous problem funke mathematical solver knowledge reading science problemsolving framework
16	Occupational training, informal work, global south	Train skill sector education percent informal labor worker market development	Oecs nurse caricom Yunnan informal kur trainee Lanka sri ghana
17	Quality of lifelong learning	Education learn quality qualification system country policy assurance national lifelong	Crossborder ria assurance lifelong qualification IBRD the recognition GAT NQFS NQF
18	Teachers' careers	Teacher teach school education professional policy student development system work	Teacher profession induction teach professional career reward bonus high performing retain

(continued)

No.	Topic	Coherence	Exclusivity
19	Training and European labor market	Skill OECD train adult learn labor need education market work	Diagnostic adult learning Slovenias activate Flanders PES low skilled Italys SMEs activation
20	Maths-science performance	Student school Pisa country OECD performance mathematics science index report	Self-beliefs country economy ESCS IIIA BSJG Macao self-reports truancy IIIB nonimmigrant
21	Development and World Bank	Bank world country development research policy work poverty Washington economic	Balkans hci ravallion mdgs weve ida deininger ington cpia worldbankorg
22	Tertiary and Bologna	Education tertiary student high institution OECD program university research review	Teis internationalization tertiary IBRD the tei cruch bologna undergraduate doctoral postgraduate
23	Development Bank and norm violation	World development right law medium bank human people legal state	Customary journalist insult pluralism news justice newspaper criminal rights based shareholder
24	Local level	Education school fund resource level local budget government system governance	Subcentral bec budget earmark territorial allocation district formula governance BOSDA
25	Latin America higher education	Education high university research international institution science country development student	Internationalization Antioquia Antioquias UNITWIN interuniversity Medellin drain Cuban scientist Cuba
26	Labour, train, development and worker	Labour train ILO development program country employment activity project worker	Seminar tripartite biennium ILOs ILO Turin advisory rehabilitation symposium fellowship
27	Skills foreign born adults	Adult skill immigrant country OECD level proficiency literacy language difference	Foreign born PIAAC technology rich native native born proficiency immigrant first generation numeracy second generation

(*continued*)

(continued)

No.	Topic	Coherence	Exclusivity
28	Employment Israel Palestine conflict	Worker Israeli territory Israel Arab occupy Palestinian work Gaza employment	Samaria Judea Palestinian Gaza Israeli occupy strip Histadrut Israel territory
29	State and trade law	Law country may legal service professional bank provide state agreement	Nancial supra benets trustee qualications judicial ecommerce rst specic efciency
30	Workers' skills and cognition	Skill job worker education employer cognitive market work occupation need	Saa anticipation noncognitive mismatch transversal skilling emotional personality cognitive conscientiousness
31	Youth and health	Youth young people program school health work country world child	Condom soul SRH Buddyz HIV AIDS sexually lovelife sexual parenthood gang
32	Evaluation and inspection	Assessment evaluation education student appraisal national teacher review system learn	Appraisal self-evaluation summative evaluator formative inspectorate inspection evaluation wwwoecdorgedu evaluationpolicy ero
33	Teacher and digital technology	Technology computer ICT learn digital student teacher information education school	OER informatics digital multimedia computer software hardware computational nit ICTCFT
34	ILO, green development	Social country work develop employment need development policy ILO labor	Industrialize ILOs environmental pollution green industrialization tripartite greening constituent ILO
35	Children's health Central Asia	Child health school social education program improve intervention learn development	Kyrgyz Tajikistan Bishkek MOH nutrition deworming malnutrition immunization Kyrgyzstan street

(continued)

No.	Topic	Coherence	Exclusivity
36	Trade unions	Worker labor union organization trade country work social relation problem	Nonmanual labor management undertaking union collective conciliation dispute organization industrial arbitration
37	Problems of adult learning	Literacy learn program community adult skill education learner people train	Facilitator literate ESD UIL Tostan low literate prison literacy multilingual illiterate
38	Convention and workers insurance	Work act convention state office worker may labor employment person	Seaman seamens workmens vesselSsunday insure Rumania stoker furnace workman
39	Autonomy and quality of universities	University high education institution student quality research system academic college	HEIs HEC faculty self-perception Irish HEA autonomy university accreditation affiliate
40	Vocational training and East Asia	Train education system development skill vocational policy government institution program	Xinjiang Moe Korean saber country report Singapores systems approach for better education results Singapore TVE instructor workforce
41	Antisemitism and holocaust	Holocaust education textbook history curriculum genocide teach war conflict study	Holocaust antisemitism genocide Shoah Jew Nazi atrocity national sozialismus perpetrator Hitler
42	Innovation	Innovation education change student OECD practice teacher country level point	Innovation systemic innovate Thuringia innovative PIRSL math HEGESCO scratch crossroad
43	Leadership	School OECD teacher education student learn system review also leadership	Wale Flemish leadership leader talis Welsh Nusche municipality SLO school

(continued)

No.	Topic	Coherence	Exclusivity
44	East Asia, reforms, globalization and demography	Education OECD country student high unite good state Japan school	Reformer Shanghai Japanese globalization MEXT demography Japans performer Japan CSE
45	Primary and secondary	Education school secondary country student percent teacher primary learn system	Jse sse Seia lowersecondary ondary secondaire lewin ssa agepa pacic
46	ILO, conference	Conference ILO programme work session country committee international concern body	Seafarer lLO maritime delegate director general ship resolution conference ILO session
47	Study inequality	School student Pisa country OECD cent mean index datum sample	Spss sas stq scq wfstr hisei icq syntax cnt grp
48	South Africa, development and telecommunication	Africa ICT south service development country information access sector communication	Fixed line outgoing egovernment Pretoria telecommunication broadband SETAs incoming ZAR estrategies
49	Development projects and community	Project development knowledge community process support activity good change staff	Wbi cda sdv ieg ppd. toolkit coalition dialogue subprojects wbis
50	Brazil, adult education	Education adult Brazil learn educao state train federal literacy UNESCO	Ramaa adultos educao ale sra confintea eja ministrio belm formao
51	Child care, parents and kindergarten	Child care early service education Roma parent family childhood country	Roma nonroma ag kindergarten preschool parental pedagogue care ECEC Romania
52	Entrepreneurship	Program business train entrepreneurship entrepreneur evaluation participant entrepreneurial student group	EET entrepreneur venture entrepreneurial entrepreneurship acceleration startups EPAG startup mentor

(continued)

No.	Topic	Coherence	Exclusivity
53	Vocational training and apprenticeship	Train education OECD vocational vet skill review program student apprenticeship	VET apprentice apprenticeship Kuczera work based WBL PET Fachhochschulen postsecondary Musset
54	Returns and overeducation	Education country high percent labor return level school wage firm	Quantile return unobserved TFP OLS overeducation overeducated premium equation payoff
55	War, employment and wages	Country economic worker work may increase social problem wage employment	Postwar depression prewar underdeveloped PRP wartime automation war manpower coal
56	Russia and Bulgaria, curriculum	Education school educational system train new curriculum change problem information	Russian Moscow Russia Bulgarian ill votec fhe of the Sofia Russias
57	Earnings, tertiary and non-tertiary	Education country student OECD level secondary educational tertiary program institution	Glance tertiary type nontertiary graduation ISCED earnings USD upper descend fulltime
58	Agriculture, mobile information	Mobile information service farmer market access technology system agricultural use	Dlrs farmer mlab mlabs traceability mobile smallholder app phone sms
59	Banks and money	Financial literacy education impact survey money group behavior bank saving	Saving Lusardi financial lottery simulator money save debit behavior takeup
60	Selection of teachers	Teacher education recommendation committee teach country government school ILO organization	Ceart ilounesco allegation highereducation ece ssr ceartrsectoendocx vicechairperson zenkyo dialogue

(continued)

No.	Topic	Coherence	Exclusivity
61	School, training and university	Education course school secondary study train university work student vocational	Pronatec dominican uasd danish polytechnic fic wyszego szkolnictwa oraz amks
62	Early childhood and care	Child early childhood education ECEC quality care development staff curriculum	Ecce staffchild toolbox ecec samuelsson melqo childhood whriki kindergarten pramling
63	Islam, culture and the state	Right state organization social world international action Islamic cultural human	Islamic Muslim ISESCO Islam declaration OIC dignity religion covenant globalization
64	Support national development	Education development country national policy plan UNESCO Support Programme train	Efa capefa Dakar postconflict caped sectorwide jomtien fpe unescos nfe
65	Methods of data analysis	Item student school Pisa sample country scale test datum use	Booklet coder NPMS parameter stratum item nonresponse verifier marker reliability
66	Language and linguistics	Language read student text write word teacher teach learn grade	Syllable phonological phoneme alphabet decipher grapheme verlan ARED CEB blackboard
67	Emotion, neuroscience and cognition	Learn research knowledge education study practice student vol environment work	Emotion neuroscience service learning ILE music inspire correlational experimentation art cognition
68	State, primary, district and teacher	Education state school primary percent teacher district study student level	DPEP Catarina Bengal Kerala Pradesh Santa Orissa Assam Karnataka ICDS
69	University, innovation, development	Education university high development regional research innovation institution OECD student	Wroclaw Andalusia Sonora lombardy basque Arizona catalonia hei paso Penang
70	Monitoring primary education	Education country school global child learn low development monitor primary	Sdg sdgs gem parity uis gpi oda gpe aymara efa

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10

Education as Cultural Frame

John W. Meyer

Introduction

The chapters of this book address the dramatic historical and contemporary expansion of education around the world. They cover the long-term rise of compulsory education, the international institutions that arise to support education, and the variation among countries and world regions in the process. They approach the problems with an admirable mix of often-innovative qualitative and quantitative methods.

The book is theoretically eclectic, but unifying themes underlie much of its argumentation and evidence. First, educational expansion reflects a general cultural process, organized at global, regional, international, and national levels. Beyond the global influences discussed in the literature, the chapters here call special attention to the significance of world cultural regions.

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Second, the various supranational processes supporting educational expansion are structured around linkages between countries and between countries and organs of regional and global society. The patterns of expansion are created around network relationships between countries—and between countries and regional and global society.

Third, all the linkages transmit broad cultural forces more than narrowly economic ones. This takes on a great deal of force against a modern literature that tends anachronistically to emphasize economic drivers, meanings, and effects. In contrast, the chapters of this book emphasize the universalistic and compulsory character of educational expansion as targeted on broad (and religious) notions of the public good.

In these comments I review the general question and some of the issues addressed in the chapters here. I discuss the global expansion of education in general, the problem of the weak relation between differentiated economies and integrated education, and the odd quality of compulsion in the nominally free society. I conclude with comments on regional and cultural variation, and reflections on possible effects of the weakening of the hegemony of the liberal world order in which the expansion of education has been rooted.

The Phenomenon at Issue: Integrated Education in a Differentiated Economy and Global Society

The rise of education as a central institution is a dramatic element in the development and spread of modernity. Much is known descriptively about this change, which is in the taken-for-granted background of this book. I review the matter, which frames the studies here. Because contemporary people take education for granted, many questions about its expansion remain unexplained: more attention is given to cases where expansion does not happen than to the massive numbers of cases and situations in which it does. Because academics also take education and its expansion for granted, analyses of modern society (e.g. as an "economy") are distorted: Baker (2014) usefully addresses the matter by calling

contemporary society the "schooled society," rather than generally modern, or capitalist, or free, or democratic.

The expansion of education has been a striking feature of the entire post-Enlightenment period. It characterized the Western world in the nineteenth century, and more peripheral regions in the first half of the twentieth century. The rate of growth increased dramatically in the liberal era after World War II and intensified even more in the neoliberal period since the 1980s (compare Ruggie 1982 and Ruggie 1998). Rapid growth came to characterize every country in the world.

Most research on the overall expansion, as outlined above, stresses the global character of the diffusion. A striking contribution of the studies here is to call attention to its regional and cultural structuration and variation, as it moved beyond its Western core. An interesting and important question raised is whether such variation may increase with the weakening of the hegemony of the West and the rise of alternative regional and cultural areas.

Several features of the overall global expansion call for attention; they lie in the background of the studies here:

1. Expansion covers a wide span of life and its dimensions. It occurs across age levels, consuming substantial parts of the typical individual life course. Primary school enrollments grew steadily over the past two centuries, and then rapidly after the war, becoming practically universal (Meyer et al. 1992). Beyond an elementary school focus, mass secondary school became common, and in many countries, universal (Barro and Lee 2015). Higher education grew exponentially, and by now more than a third of young people in the world experience its blessings (Schofer and Meyer 2005).

Expansion has also been endemic apart from the normal educational cycle. Lifelong learning became standard in both policy and practice (Jakobi 2009). Preschool enrollments grew rapidly (Wotipka et al. 2017). Clear school-like arrangements expanded in noneducational settings (Scott and Meyer 1991). And beyond education in established national settings, emphases on and practices for education in irregular forms developed dramatically—education for refugees, the disabled, the marginal, the immigrant, and the inhabitant of conflictful societies (Lerch and Buckner 2018). Even the very beginning and end of life became

targets of school-like instruction, with prenatal education and education for death arising as doctrines, programs, and possibilities.

Further, the agendas of education expanded to cover more and more dimensions of life. In higher education, fields covered move from a few matters of rather sacred significance down into more and more aspects of mundane life (Frank and Meyer 2020). Farming, forestry, and mining move into the university, as do many aspects of business life. Practical matters of engineering become relevant, and the university student can study the proper design of the kitchen or the toilet. In mass education, similarly, details of proper social life and interaction are now included, along with the niceties of high language and literature. Overall, it is difficult to think of dimensions of life that are not now schooled (Baker 2014).

2. Education had, and has, mostly universalistic meanings in its claims and its practical diffusion, and takes common forms around the world. Throughout its history, the idea of the university was commonly held across Christendom. It is now established across the whole world society (Frank and Meyer 2020). So universities could be assessed in general—and are now ranked as "world-class" in a surprisingly unitary way (Shin and Kehm 2012). Similarly, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) or International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) rankings on the subjects of mass education imply common conceptions of what education is.

In practice, this means that university curricula, evolving in Western Christendom and expanding around the world, have strikingly common features (Frank and Meyer 2020; Frank and Gabler 2006). Originally, theology and law (canon and civil) were central defining elements of what it meant to be a university, along with medicine and philosophy (of lower standing). With secularization, expansion, and diffusion around the world, philosophy expanded and differentiated to include the humanities and sciences. In the twentieth century—especially its last half—the social sciences expanded rapidly (Drori and Moon 2006). In all these cases, expansion was worldwide, so it is possible for any intellectual to read and understand the catalogue of courses for any university anywhere else (Frank and Meyer 2020). In contrast, the university's organizational structure varies sharply in tune with national political arrangements and is often opaque to outsiders (Clark 1983).

The same principle holds with mass education. Curricula and curricular change show strikingly common elements around the world, which explains why the fashionable tests can be employed on a widespread basis (Benavot et al. 1991; Kamens and McNeely 2010). Curricular patterns and plans can be communicated everywhere and discussed in international fora (Rosenmund 2006). Thirty percent of an elementary school curriculum would be devoted to national language(s). Foreign language (usually English, if that is not a national language) makes up an additional element. Mathematics might be fifteen percent (now increasingly including computer science), and science perhaps ten. Social science, shifting over the decades from history and geography toward civics and social studies, and sometimes including religion or moral education, might be another ten percent (Wong 1991). Art and music would usually be included. Occasionally practical training—for example, in hygiene—would be involved. The larger point is that essentially everything involved could be understood and probably enacted by a reasonably experienced educator anywhere in the world.

Obviously, when we move from institutionalized curricular patterns down to the specifics of practice, there are major disconnections. The term decoupling is used to reflect the great gaps between high policy, often attuned to global standards, and practice (Bromley and Powell 2012). The pretenses of the historical or contemporary university to universality are always at some distance from what can be approved or carried out in practice (e.g. Clark 2006). And in mass education, the claims of high curricular policy are likely to be very distant from the mundane capabilities of local teachers and students. In any case, a contemporary teacher, discussing major environmental or social problems, is unlikely to go into detail explaining to the students the sins of their parents, and indeed may identify more with these parents than with policymakers far off in the national capital. But up and down the line from policy to local practice almost all the participants aspire to notions of education as a high and universal enterprise. There are many claims to being different, but not to lie outside the global cultural canopy. Almost everywhere, it is intended that education be "for credit" and that its credits be widely accepted.

Interpreting Expansion from the Wrong End of the Telescope: The Economistic View

Education is now so firmly institutionalized that contemporary people take it for granted as a central and defining component of the life course. And given that contemporary society is reflexively analyzed in economic terms, education is seen as an economic commodity, variously profitable for the individual (lifetime income) and society (gross domestic product). Unfortunately, intellectual analysts of this situation take the same view, seeing education as produced and expanded by economic forces and as providing principally valuable effects. This is certainly now true of educational effects, as contemporary societies make it so by definition. They create certificational rules rewarding schooling, and build valued roles out of the knowledge legitimated by education. Serious performances by political or economic elites are properly made on the advice of penumbras of consultants following in the train of the nominal decisionmaker. Even ordinary people, assuming the modern posture of actorhood, require schooled advice of occupational, psychological, physical, mental, and familial therapists. The result is that education, whatever its utility, is valued and rewarded: it is a matter of political and cultural construction, and difficult to assess as a matter of narrowly "economic" value.

Beyond the constructed effects of education, a main thrust of the studies in this book is that the rise of education is a political and cultural matter more than a narrowly economic one. Even with all the economizing ideology in the field, economic development is not the core driving force, and the studies here provide a valuable corrective (see also Meyer et al. 1992; Schofer and Meyer 2005; and Ramirez and Boli 1987). The major international organizations supporting educational expansion focus on broad cultural development, though with regional variations (Chaps. 1, 5–8). Educational development itself historically has Western cultural roots and its forward movement varies with cultural contexts (Chaps. 1, 2, 5, and 9).

These processes reach down into the details of real life. Parents, for example, routinely prepare their children to participate in the cognitive development enterprises that are educationally central (Schaub 2010).

An older world, in which children are to be obedient and quiet, tends to disappear. Similarly, contemporary society is seen as an occupational arena for which education is crucial and required as an entry point, so that educational success is the central source of success and social status in life (Shavit et al. 2007).

All the rationalized social structure of a modern society tends now to be assessed in terms of a unified value scheme, heavily organized around a common currency. There is a tendency to think of it all, and measure it all, as if it were an economy. So people have "jobs," and go to "work" and "earn a living." They are entrants in a "labor market," and their individual and aggregate behavior can be assessed in terms of "productivity." Their behavior adds up to a national "gross domestic product." And with global integration it now adds up to a "world economic product." None of this language makes much substantive sense in describing modern professionalized occupational systems, far from what was once considered labor.

But it all tends to be seen as somehow economic in character, with nineteenth-century mental models of society as made up of producers of shoes and potatoes who engage in market exchanges around competitive prices. This poorly fits the contemporary developed world, and it makes less and less sense in the Third World. But it is the institutionalized fiction of the global public culture and its analysts.

In practice, modern societies are dominated, not by agricultural or industrial production, but by what is called the "service sector." Occupational positions are in mass and higher education, medical care, child care, recreation, social welfare, research, administration, and above all else all sorts of governmental activity. Most of this activity cannot reasonably be seen in classic terms as economic labor, jobs, work, or productivity. It is often seen as somehow professional, and this category of roles is central and rapidly expanding in most countries of the world. The definitions of work involved rely heavily on education. If, in the culture of modernity, an important but invisible "nothing" must be done, it is especially important that a properly schooled and certified person does it.

The contemporary misinterpretation of education as economic in origin and consequence leads to mistaken historical interpretations, as if economic forces lay behind the long-term explosion of schooling. But actual historical research dismisses such anachronistic theories, and the

studies in this book are true to the broad historical record. Both mass and elite education spread outward from the world's cultural core, but not particularly from economic centers. For instance, the great center of the industrial revolution—the United Kingdom—was by no means central in the spread of either elite or mass education. And within this polity, protestant Scotland was more advanced than England. Both looked up, in terms of public education, to Prussia (Smith 2021), by no means an economic center.

The long history of higher education starts with the medieval religious system, and religious aspects of the polity, not with economic arrangements. Education was, and in good part remains to this day, a secular parallel to religious salvation. In the nineteenth century, further secularization linked education to expanding individual citizenship, and nation-building exercises created further secular parallels between religion and nation-states (Ramirez and Boli 1987). Links between education and the economy really developed only, and modestly, in the early twentieth century, with the rise of business schools, of schooled managerialism, and modern rationalized organization (Moon and Wotipka 2006; Bromley and Meyer 2015). Only after World War II did this system expand into the contemporary scene in which the profane world of business is legitimated enough, and rationalized enough, to become securely linked to elevated schooling. Beyond the United States, failures of the first half the twentieth century exposed a weakened Europe to an American cultural invasion with its liberal (and later neoliberal) linkage of the private to the public good (Djelic 1998).

In the same postwar period, liberal dominance expanded to much of the noncommunist world, and with it educational systems were rapidly founded and grew. They were linked, both in ideology and in practice, to economic forces and economic growth. During the early part of this period, mass education came to be seen as central to economic productivity (Harbison and Myers 1964), and international organizations like the World Bank celebrated the linkage, as the chapters here note. Higher education was seen much more skeptically from an economic perspective, and growth was regarded with suspicion (e.g. Collins 1979; Boudon 1973). But with neoliberalism, and the valuation of the educationally

produced "knowledge society" higher education itself was redefined as a core source of economic growth (Stehr 1994; Nowotny et al. 2001).

The studies here develop a picture of education as having Western cultural roots and diffusing variably around the world, aided and hindered by cultural, not principally economic forces. This is a valuable contribution to a distorted literature.

The Human Right to Be Compelled to Go to School

The chapters of this book return again and again to a very distinctive and revealing feature of mass education around the world: it arises, expands, and diffuses not only as a general and standardized or unified value or practice, but as a compulsory institution (Chaps. 1–3, 9). All members of society of a certain age are required to participate. Early on, this is justified as in the collective good of religious society seen as a religious polity. With secularization, the ground shifted and it became an obligation of citizenship. Over the last two centuries, this obligation linked to citizenship remains, but in addition education increasingly is formulated as an individual right—first, a right of citizenship within the charismatic nation-state, and then (with the Education for All movement) a right of all human persons, and thus a claim against the whole world (Chabbott 2003).

The compulsory character of mass education indicates the extent to which education should be seen as both an individual and a collective good: it is the one basic right that is also an obligation. Further, it is seen as linked to universalistic cultural membership in modern society, not principally its differentiated role structure. This main theme of this book is thus reinforced by the standardized ubiquity, not only of education, but of *compulsory* education.

We can contrast this situation against several alternatives, each of which appears in partial form in education around the world.

1. A first alternative would be one in which education was a valued enterprise, and led to success in some domains, but not required of

everyone. This arrangement is common in agrarian societies and empires. The idea is that elites, or at least some political and religious elites, require education in core cultural elements and activities. Other elites, including economic ones, do not. And the masses of people, involved in rural or urban labor, certainly do not.

Education around the modern world runs beyond this model. Elites of various sorts certainly get more education than ordinary people, and the schooling involved varies from elite to elite—the requirements are less strict for business elites than professional ones. But the distinctive educational features of the contemporary model are that basic education is prescribed for everyone, and that even elites must pass through it. A schooled baseline of membership in society is thus generated. The distinctive world of compulsory education is a general world model, required of practically all: explaining the spread of this system is a focal theme of this book.

A basic theme of Western Christendom emphasizes that every proper member of the community has a soul requiring salvation, and thus that everyone should be baptized. Even infants could, via surrogates, thus acquire the faith—as part of the moral community seen as a congregation, not the restricted elite "society." With the Enlightenment "discovery of society," the whole principle is secularized in mass education and extended to all. The link to the nation-state means that the furthest and most marginal people must be educationally incorporated with zeal—the former peasants must become Frenchmen (Weber 1976). An old empire would not have worried so much about weak peripherals.

The chapters of this book, thus, focus less on the expansion of education as a practical enrollment matter, and attend to the expansion of the principle of compulsion. In authoritarian contexts, the compulsion is to produce conforming participation: in liberal ones, democratic participation. From the point of view of Foucault (1991), the two are very similar strategies of social control (Miller and Rose 2008). The same view is held by Friedenberg (1965), who sees the compulsory American secondary school as close to a prison of democracy. It is indeed a striking thing that contemporary societies, valuing the freedom of the individual, imprison the young who have done nothing wrong. It seems that the Western notion of original sin, extended even to infants and requiring their special

salvation through baptism, extends rather directly to compulsory education: ignorance is sin, secularized.

2. A second alternative to sweeping standardized compulsory education would be to tie education closely to the differentiated roles making up the modern society. This can be done by linking schooling to social origins, under the assumption that the young will enter society in the roles of their parents. One can imagine rules formalizing such arrangements. Historically, such patterns, formalized or not, are quite common, and education has been very differentially allocated to different social strata. Thus American states created distinct schools—or no schools—for black people. And in many contexts, rural children have very different educational rights and resources than urban ones. Similarly, historically, male and female students had different prospects.

The advocates of compulsory education historically attacked such arrangements in preference for democratic or undemocratic equality. Most of these patterns, seen as discriminatory, are treated in the contemporary world as unacceptable, and they are the object of much reform. Individual rights principles are globally established, and nationally rooted (in principle if not in practice). The human rights movement gives great attention to rights dimensions related to education (Elliott 2007, 2011, 2014; Stacy 2009; Lauren 2011), and the Education for All movement enters into the various contemporary lists of Millennium or Sustainable Development Goals.

3. A distinct alternative educational model relates variable schooling opportunities to the prospective future of the young person, rather than social background. This is less of a violation of egalitarian principles, though it often sorts students out in the same unequal way. Systems of this kind sort students depending on their prospects or choices: those going on to the university get academic training, while others may be prepared for apprentice training and working-class roles. These sorts of systems have been strong in the Germanic countries. They are historically admired as efficient, and criticized as inegalitarian—and given the global dominance of democratic ideologies, have tended to weaken over time in preference for comprehensive standardized compulsory education (Benavot 1983).

4. A special note must be made about the strange history of education for males and females. In many historical contexts, there is no explanatory problem. Schooling relates to forms of public status and authority that are reserved for males—clerical roles, and legal ones, in the West, for example. Arrangements of such sorts are common: gender roles link to educational differentiation. An evolved system with separate and usually unequal schooling for male and female students—often with somewhat differentiated curricula given the distinctive roles for which males and females are to be prepared—still might make a kind of functional sense.

A further evolution, with essentially similar training but in segregated schools, now characterizes a few parts of the Islamic world. But common forms of education, everywhere, are now integrated and coeducational, and have been for many years. This seems normal to moderns. But it is very odd, seen from economistic and functional points of view: if men and women are to play quite different occupational and familial roles in society—a normal understanding over the last two centuries—why are they schooled in such similar ways? Tyack and Hansot (1992) forcefully raise this question in their discussion of coeducation in historical American society. It is not well answered in the subsequent literature.

The answer is clearly that basic education is about membership in the modern society, seen as a sort of religious-like community. It is not about the particular roles people will play—jobs they will have, their distinct child-care roles, and so on throughout the differentiated society.

Over and over, the chapters here show this central point: the core role of compulsion, the cultural rather than economic or organizational character of global and regional policy structures, and the globally and regionally standardized character of the schooling impulse.

Institutions of Education as Supranational and Global

As an empirical matter, the spread of education is a world process. Some of this is a matter of international compulsion, with colonial domination creating (and restricting) schooling, or with postcolonial pressures from

world institutions. Much more has a voluntaristic quality, as national states see education as central to their own coherence. The theory or ideology of the modern nation-state makes education important: mass education as constructing, on the run, citizens out of people disparate in religion, ethnicity, and culture; universities as creating and staffing the apparatuses of a nation-state. With both mass and elite education, mimetic copying of standard forms was crucial.

First, constructing a national culture is a difficult business, and so is creating professionalized elites. Available forms, reflecting arrangements that have worked elsewhere, are of great use. None of us, for example, would be able to invent a nominally relevant local cultural template for a national system of criminal law. And while local educators might be able to create curricula adapted to a few specific aspects of the local ecology, they cannot create doctoral training programs out of whole cloth, or secondary school curricula for biology.

Second, given the weakness of most national status, and fragmentation of national cultural systems, legitimacy is a main problem. Highly developed educational forms in successful developed societies are much more likely to seem legitimate than particular structures with subgroup legitimacy in a fragmented Third World country. Students and parents are likely to have special respect for linguistic and cultural material validated in the global cores. In contrast, there can be great inconsistency and conflict in an attempt to formulate a definitive national language. It is easier to agree on what is English than on what is to be the official local language.

There is much direct copying, country to country, around the world, that reflects the old hierarchies of the colonial system (but note Chap. 2 and elsewhere), and the newer ones of current global stratification. The studies here suggest network relations structured by region, cultural background, and development level (Chaps. 1, 2, and 5–9). Future research could examine, beyond state-to-state linkages, the effects of professional networks. These have elaborated enormously in recent decades, and over and above national influences integrate world ideologies of what it means to teach history or biology in mass or higher education. A good First-World university could, with little difficulty, generate complete curricula for a needy Third World one: some of them, it seems, do.

Thus, the models put forward in world centers—established aid programs from leading countries, professional communities, and so on—are likely to serve as models for policy if not practice, in weaker contexts.

Beyond nation-to-nation ties, policies legitimated in major international organizations are likely to have even more official standing. The studies in this book give special attention to such fora: country ties may reflect common immersion in international organizational communities. These are of great interest in codifying the world educational culture that helps drive expansion everywhere.

The studies here suggest that some international organizations focus on economic development as a core purpose of education. As one might expect, the World Bank thinks in this way. But the major observation (Chaps. 5 and 9) is that even the international organizations focused on development give much attention to education as a matter of broad individual and cultural development, not training for particular (e.g. economic or occupational) roles. And the regional organizations studied here focus even more on cultural matters—in partial reaction to a liberal and Western global culture (Chaps. 7 and 8). Interestingly, these organizations, while in part reactive, seem not to formulate core aspects of mass or elite education as unacceptable. They advocate difference, but not direct opposition.

Conclusion

The studies here address the global diffusion of education—a dramatic worldwide change. They address the long-term and worldwide character of the change, and the international organizations that now manage and promote it. These are principally modern, though the old colonial empires provided some structuration (the current effects of which appear empirically to be moderate). They especially attend to the network of international relationships along which education diffused historically. Chains of power and culture formulated patterns that still operate, now in part through regional organizations.

Along the way, the studies show, the pattern of diffusion changes, and diffusion changes the pattern. Originally Western, what we now call

education (both mass and elite) spreads depending on cultural areas of the world—faster in closer peripheries, slower in more separate and independent ones. Over time, the regional differences crystallize with distinctive regional organizations—a focus of several chapters here (particularly Chaps. 7 and 8).

Looking to a future in which the liberal Western-centered global order is less hegemonic, we might speculate that along with continued diffusion of global standardization, sharper oppositions might arise. Models around the world might be formulated in explicit codifications of criticism of global models as Western, Christian, and/or American, and reflecting hegemony rather than universal understandings. As such forms of consciousness spread, we may expect a slowing of global diffusion, perhaps accompanied by the intensification of regional ones. The studies of this book certainly suggest that network patterns, which obviously drive diffusion, can also change or transform it.

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11

Isomorphism, 'Cultural Spheres', and Education Systems: A Brief Summary and Concluding Remarks

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Introduction[1]

In this chapter, we present an overview of the empirical results presented in this volume. We begin with a summary of our theoretical arguments and research design in the subsequent section of this chapter. We argue in

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favor of a combination of sociological neo-institutionalism with a concept of global cultural diversity. In our view, culture might be an important moderator of the global diffusion and institutionalization of both education systems and guiding principles of education. We briefly summarize the results of our analyses and juxtapose results and theoretical arguments. Since our results cover various aspects of global education and the theoretical arguments potentially allow a variety of different predictions, we also discuss whether the results are *overall* in line or in contradiction to these arguments.

In our view, the empirical results corroborate the theoretical assumptions of neo-institutionalism. At the same time, cultural diversity and cultural difference do indeed play a crucial role in moderating the diffusion process of Western educational institutions, ideational frames, and leitmotifs. In the concluding section of this chapter, we give an outlook for future research and argue that research on global education should take up the challenge and develop more sophisticated concepts of global culture, that are accessible to measurement and to relational methods of social network analysis, dimensional analysis, typology building, and classification.

Recapturing the Theoretical Approach and Research Design

Our theoretical concept follows sociological neo-institutionalism (Meyer and Rowan 1977; Meyer et al. 1997). In this perspective, institutions structure our taken-for-granted knowledge and our social order. During the transition into modernity, modern rational institutions became highly efficient bureaucracies and require appropriately educated and specialized administrative staff. Once established, these rational and bureaucratic institutions seem to take on a life of their own; rationalization became self-perpetuating and self-reinforcing. Citizens adapted to following the formalized rules, where the administrative staff operates in an "iron cage" (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) or "steel-hard casing" (Weber 1972) of depersonalization and dehumanization. A "caste" of managers,

civil servants, and functionaries has monopolized political and economic power. Yet, this form of social order allows the organization of knowledge, science, and technology in a highly efficient way. The same is true for the economy and military. Following this, modern capitalism and bureaucracies tend to spread over the world. Most International Organizations (IOs) also show these institutional characteristics, so countries that aim to become acknowledged members of these IOs tend to adapt their own institutional structures—at least as a performative act of "myth and ceremony" (Meyer and Rowan 1977). These processes recently became obvious in terms of expansion of higher education and its effect on core characteristics of a society, for example, the rationalization of society and state, social and political mobilization as well as global integration by membership in IOs (Schofer et al. 2021).

There is considerable empirical evidence on the globalization of rational institutions, in particular with respect to education (Meyer et al. 1992). This evidence corroborates the basic idea of neo-institutionalism. Indeed, Western modern rational and bureaucratic organizations tend to spread around the world. Even the fact that adopting an institution occurs just at the "front stage" (Goffman 1959) in some countries, while their actual performance follows traditional routines and practices, is in line with the theory. It seems that these countries simply do have to play along with the game. They need to acquire legitimacy in the IOs they are a member in but also in their domestic population.

In our research, we started from sociological neo-institutionalism and enhanced the argument with a stronger focus on global cultural diversity. Max Weber already noticed the spread of Western rational culture and bureaucratic institutions around the globe, and he was interested in how different cultures related to rationalization (Weber 1972). These cultures developed along the lines of different religious views of the world and the afterworld. According to Weber, Protestant sects in Europe and North America and their specific theological approach to the problem of the theodicy initiated the cultural development toward rationalization, which is why Weber used the term "occidental rationalism". The occidental culture took a very specific developmental path. Modern Western individualism, capitalism, and means–ends rationality was not necessarily appreciated in other cultural traditions. As studies in anthropology on

trade and exchange (Mauss 1967; Fiske 1991, chp. 14) and recent interpretations of the history of economic thinking suggest, regarding "markets as morality-free zones" (Bowles 2017, 25) is rather inappropriate to human nature (Turner 2021, 110, 183). Yet, this is exactly what happens in today's highly dynamic markets, particularly in financial markets and stock exchanges. Another example of the difference between culture as a legitimizing foundation of bureaucratic authority and both the legal state as well as societies based on lineages as the fundamental units of social organization is the response toward rectification of transgressions. Modern institutions operate *sine ira et studio*, without particular social obligations and emotions (Weber 1972, 129). In contrast, in societies based upon kinship there is a much lower tendency to accept a punishment executed by a nonmember of one's kin group: "Punishment by a nonmember of a member's misbehavior may itself be considered a transgression requiring rectification or inviting retaliation" (Bowles 2017, 141). Social order based on extended kinship groups was historically the norm rather than the exception, also in the northern countries, for example, Scotland and Ireland (Weiner 2013), and are comparatively important even today in some cultures (Haidt 2012; Inglehart 2018, 81–82). After the occidental rationalism became unleashed in the West, however, capitalism and institutionalized bureaucracies emerged in an astonishingly short historical period. Positive aspects of this development are enlightenment, progress in science and technology as well as civil rights and liberties at an unprecedented scale (Pinker 2018), at least for citizens in Western democracies. The flipside of the coin implies bureaucratically organized atrocities (Bauman 1989), mass exploitation, and environmental deterioration. Consequently, anthropologists recently described the highly individualistic European and North American culture as WEIRD (western, educated, industrialized, resourceful, democratic) (Schulz et al. 2019; Henrich 2020). Specific moral orientations come along with this WEIRD culture. Moral emotions are triggered by the evaluation of actions in six dimensions of what Haidt calls the "moral matrix", and the relative weight of each dimension of this matrix considerably differs across cultures. The WEIRD "liberal moral matrix" puts substantial weight on the dimensions of care–harm, liberty–oppression, and fairness–cheating. In contrast, loyalty–betrayal, authority–subversion, and

sanctity–degradation, which are quite important, for example, in India (Haidt 2012, 121–22), are not valued high, if not even rejected (Haidt 2012, 351).

Given these considerable average differences in cultural orientations between the WEIRD culture and other cultures (Henrich 2020, chap. 6), why should there be an undamped diffusion of Western institutions? If the legitimacy of such institutions requires specific cultural conditions, it will be likely that different cultures moderate the speed of the diffusion process, even if the process itself is hard to impede. This might hold especially in the institutional field of education because of its crucial role in the intergenerational reproduction of culture.

We developed our concept of 'cultural spheres' based on existing cultural typologies that suggest a wide-ranging set of characteristics for a country's culture. In our standardized analyses, our methodological approach was to recode cultural characteristics into binary variables and to generate a two-mode network of cultural proximity. In so doing, we extracted fuzzy-set clusters of global cultures from the data. Moreover, analyzing documents on educational issues and programs published by IOs, we combined standardized and nonstandardized methods of text analysis. In addition to the macro-quantitative approach, which included most countries in the world, our qualitative research design is based on a 2 × 2 table. One dimension was 'derivative vs. dedicated' IOs; the second dimension was whether these organizations were open to any state or restricted by specific criteria, such as geographical position or religion (Windzio and Martens 2021).

We analyzed whether the valued network of cultural proximity had an influence on the diffusion of compulsory education, whether there are different trajectories of adjusting the length of compulsory education and whether globalization affects the performance of secondary education systems. Moreover, we investigated regional clusters in the OECD discourse on education, which differ according to similarity in economic and cultural conditions. Using qualitative methods, we checked similarities and differences in ideational framing of the education purpose in four selected IOs, what kind of ideational framing the SEAMEO and the ICESCO apply, both of which are not universalistic organizations, and

whether we find different frames when we analyze these documents using standardized methods of text analysis.

Summarizing Empirical Results in the Light of the Theory

The chapters collected in our volume focus on various issues but are integrated by our theoretical framework outlined in Chap. 1. Each of the nine empirical chapters presents empirical results related to our theoretical framework.

Chapter 2 investigates diffusion of compulsory education from 1789 to 2010 and shows that there are strong and consistent effects of similarity in the cultural spheres network, whereas there is no effect of ties in the network of colonial legacies. Moreover, the cultural clusters 'WEIRD' and 'Catholic, Spanish-speaking', but also 'Eastern Europe' show much higher adoption rates than 'dominantly Muslim' countries, or countries that are 'not dominantly Muslim African/East Asian'. Since GDP per capita and levels of democratization have been controlled in this analysis, results indicate that cultural similarity does matter in the diffusion process. The five cultural spheres we extracted from the data by using two-mode network analysis do indeed show considerably different inclinations to adopt compulsory education. State organized compulsory education originated in Europe and Western countries, then quickly spread among 'Catholic, Spanish-speaking', and 'Eastern European' countries. The cultural spheres of 'dominantly Muslim' and 'not dominantly Muslim African/East Asian' countries lagged behind in this process. And this is what we expected according to our theory. Transferring important tasks to the state and public institutions and thereby exposing your children to a more or less standardized curriculum and giving them access to literacy and mass communication might accelerate the process of individualization and thereby could support the 'Westernization' of culture and society. Moreover, the role of the state in the Islamic tradition could be different from the Western tradition. Certainly, imposing *shari'a* law on the society or regarding the state as a caliphate where the leader's

government should work on the realization of a divine law and order is close to the ideology of Islamism rather than Islam (Tibi 1994, 2012). However, it " is likely that many mainstream Muslims would theoretically welcome a renewal of the caliphate, but feel that it is not for them to bring this about" (Silverstein 2010, 75). Silverstein's speculation can prove false, but one reason why states in Muslim countries were comparatively weak in history, although at the same time often authoritarian, could be that interpretations of Qur'an and the Sunna by Muslim scholars did indeed suggest a kind of divine order (Tibi 1994). There are plenty of Surahs in the Qur'an related to educational goals and practices (Antes 1991, 70–71). If religious education in Qur'anic schools provided basic literacy, the religious tradition was perhaps a good alternative and to some degree a substitute for state-regulated compulsory education.

There are also huge intra-cultural differences in the sequences on the durations of compulsory schooling, as presented in Chap. 3. Interestingly, the cluster 'Catholic, Spanish-speaking' has comparatively long durations, but it is due to an overall trend to introduce compulsory preprimary education. In contrast, WEIRD countries tend to hold back from implementing such policies, even though these policies are propagated by the UNESCO. Clustering according to the sequences of length of compulsory education reveals that cluster 2 'stagnant short' (N = 28) consists of mainly Arabic and African countries, but there is no clear distinction with respect to cultural spheres when the clustering is based on the sequences. However, there is a correspondence between cluster membership and gender rights: in the cluster 'Long and extending', where the duration of compulsory education is comparatively long, but nevertheless still extending, the mean value of the gender rights scale are highest, whereas it is lowest in the cluster 'Late and stagnant'. Hence, there might be a correspondence between culture and duration of compulsory education, since gender rights or the tendency toward their absence, is an important aspect of the so-called honor cultures, which include segmentary lineages or patriarchal clans (Nisbett and Cohen 1996; Basáñez 2016; Henrich 2020, 283).

A further question was whether globalization has an impact on the performance of secondary education systems. The influence of IOs on domestic education policies has been clearly shown in previous studies

(Martens et al. 2014), but it is not yet clear whether the actual performance is affected by globalization. In our study, we used global trade, global migration, and global student mobility as indicators of globalization. We measured each of these dimensions as networks and thereby captured recent ideas about globalization in a rather direct manner. In Chap. 4, we applied a model for network evolution that is able to separate the effects of *selection* into a particular network tie from the *influence* these ties have on actor attributes, in our case, on the performance of a country's secondary education system. Nonetheless, our empirical results did not illustrate a significant selection of network ties according to similarity in PISA scores or rankings, nor any effect from social influence. This is an interesting result when considering the background of the responsiveness of some countries to the results of the PISA study (Martens et al. 2014). Rankings published by the OECD had considerable effects and triggered intensive debates in some countries. Surely, the top-down influence by 'naming and shaming' and by benchmarking the performance of education systems is a different mechanism than horizontal interdependencies via networks of trade, migration, and student mobility. Nevertheless, this is what we would expect according to the theories of globalization: the stronger the interconnectedness of countries, the stronger are the lateral influences in the world system. If this argument is still correct, then our results indicate that it depends on the respective dimension of the network in which countries are tied to each other. At least we can conclude that the three network dimensions investigated in our study do not influence educational performance, despite the policy changes triggered by global actors, such as the OECD. Perhaps our results also indicate that the implementation of policy reforms is at times rather a performative act (Steiner-Khamsi 2012) and 'myth and ceremony' (Meyer and Rowan 1977).

Chapter 5 focused on the four major IOs, the World Bank, OECD, UNESCO, ILO, and their ideational framing of education. The World Bank now acknowledges the limits of a liberal market model but its traditional economic paradigm is still present. The OECD follows a twofold education leitmotif, namely, the individual benefit and a better quality of life due to education, but also better employability and higher wages. However, the states are supposed to also benefit from the overall increase

in education due to economic prosperity. The UNESCO does not neglect the economic consequences of education, but addresses the improvement of people's living conditions, a better inclusion of marginalized groups, reducing poverty, and improving social justice and social cohesion. The leitmotifs of the ILO became more diverse over time as well. Originally, the ILO managed labor markets and employability, but now also covers equal opportunities and social cohesion, even though the improvement for individual workers' conditions is still considered highly important. The most important result of this comparative analysis is the tendency toward *integrative* ideas. Whereas these organizations formerly dealt with different issues—World Bank and OECD with economic growth; UNESCO and ILO with quality of employment, social issues, quality of life, and social cohesion—these issues seem now to converge toward more integrative concepts. In our view, if there is some commonsense about the importance of particular issues, in this case, social justice and the improvement of life, they become institutionalized expectations in the social environment of the organizations so that it becomes almost impossible to ignore these issues. Proponents of new institutionalism may not be surprised by this result.

Chapter 6 investigates the references in OECD publications. References to European countries seem to be more prevalent compared with references to non-European countries. Certainly, this has to do with the fact that most OECD countries are European. However, references occur quite often within regional clusters, even though European countries, mainly Finland and Germany, receive most references. So, the "Westernization of education is just as much a Finlandization, a Europeanization, or even a 'localization' of education policy" (Chap. 6 in this volume). It has been shown in previous research that Finland, as the best performer in the PISA 2000, did set the mark for many countries, whose representatives tried to learn about Finland's education system (Martens et al. 2014). Once a particular Finnish strategy has been identified as effective for success and entered public discourse, for instance, the inclusion of anybody (Herrmann 2020), it is hardly possible not to consider its adoption.

Chapters 7 and 8 analyze the educational leitmotifs of the SEAMEO and the ICESCO as regional or cultural specific IOs. The Islamic IO on

education, ICESCO, and its partner organizations ALESCO and ABEGS, are aware of the fact that high-quality education is of crucial importance in international relations and for global economic and political competition. Nevertheless, the ICESCO puts particular emphasis on the preservation of the cultural and spiritual roots of its member countries, almost all of which are dominantly Muslim, and these issues rank much higher than in other regional organizations. Islamic educational IOs perform the balancing act of acknowledging their embeddedness into global markets, on the one hand, and considering "Westernized" education an impediment to the spread and proliferation of Islamic cultural roots, on the other hand. The influence of the Islamic tradition and philosophy is obvious in many documents. These IOs have their own distinct ideas on education and follow their own educational leitmotifs, without neglecting, however, the requirements of inclusion into global markets and the world system. Accordingly, these results are in line with the idea of 'cultural spheres' that moderate the diffusion of Western institutions, rationality and culture, even though there is no serious alternative to the adoption of institutionalized education in general and in the long run. In a similar way, the SEAMEO emphasizes traditional norms and cultural values of the particular regional context of their member states and is at the same time interested in economic and developmental benefits of global markets and the integration into the world system. The two studies in Chaps. 7 and 8 reveal the tension between the worldwide institutionalization of Western culture and rationality, which dominates global markets and many important and powerful IOs, on the one hand, and the countries' own particular local or religious cultural orientations, on the other hand. To some degree, our results even indicate resistance of some cultures in the world against the expansion of the WEIRD cultural model.

Our mixed-methods approach to the analysis of ideational framings and leitmotifs of education enabled us to enhance the political view and to contrast the results of the qualitative studies with results from standardized text analysis. Analyzing more than 1,600 documents published by six IOs, namely, the ILO, World Bank, OECD, UNESCO, ICESCO, and SEAMEO, Chap. 9 shows that these various IOs focus on different topics in the field of education. IOs restricted in membership tend to

focus on their particular topics, which is Islam for the ICESCO and issues concerning the Southeast Asian world region for SEAMEO. In contrast, the OECD focuses more on universal issues related to education, higher education, and the economy. Moreover, also the heterogeneity of topics differs enormously between these IOs. Why the most prevalent three topics of the respective organization cover between a fourth and a half of their overall topics, the SEAMEO devotes a major part of its communication (78.6%) just to one topic, namely, "development, SE Asia". The same holds for the ICESCO, but to a lesser degree: the ICESCO concentrates 54.7% of its overall communication covered by our 70 topics on "Islam, culture and the state". These results fit quite well to the qualitative document analyses in Chaps. 7 and 8. We also found that the UNESCO communicates around 7% of its overall communication (covered by our 70 topics) to the issue "Islam, culture and the state". At first sight, this seems to be surprising since the UNESCO is a universalistic IO, dedicated to education and has no restrictions in membership. Maybe, this result reflects an attempt of the UNESCO to cover particular interests of its member states and in so doing, the UNESCO has to acknowledge global cultural diversity. Indeed, culture is one of the major fields in which this IO is highly active.

Overall, our results are in line with our theoretical assumptions. First, institutionalized education is considered highly important by IOs who focus their activities on cultural or regional contexts. Education is essential for countries to compete on global markets and to participate in global trade. The more the postindustrial modes of production and consumption are globalized, the more important education becomes on a global scale. Surely, globalization entails competition between states in the field of education (Wallerstein 2004). If competition was the major stimulus of why countries institutionalize education, however, it would be difficult to explain why countries sometimes adopt these institutions just at the 'front stage' (Goffman 1959), as a 'myth and ceremony' (Meyer and Rowan 1977), or a 'performative act' (Steiner-Khamsi 2012). Moreover, why would the regional or cultural specific IOs put such a strong emphasis on the preservation of their regional or religious traditions? Instead, neo-institutionalism argues that once a practice is institutionalized as taken-for-granted, it becomes increasingly difficult for

countries to refuse to adopt it, even though they adopt it at the 'front stage' in order to gain legitimacy. In this regard, neo-institutionalism is certainly correct at the global scale, where there is a considerable *pull* toward adopting educational institutions.

But, if the global spread of educational institutions is also fostered by universalistic and dedicated IOs, why then do regional and culturally specific IOs exist at all? IOs, such as the SEAMEO and the ICESCO, make particularistic claims and develop particularistic programs. In their view, their missions seem to not be covered by universalistic IOs, e.g. by the World Bank or the UNESCO. Their particularism indicates the existence of forces working against Western-dominated isomorphism in the field of education. Since education is strongly linked to the intergenerational reproduction of culture, it is not surprising that forces working against global diffusion and isomorphism reside in what we have called 'cultural spheres'. This conclusion fits well to recent studies highlighting the increasing importance of identity—ethnic, religious, cultural or political—during the last decades (Tibi 2012; Fukuyama 2018). Empirical findings pointing to the 'performative act' of adoption (Steiner-Khamsi 2012) are of particular interest because they integrate both perspectives: on the one hand, countries must somehow become active and address institutional innovation propagated by influential IOs. Otherwise, they do not acquire legitimacy, neither at the level of the global state system organized within the IOs nor in their domestic population and electorate. On the other hand, they do not fully acquire these institutions and keep operating in their traditional way on the 'back stage'. This argument highlights that the two theoretical perspectives outlined in the introduction of this volume—isomorphism and cultural spheres—do not contradict but rather complement each other.

We are well aware that a systematic inclusion of the concept of culture in international comparative education studies is far from being trivial (Anderson-Levitt 2012). It is indeed like "nailing the pudding to the wall", as the German political scientist Max Kaase argued with reference to the concept of political culture (Kaase 1983). However, disciplines such as cultural psychology, anthropology (Henrich et al. 2010), and cultural comparative sociology (Inglehart 2018; Norris and Inglehart 2011) have recently improved their theoretical concepts and empirical

measurements of culture (Mohr et al. 2019). Analytically, therefore, we should not hesitate to systematically include culture in our studies—we should simply accept the challenge and account more systematically for one of the core concepts in sociology and anthropology.

In addition, we are also aware that integrating culture in the social science studies can cause quite a stir from a normative and political-activist perspective. It is important to note that analyzing cultural differences does not necessarily imply a negative valuation of other cultures. This is an important lesson to be learned from cultural psychology (Shweder 2003). Certainly, the editors of this volume are born and socialized in post-1968 Germany, so part of our identity is shaped by the WEIRD culture. Both of us do highly appreciate civil liberties, personal freedom, equality, egalitarian gender roles, democracy, social security, and a well-functioning legal state—we are even in the comfortable situation of being able to take all this for granted. If persons adhere to liberal-democratic values, they would like to see these values realized for other people in the world, if they desire these values as well. So do we.

But being shaped by a particular culture and adhering to particular values should not come along with imposing this culture and values to others. As Haidt argues, if actors observe moral transgressions they respond with emotions generated by neuronal processes. Which kind of transgression triggers such a response is to a considerable part 'hard-wired'. All mentally healthy people are empathic and generate negative emotions when they see people suffering (Haidt 2012, 72–75). Another part of our responses toward moral transgression, however, results from cultural factors and cognitive judgments (Shweder 2003, 36–37). Maybe, it will never be possible "to draw a sharp line between, on the one hand, emotions whose manifestation is organized by the generative templates in the human brain and, on the other, emotions whose arousal by neurological and body systems is regulated by socially constructed rules" (Turner 2000, 131), but this distinction is nevertheless important. For many people from secular WEIRD cultures, the moral dimension 'sanctity-degradation' is not important, whereas not respecting sanctity is regarded as a serious transgression by many people, for example, in India (Haidt 2012, 121–122, 173). Who are we to say that the emotional response of moral disgust is inappropriate when observing such a

transgression? Not respecting or even denying Indians' moral emotions would be Eurocentric. Cultural moral psychology has shown that to some degree the moral matrix in other cultures differs from ours. It is definitely a virtue, not only for scientists, to recognize this difference and to put our own moral matrix into perspective. In a global view, we are rather WEIRD than the norm. This does not mean relativism if we adhere to liberal-democratic and egalitarian values and argue in favor of them. Yet, given the historical evolution of the WEIRD culture, it is not surprising that other cultures differ from us. And these differences are an interesting subject to scientific inquiry.

Outlook for Future Research

In this volume, we analyzed different "Global Pathways to Education" and focused on cultural spheres, networks, and international organizations as explanatory variables. We started from a combination of theoretical insights that originate from sociological neo-institutionalism and the comparative analysis of global cultures. We assume that our approach is innovative and could contribute to the further development of neo-institutionalism.

Moreover, the research methods applied in this volume are innovative. Our methods range from qualitative document analysis, macro-quantitative longitudinal analysis, social network analysis, sequence analysis, and standardized text analysis. Future research could further elaborate on our theory-driven multi-methods perspective. Thereby, the set of IOs analyzed in this volume could be enhanced as well. Currently, we have identified 30 active IOs in the field of education. Of course, such a considerable extension of the number of IOs is a challenge, particularly for qualitative analyses. But also, the standardized methods of text analysis require an accountable selection and collection of documents and their preparation (adaption of formats, deletion of stop words, word stemming) comes with a considerable workload. Nevertheless, the classification of IOs in the dimensions of dedicated versus derivative and open versus restricted seems to be fruitful. Thus, it is worth to put even more

effort into the analysis of regional or culturally specific IOs compared with universalistic IOs, such as the World Bank, ILO, or the UNESCO.

Obviously, the cultural clusters resulting from our two-mode social network analysis depend on the respective cultural characteristics we included in the analysis. Also, extending or changing this set of characteristics would change the results. Therefore, we should think about collecting more data on global cultures. Moreover, future research should systematically account for the consequences of education policy in different cultural spheres and their populations. Individual level data, as provided, for example, by the World Value Survey, can be used to refine our typology of cultures (Basáñez 2016; Inglehart 2018). Moreover, this data also includes information on respondents' education, labor market integration, but also on, for example, gender role orientations and the inclusion of females into education. This information should be used in future studies in order to assess the actual, micro-level consequences of education policies in different cultural spheres.

Finally, in addition to the collection of more data on the introduction of particular policies, the network diffusion analysis should be systematically extended to continuous variables. These variables could be, for example, the share of female students in primary, secondary, and higher education, or the share of migrants and minorities relative to the overall population, by defining thresholds and the discrete event of adoption by crossing the respective threshold (Meyer et al. 1992).

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