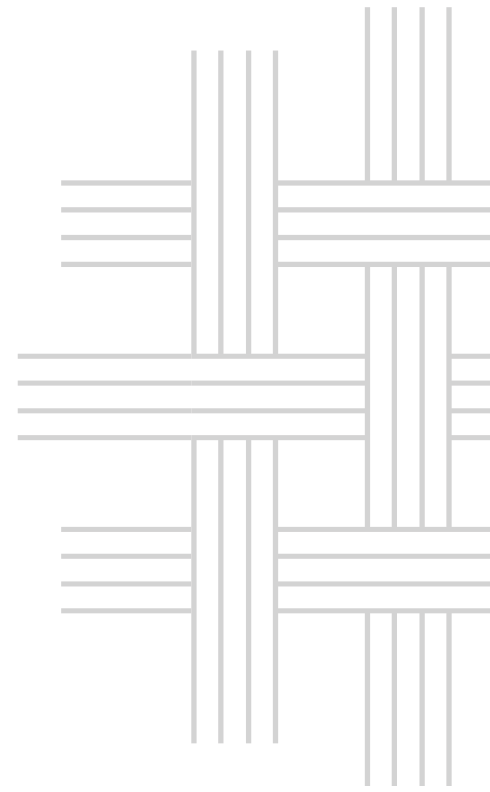Inland Norway
University of
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Faculty of Education

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PhD Dissertation

Teacher autonomy and teacher agency in an accountability context

A comparative study in Norway and Brazil

Ph.d.-avhandlinger i profesjonsrettede lærerutdanningsfag
PhD Dissertation in Teaching and Teacher Education

Ana Lucia Lennert da Silva

Teacher autonomy and teacher agency in an accountability context: a comparative study in Norway and Brazil

PhD Thesis

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Abstract

This study addresses teacher autonomy and teacher agency in public lower-secondary schools in one Latin American country (Brazil) and one European country (Norway) that have different models of educational governance based on the implementation of test-based accountability systems.

This study employs semi-structured interviews and secondary data to investigate teachers' perspectives, and document analysis of curriculum policy to investigate the accountability context in which teachers' work.

Theoretically, this study draws on literature concerning teacher autonomy and teacher agency to investigate teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and responses to policy. This study also applies institutional logics to describe the context of accountability in which teachers are situated.

The findings show national actors interacting with the accountability logic to adapt this logic to national contexts. In addition, the findings show teachers engaging with the logic of accountability to make meaning of their actions in their local contexts of practice.

Further, the findings show that the relationship between teacher autonomy and teacher agency in educational contexts marked by accountability is not necessarily linear. First, teachers perceive that they have autonomy to decide on their teaching and planning at the classroom level irrespective of models of educational governance. However, teachers report that they do not participate often in professional collaboration in schools. Professional collaboration may allow for collegial teacher autonomy or decision-making at the school level. Teachers also report low perceived social value and policy influence. These two factors may provide insight into professional teacher autonomy in which teachers are able to influence the framings of the profession at the policy level.

Second, despite educational systems of strong state control that restrict teacher autonomy, teachers are able to achieve agency by using reflexivity and creativity to define their own practices in the interest of students and learning. In this sense, teachers may be policy adopters, but they also can adapt and translate accountability policy to their local situations, although bounded by their contexts.

Sammendrag

Denne studien undersøker læreres autonomi og aktørskap i offentlige ungdomsskoler i et latinamerikansk land (Brasil) og et europeisk land (Norge) som har forskjellige modeller for styring av utdanning basert på implementering av testbaserte ansvarliggjøringssystemer.

I studien blir det anvendt semistrukturerte intervjuer og sekundære data for å undersøke lærernes perspektiver i tillegg til dokument analyse av læreplanpolitikk for å undersøke ansvarliggjøring av lærernes arbeid.

Det teoretiske grunnlaget for studien er forsking og teorier om læreres autonomi og aktørskap for å undersøke deres oppfatning av sin autonomi og reaksjoner på utdanningspolitikk. Videre brukes det i studien også institusjonell teori for å analysere konteksten for ansvarliggjøring der lærerne befinner seg.

Funnene viser at nasjonale aktører interagerer med ansvarliggjøringslogikken for å tilpasse denne logikken til nasjonale kontekster. I tillegg viser funnene at lærere engasjerer seg i denne logikken for å gi mening til handlingene sine i deres lokale kontekster.

Videre viser funnene at forholdet mellom lærerautonomi og aktørskap i pedagogiske kontekster preget av ansvarliggjøring ikke nødvendigvis er lineært. For det første oppfatter lærerne at de har autonomi til å bestemme undervisning og planlegging på klasseromsnivå, uavhengig av modeller for styring av utdanning. Lærere rapporterer imidlertid at de deltar i liten grad i profesjonelt samarbeid på skolene, noe som kan gi lite rom for kollegial lærerens autonomi eller beslutningstaking på skolenivå. Lærere rapporterer også at de oppfatter lav sosial verdi og politisk innflytelse, noe som kan gi innsikt i profesjonelle læreres autonomi der lærere er i stand til å påvirke profesjonsrammer på politisk nivå.

For det andre er lærerne i stand til å oppnå aktørskap til tross for utdanningssystemer med sterk statlig kontroll som begrenser lærernes autonomi, ved å reflektere og være kreativ for å definere sin egen praksis i interesse av studenter og læring. I denne forstand kan lærere være politikk adoptere, men de kan også tilpasse og oversette ansvarliggjøringspolitikk til sine lokale situasjoner, selv om de er avgrenset av sine kontekster.

Acnowledgments

This accomplishment would not have been possible without you all. Thank you!

Ana Lucia Lennert da Silva

Hamar, August 2021

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Chapter 1. Introduction

In this study, I investigate teacher autonomy and teacher agency in different educational contexts from teachers' perspectives by means of semi-structured interviews and secondary data I view accountability as an institutional logic in which teachers are situated, comprising symbolic, material, and social construction aspects (Thornton et al., 2012). I investigate accountability through document analysis of curriculum policy documents.

The study's contexts are public lower-secondary schools in one Latin American (Brazil) and one European (Norway) country that have different models of educational governance based on the implementation of test-based accountability systems (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

Theoretically, I draw on literature concerning teacher autonomy and teacher agency to investigate teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and responses to policy in the context of educational accountability. I also apply institutional logics to describe the context of accountability in which teachers are embedded.

The concepts of teacher autonomy and teacher agency have some overlap, but they also have different analytical potentials (Erss, 2018). I decided to invest in these differences by using the concept of teacher autonomy to explore how teachers perceive their scope of decision-making and action in relation to state governance (Frostenson, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017; Wermke et al., 2019). In addition, I use the concept of teacher agency to investigate teachers' perceptions of what they do with the scope of decision-making and action that they perceive they have (Erss, 2018). It is important to highlight that teachers' perceptions are influenced by both structural conditions in which they are embedded and teachers' individual capacities, which are based on their personal and professional values, beliefs, and experiences (Erss, 2018; Priestley et al., 2012, 2015; Biesta et al., 2017).

Teacher autonomy and teacher agency are important concepts to be addressed in the contemporary educational scenario. First, some studies have indicated that teacher autonomy has been contrived by educational accountability (see Chapter 2), which affects teachers' sense of self-efficacy, job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment (Pearson & Moomaw,

2005; Winter et al., 2006; Wright et al., 2018), and, by extension, teaching practices and students' learning (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007; Wermke et al., 2019). Second, research literature has shown that teachers' responses to accountability policy can vary from compliance to disengagement and resistance (see Chapter 2). These responses indicate that teachers are not only policy adopters, as many studies have indicated, but also policy shapers who adapt and translate accountability policy to their local situations, although bounded by their contexts (Smaller, 2015).

I chose to focus on teachers' perspectives based on the recognition that global ideas vary according to particular contexts (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). I also acknowledge that there is a dialectic at work between the global and the local through which global forces interact with national and local actors and contexts to be modified and transformed (Arnove, 2013).

In this sense, this study accommodates some level of convergence by studying educational accountability as a global institutional logic that influences national and local actors and contexts. In addition, this study addresses divergence by exploring national and local actors engaging and changing this logic according to local particularities.

The next sections provide the aim and research questions of this study. After that, this chapter describes the study's contexts. Finally, it concludes with the outline of this extended abstract.

1.1. Purpose and research questions

This study addresses teacher autonomy and teacher agency in different educational contexts marked by accountability. The research questions are:

- How do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers perceive their autonomy in an accountability context?
- How do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers respond to accountability policy?

This study is a comparative investigation comprising three articles published in academic journals. The research conducted in this study offers knowledge into how teachers perceive their autonomy and achieve agency in different educational settings marked by accountability. To investigate this topic, I interviewed Brazilian and Norwegian lower-secondary teachers, used secondary data, and examined policy documents. Table 1.1 offers an overview of the research aims, data sources, and the main findings of the three articles.

Table 1.1. Overview of research aims, data sources, and main findings of the three articles

Articles	Article 1	Article 2	Article 3
	Teacher autonomy and teacher agency: a comparative study in Brazilian and Norwegian lower-secondary education	National curriculum policy in Norway and Brazil: translations of the global accountability logic	Comparing teacher autonomy in different models of educational governance
Aims	The goal is to explore established theory on teacher autonomy and teacher agency, using empirical data gathered in a comparative study between one European and one Latin American country.	The aim is to study how national curriculum policy adopts accountability as a global logic promoted by the OECD.	The aim is to compare teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in different models of educational governance.
Data sources	Semi-structured interviews with teachers working in public lower-secondary education in Brazil and Norway	OECD policy and national curriculum policy in Brazil and Norway	OECD TALIS 2018 secondary data and semi-structured interviews with teachers working in public lower-secondary education in Brazil and Norway
Main findings	Teachers respond in different ways to accountability, depending on their perceptions of their scope of action and on their national and local contexts. In general, Brazilian teachers have a constrained scope of action and possibilities for achieving agency in comparison with their Norwegian counterparts. However, they do achieve agency using their creativity in some cases. Norwegian teachers also have their individual autonomy constrained by extended state control over the curriculum and testing. However, the practice of collective work allows for the achievement of teacher agency because of the possibility of reflection and collective construction of teaching plans and strategies that frame and legitimize their work.	The study's findings show commonalities and differences in the adoption of the global accountability logic. One commonality is the assumption that accountability can lead to better-quality education for all, which provides legitimation for the adoption of test-based accountability systems. This assumption is in line with the OECD global logic of accountability. The differences are expressed by the existence of coherent and contradictory logics in the national curriculum policy of the country cases. Norwegian policy documents present a cohesive adoption of the multiple aspects of accountability logic. Conversely, the Brazilian policy documents reflect the existence of competing social groups in policy-making. The same documents present arguments for the use of accountability measures, alongside critiques of these measures that suggest their abolition.	The quantitative data reveal no clear pattern between teacher autonomy and models of educational governance. In general, teachers perceive that they have good control over teaching and planning at the classroom level. However, teachers report that they participate to a lesser degree in professional collaboration in schools, which could allow for collegial teacher autonomy. Teachers also report low perceived social value and policy influence, which may provide insight into professional teacher autonomy at the policy level. This article also shows the relevance of a detailed description of the country cases to gain a better understanding of the multiple dimensions of teacher autonomy.

Note: OECD Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, TALIS Teaching and Learning International Survey

Article 1 compares teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency in Norway and Brazil by employing semi-structured interviews with teachers. Article 2 compares how national curricula in these two countries adopt and translate accountability as an

institutional logic created and promoted by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) through the analysis of policy documents. Article 3 compares teachers' perceived autonomy in countries with different models of educational governance, using secondary data from the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2018 and semi-structured interviews with lower-secondary teachers in Norway and Brazil.

In summary, the interviews address teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency in Norway and Brazil. In addition, the secondary data provide knowledge on teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in multiple national contexts. Complementarily, the analysis of policy documents provides descriptions of the global context and the national contexts of Norway and Brazil in which teachers work. The next section describes the global and national contexts of this study.

1.2. The contexts of this study

The contexts of this study comprise the global, national, and local levels. I take the view that the global and national levels affect teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency at the local level.

In this study, I concentrate on recent educational reforms that have expanded exponentially across the globe. Researchers have labeled these educational reforms as "governing by numbers" (Grek, 2009; Ozga, 2009), "test-based accountability systems" (Verger et al., 2019), "outcomes-based accountability regimes" (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020), and "evaluative state" or "governance by results" (Maroy, 2008). These labels refer to the state's use of performance data from large-scale assessments as evidence for policy-making.

Recent educational reforms have included state initiatives such as centralization of curriculum design, national testing, target setting, documentation, and inspection, which states have combined with decentralization of responsibility for pedagogical and financial matters to schools (Grek, 2009; Sellar & Lingard, 2013). These educational reforms aim to improve performance data in external evaluations by closely monitoring teachers' work (Ball, 2003; Lingard, 2013; Maroy, 2008; Sobe, 2014).

In the global scenario, the OECD is a powerful actor providing comparative data on educational systems and students' performance (Grek, 2009; Lingard et al., 2013; Sellar & Lingard, 2013). Moreover, policy-makers use the OECD data and policy recommendations to justify

educational reforms or provide support for existing policy directions (Grek, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2003).

At the national level, this study demonstrates that both Norway and Brazil are influenced by the global context.

Norway implemented a national quality assessment system with accountability purposes in 2004 and an outcomes-based curriculum in 2006, after the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) "shock," in which the country scored barely above the average despite considerable investments in education (Camphuijsen et al., 2020; Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Imsen & Volckmar, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015). According to Tveit (2014), national tests are the best-known component of the national quality assessment system, which also includes the School Portal (Skoleporten), international studies, educational statistics, user surveys, and inspections.

Moreover, national particularities have influenced the adoption of educational accountability in this country. First, Norway is a welfare state and a rich country marked by low class, gender, and income differences along with few actors in private education. Second, the idea of social integration and equality through an equal right to education is persistent in the country (Imsen & Volckmar, 2014). These two features bring some particularities to the adoption of educational accountability. For example, studies have shown that the accountability instruments adopted in the country have been predominantly low stakes because of the focus on using test results for formative purposes. In other words, teachers use test results to assist them in providing feedback and planning strategies to develop students' knowledge and skills in the subject. Testing results are not connected to monetary incentives or sanction mechanisms in relation to teachers' work, as they are in high-stakes accountability systems (Mausethagen, 2013; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

Influenced by the global context, Brazil adopted an outcomes-based curriculum in the early 2000s and national testing in 2005 with the aim of increasing efficiency and performance in international comparisons (Barreto, 2012; Therrien & Loiola, 2001; Villani & Oliveira, 2018). The Brazilian National Education Plan (NC, 2014) has included the PISA average as an indicator of educational quality, which illustrates the power of the OECD and PISA in the country. PISA

is also part of the country's educational assessments alongside national assessments (NC, 2014).

Moreover, national particularities have also played an important role in the adoption of accountability instruments in the country. Brazil is a developing country characterized by high economic and educational inequalities. The Brazilian middle class typically does not support decisions to increase taxes or implement a social redistribution system. In addition, since the 1990s, the Brazilian government has adopted open market and privatization measures in education (Barreto, 2012; Villani & Oliveira, 2018), increasing the participation of private actors and introducing measures such as target setting with bonus payments for schools that achieve performance targets. This neoliberal alignment has resulted in an education system with high-stakes accountability, in which teachers' remuneration is affected by the results of large-scale assessments (Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

In summary, both countries have been affected by the global context marked by educational accountability. However, Norway has embraced low-stakes accountability, while Brazil has adopted much stricter accountability measures and forms of control of the teaching profession (see Articles 1 and 3). These similarities and differences make it fruitful to compare and explore teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency at the local levels.

1.3. Outline of the extended abstract

This thesis comprises two parts, the extended abstract (Part I) and three articles (Part II). Following this introductory chapter, the extended abstract includes six more chapters.

Chapter 2 is a literature review identifying and presenting the dominant issues concerning educational accountability, teacher autonomy, and teacher agency in recent times.

Chapter 3 is the theoretical framework. This chapter elaborates on the importance of social structure, power dynamics, and agency as central constructs to study teacher autonomy and teacher agency in the context of educational accountability.

In Chapter 4, I present the comparative and multi-method approach adopted in this study, including descriptions of the data sources, participants, and analyses. Finally, I address

research credibility, including discussions of reliability, validity, generalizability, researcher's positionality, and ethical considerations.

Chapter 5 is a summary of the three articles in this study, describing the main findings of each article.

Chapter 6 discusses the main findings, considering the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3.

Finally, Chapter 7 shows the relationship between the extended abstract and the articles. This chapter ends by pointing to the study's contributions, limitations, and possibilities for future research.

Chapter 2. Literature Review

This study addresses teacher autonomy and teacher agency in different educational systems marked by accountability.

Research literature has indicated multiple accountability logics that permeate educational settings (e.g., Kim & Yun, 2019). For example, "test-based accountability" may coexist with other logics in coherent and contradictory ways (e.g., Camphuijsen et al., 2020; Maroy & Pons, 2019; Pagès, 2020; see also Article 2). Moreover, teachers can relate differently to these multiple logics to make meaning of their actions in their local contexts of practice.

This study focuses on "test-based accountability," which refers to the influence of large-scale assessments in educational systems. I chose to focus on test-based accountability in this study because of the powerful role of the OECD and PISA globally. The OECD's data and policy recommendations have led to the implementation of accountability measures across the globe to meet performance targets in PISA and other large-scale assessments (Grek, 2009; Lingard et al., 2013; Sellar & Lingard, 2013; Steiner-Khamsi, 2003). This chapter addresses research literature that has demonstrated that these accountability measures affect teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency in schools.

Regarding the concepts of teacher autonomy and teacher agency, I have chosen to present them as two distinct phenomena (Erss, 2018), despite some overlap (e.g., Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015; Molander et al., 2012). According to Erss (2018), "one distinction between autonomy and agency could be that autonomy is something that teachers have (or are believed to have), while agency is something they do" (p.244).

This literature review chapter presents research literature that has addressed three issues: educational accountability, teacher autonomy, and teacher agency. I have selected, distinguished, included, and omitted research based on my interpretations of what is relevant to the study's purpose and research questions, as suggested by Montuori (2005).

I conducted the search in ERIC (EBSCOhost) and Academic Search Complete (EBSCOhost) in June 2019, using the following search terms: *teacher autonomy and elementary secondary education*, *professional autonomy and elementary secondary education*, and *teacher agency and elementary secondary education*. In addition, I read literature suggested by other

researchers and literature that I found in the reference list of some of these studies. The time span is 20 years, from 2001 to 2021. I have included only articles and books in English, which means that I have not considered other types of materials and languages for this review.

This chapter begins by presenting research on educational accountability as a global phenomenon affecting teachers' work (Section 2.1). Then, this chapter describes teachers' scope of decision-making and action (autonomy) within educational systems marked by educational accountability (Section 2.2). Finally, this chapter ends by presenting the ways teachers mediate policy, potentially achieving agency in this process (Section 2.3).

2.1. Educational accountability

This section presents accountability as an institutional logic comprising symbolic, material, and social construction elements (cf. Thornton et al., 2012). Section 2.1.1 addresses the themes of accountability logic, describing research that has addressed symbolic elements (e.g., professional and personal values), material elements (e.g., instruments and practices), and contextual particularities in the adoption of educational accountability. Section 2.1.2 concerns the themes of accountability instruments and practices, presenting studies that have described instruments and practices characteristic of educational accountability.

2.1.1 Accountability logic

Kim and Yun (2019) created an analytical device to present different logics of accountability associated with different forms of control and symbolic systems that support these forms of control. Using secondary data from OECD TALIS 2013, they found that accountability can be linked to test-based accountability, which ensures that schools meet outcomes on standardized assessments of student learning. The findings also indicated that accountability can be linked to professional accountability, which relies on the professional ethics and standards of a professional field, as well as to personal or moral accountability, referring to the principles that educators hold in their work-related actions. Altogether, their findings suggested that one should be open to understanding multiple logics of accountability as interacting with each other in school practice beyond test-based logic.

Likewise, Pagès (2021) described the existence of multiple logics in a case study conducted in a Southern European school system. According to Pagès, two logics permeate performance-based accountability: (a) administrative logic, or bureaucratic control through

inspection services and external and standardized evaluation of school performance; and (b) market logic, referring mainly to parental school choice. The findings revealed that administrative and market forms of accountability tend to generate dynamics of interdependence, resulting in increasing external pressures that schools address by "teaching to the test," which promotes competition between schools.

Similarly, Maroy and Pons (2019) argued for the study of heterogeneity in the adoption and implementation of accountability policy across France and Quebec. They also argued for the existence of multiple logics (e.g., market and profession) along the same lines as Kim and Yun (2019).

In the case of Norway, Camphuijsen et al. (2020) illuminated the existence of multiple logics for the adoption of test-based accountability in the country. These logics are equity and quality, which have been cohesively rearticulated to performance indicators based on national and international tests. Camphuijsen et al. (2020) argued that this blending of logics has detrimental consequences for the autonomy of school leaders and teachers. According to them, "although the original aim was to encourage individual and local adaptation and creativity, stricter local authority control and supervision has sometimes constrained teacher autonomy and promoted standardised teaching methods" (Camphuijsen et al., 2020, p.15).

In summary, this section shows that accountability logic may coexist in complementary and/or contradictory ways with other logics.

2.1.2. Accountability instruments and practices

This section is concerned with the types of instruments and practices that characterize educational accountability.

Verger et al. (2019) described some accountability instruments and practices employed in educational systems around the world. These are policy instruments, such as national standards, high-stakes testing, league tables, indicators, inspections, and various forms of incentives and sanctions for principals and teachers that are "being increasingly enacted to monitor teachers' performance and promote competitive pressures among schools" (p.249). Verger et al. (2019) further classified countries according to models of educational governance based on the different forms of implementation of these instruments and practices (e.g., high-

stakes, low-stakes, and uneven accountability systems), showing that accountability is dependent on institutional and socio-economic contexts.

Similarly, Högberg and Lindgren (2020) explored the diffusion of accountability across OECD countries by using PISA data. They categorized countries in different accountability regimes according to forms of governance and the presence of accountability instruments and practices. These instruments and practices are the adoption of standardized performance data, several forms of evaluation by external parties, and incentives and sanctions resulting from this evaluation, which can be centralized by educational authorities (i.e., "vertical accountability") or decentralized and involving multiple stakeholders (i.e., "horizontal accountability"). According to Högberg and Lindgren (2020), "thick accountability" regimes adopt all these instruments and practices, with variations in the level of centralization of decision-making. In contrast, "thin accountability" regimes use substantially fewer accountability instruments and practices. Their findings indicated that accountability instruments are quite widely used in most OECD countries, with most countries falling into what they labeled "thick accountability" regimes, with variations regarding the centralization of decision-making.

In short, research literature has shown that accountability instruments and practices are common features of educational systems, despite showing some variations.

2.2. Teacher autonomy

This section focuses on teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in a context marked by educational accountability.

In general, the research literature has applied the concept of teacher autonomy to investigate education policy marked by neoliberal and accountability reforms as well as the relationships between teachers and the state governing teachers' work. From a governance perspective, teacher autonomy refers to the capacity of teachers to make informed judgments and decisions that affect their work and roles within a frame of regulations and resources provided by the state (Frostenson, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017; Wermke et al., 2019). Mausethagen and Mølstad (2015) observed that the concept of teacher autonomy includes both teachers' capacity to make key decisions and their will and capacity to justify and develop practices, which is close to the definition of

teacher agency described later in this chapter (Section 2.3). Other studies have also addressed teachers' decision-making based on the exercise of discretion within personal and/or professional frames (Molander et al., 2012; Nerland & Karseth, 2013).

The themes described in this section are: (2.2.1) restricted teacher autonomy, describing studies that have shown that accountability decreases teacher autonomy; (2.2.2) multiple dimensions of teacher autonomy, presenting studies that have addressed the multiple dimensions of this concept and how these dimensions are affected by accountability; (2.2.3) nuanced views of teacher autonomy, describing studies that have revealed that teachers' aspirations to autonomy vary; and (2.2.4) new professional teachers, describing studies that have shown that teachers do not necessarily perceive accountability and autonomy as incompatible concepts.

2.2.1. Restricted teacher autonomy

This section presents studies that have described accountability as restrictive to teacher autonomy.

The research literature has shown that accountability constrains teacher autonomy (Maroy, 2008; Ozga, 2009). Studies have indicated hierarchical and regulatory forms of use of data in a managerial model of accountability, focused on surveillance and answerability (Ball, 2003; Lingard et al., 2013; Sobe, 2014). In this context, local authorities and schools adopt rigorous systems of self-evaluation, development planning, and performance management, which reinforce the existing relationship between the central state and local actors (Maroy, 2008; Ozga, 2009).

Ball (2003) has used the term "performativity" to describe the new modes of regulation of conduct that emerge from contemporary educational reforms. According to Ball (2003), performativity is a new technology of educational reform composed of monitoring systems and the production of information that aligns public schools with the methods, culture, and ethical system of the private sector. Ball (2003) defined performativity as "a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition and change — based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic)" (p.216).

In addition, research literature has shown that teachers perceive a lack of autonomy due to accountability measures and practices. For example, Assunção Flores (2003) conducted a qualitative study in a suburban elementary school in Portugal. The study's findings revealed that the policy demanded that teachers be autonomous actors in the management of the school curriculum, but this demand did not correspond to the reality of the school, which was marked by imposed collaboration and lack of support, working against the role of teachers as autonomous actors.

In another study pointing to restricted teacher autonomy, Carpenter et al.'s (2012) case study investigated the impact of neoliberal education reforms on the classroom practice of teachers and adult educators in Ontario (Canada). Both teachers and adult educators reported a reduction in autonomy and an emerging "culture of fear" because of government inspections that determined the allocation of funding according to schools' compliance with policy demands.

In the same vein, Grenville-Cleave and Boniwell (2012) indicated external control constraining teacher autonomy. This mixed-methods study conducted in England and Wales was based on an online survey with teachers (n=150) and non-teachers (n=148). The latter group was composed of professionals working in health, social work, finance, and human resources. In phase 1 (quantitative), the results indicated that teachers' perceived control over their work and well-being was significantly lower than that of non-teachers. The concept of autonomy used in phase 1 referred to teachers' choice over how to do their job, personal influence, and freedom to exercise professional judgement, as well as their ability to interpret and "craft" their job (Grenville-Cleave & Boniwell, 2012, p.4). In phase 2 (qualitative), the results suggested that teachers perceived that they had less freedom, choice, and control over what they did every day compared to non-teachers and that the biggest influences on these perceptions were the national curriculum and educational authorities' requirements.

The findings of a comparative interview study in Estonia, Finland, and Germany (Bavaria) revealed that curriculum policies have promised increased autonomy to teachers (Erss et al., 2016). However, as the cases of Bavarian and Estonian curricula showed, the autonomy-stressing rhetoric of the curriculum was accompanied by teachers' perceived lack of autonomy. Bavarian and Estonian teachers perceived low social status and lack of involvement in educational decision-making as negatively affecting their sense of autonomy. In contrast,

Finnish teachers perceived high social status and involvement in educational decision-making as reinforcing their sense of autonomy.

The findings of a mixed-methods study showed that teachers in Georgia (USA) were not overly confident in their ability to make change and saw themselves as implementers more than creators of education policy (Hinnant-Crawford, 2016). Along the same lines, a case study in California (USA) demonstrated that teacher autonomy has been constrained because of high-stakes testing (Wills & Sandholtz, 2009). Wills and Sandholtz (2009) found that teachers can retain autonomy in classroom practices, but their decisions are significantly circumscribed by contextual pressures and time demands that devalue other domains of their autonomy. These studies have presented educational reforms marked by accountability constraining teacher autonomy.

2.2.2. Multiple dimensions of teacher autonomy

This section adds to the complexity of the phenomenon of teacher autonomy by showing that teacher autonomy has multiple dimensions and that restricted autonomy in one dimension may not correspond to restricted autonomy in another.

Cribb and Gewirtz (2007) described two dimensions of the concept. Collective autonomy refers to teachers acting in groups within schools and politically through trade union activity and lobbying at the policy level. Individual autonomy refers to teachers acting individually in classrooms (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007, p.204). Frostenson (2015) discriminated between three dimensions of teacher autonomy: individual, collegial, and professional. The individual dimension comprises teachers individually making decisions that affect their work and roles and those of their students at the classroom level (p.24). The collegial or staff dimension consists of teachers making decisions as a group at the school level (Frostenson, 2015, p.23). The professional dimension accounts for teachers as a professional group deciding on the contents, frames, and controls of their work at the policy level (Frostenson, 2015, p.22).

Frostenson (2015) suggested that the general loss of professional autonomy in recent times in the Swedish context and other parts of the world does not necessarily imply that teachers are losing their autonomy at the collegial and individual levels (p.24). In the context of neoliberal reforms in Sweden, school administration requires teachers to collaborate, which can result in increased experienced collegial autonomy in shaping the contents and forms of

the teaching practice. However, Frostenson (2015) highlighted the fact that quality and accountability measures, which are part of the Swedish educational context, lead to a decrease in individual autonomy in some cases.

In a similar vein, the findings of a quantitative study using data from PISA (Jeong & Luschei, 2018) determined that teachers across 33 countries have lost decision-making authority, while governments and school leaders have gained authority, which threatens individual teacher autonomy.

Helgøy and Homme (2007) showed that Swedish teachers perceived a high degree of individual autonomy, which did not correspond to their influence in national policy processes. By contrast, Norwegian teachers perceived limited individual teacher autonomy because of a culture of collectivism in the country. However, they still managed to supply conditions for national policy-making as a professional group, indicating a stronger professional teacher autonomy in comparison with their Swedish counterparts.

In conclusion, this section shows that teacher autonomy is a multidimensional phenomenon and that restricted autonomy in one dimension does not necessarily equate with restricted autonomy in another dimension. Moreover, teachers may perceive extended individual teacher autonomy in some situations, which does not necessarily correspond to an increase in participation in decision-making processes at school and policy levels. Further, school administration may require teachers to collaborate, but this approach can result in contrived collegiality, which refers to administratively contrived interactions among teachers where they meet and work to implement the curricula and strategies developed by others, enhancing administrative control while constraining individual teacher autonomy (Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990).

2.2.3. Nuanced views of teacher autonomy

This section shows that teachers' aspirations for autonomy vary according to teachers' experiences and social contexts.

The findings of a document analysis study in England indicated that many teachers did not aspire to autonomy in terms of documenting their planning (Betteney, 2010). However, this tension arose between some teachers, who were critical of the content of the policy, and some aspects of documentation, which specified what and how to teach. The findings pointed

to a contrast between more experienced teachers who were critical of the content of the curriculum policy and younger teachers who welcomed the safety of planning that specify their teaching.

The results of a qualitative interview study with in-service teachers in Cyprus revealed that teachers' sense of autonomy varied between minimum and maximum autonomy over the participation and introduction of the new official curriculum (Philippou et al., 2014). Teachers discursively negotiated their positioning in contradictory ways, affecting curriculum change and implementation processes. A single individual could craft positionings as spectator, receiver, implementer, and reformer of the curriculum. Some teachers described themselves as spectators of curriculum change prescribed by more expert others, as receivers by claiming the right to choose from possible ready-made teaching material, as implementers by demanding participation in the development of teaching material with the collaboration of more expert others, and as reformers by using curricula as a means of emancipation for them and their students (Philippou et al., 2014, p.628). According to Philippou et al. (2014), this complexity emanated from demands of the new official curriculum within the context of a historically centralized educational system that has limited teacher autonomy in a variety of ways.

Similarly, a comparative interview study among Estonian, Finnish, and German teachers indicated heterogeneity in teachers' expectations regarding the amount of desired autonomy (Errs, 2018). In the interviews, Finnish teachers perceived a high level of autonomy to determine instruction and curriculum content, and they felt that control over their work was unnecessary. Estonian and German teachers did not advocate the absence of control, instead viewing regulations as positive to the development of their work. German teachers perceived the rules set by school leadership regarding assessment as positive to their work, while Estonian teachers showed a desire for textbooks to guide their work. Erss (2018) explained that the desire for autonomy relates to teachers' professional status and participation in decision-making, which was considerably higher in Finnish society.

The results of qualitative studies in Norway revealed that teachers did not aspire to autonomy, which may challenge their professional knowledge and social status (Haugen, 2019; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015). One possible explanation for teachers placing themselves as respondents of policy (and not agents of change) is that Norwegian teachers do not see their

expanded freedom as real freedom, but as extended demands over their work (Mellegård & Pettersen, 2016).

In summary, these studies show that teachers' aspirations for autonomy vary according to teachers' experiences and social contexts. Moreover, teachers may perceive enhanced autonomy as being politically used to increase accountability demands over their work, thus rejecting teacher autonomy.

2.2.4. New professional teachers

Further, while some studies have negatively viewed teachers normalizing the discourse of the "performativity teacher" (e.g., Holloway & Brass, 2018), other studies have not seen teachers' alignment with accountability policy as something negative. I describe these studies below.

The findings of a qualitative study in England (Storey, 2007) showed that several recent changes in the composition and nature of the teaching workforce, with mid-career new entrants with prior experience of targets, objectives, and routine assessment, have resulted in greater receptivity to the language and methods of performance. According to Storey (2007), the adoption of performative practices by these teachers does not necessarily imply an erosion in their creativity and professionalism. In addition, other studies have shown that younger teachers were more willing to work within the new frames of policy, and they found ways to cope with policy demands.

For example, Wilkins (2011) conducted a small-scale study of newly qualified primary school teachers in England. The findings presented post-performative teachers whose experiences as students had been in a performative schooling system. According to Wilkins (2011), these teachers could not be categorized as either "compliant" or "resistant" to the demands of performative management systems and government initiatives. They combined great motivation based on affective rewards with clear career ambitions. They were also comfortable with the balance they were able to strike between demands for accountability and the desire for autonomy.

Similarly, the findings of a mixed-methods study in Belgium revealed that younger teachers assumed a more collaborative attitude toward autonomy in relation to their experienced colleagues, thus engaging more often in deeper forms of professional collaboration to achieve the goals of the curriculum (Vangrieken & Kyndt, 2019). The study's findings indicated that

younger teachers perceived professional collaboration as meaningful and contributing to their individual autonomy in classrooms. Vangrieken and Kyndt defined this perception as collaborative autonomy in which teacher autonomy is combined with a collaborative attitude (Vangrieken & Kyndt, 2019, p.196). In this case, professional collaboration emanates from the subjective needs of the teachers who themselves set the agenda and participate in decision-making, thus contributing to enhancing both collegial and individual teacher autonomy (Elo & Nygren-Landgärds, 2020; Frostenson, 2015; Kelchtermans, 2006). In summary, this section shows that new professional teachers do not necessarily perceive accountability and autonomy as irreconcilable concepts.

2.3. Teacher agency

This section focuses on the concept of teacher agency. In general, research literature has used this concept to illuminate "how teachers make sense of externally initiated policy, and the multifarious factors that influence this process" (Priestley et al., 2012, p.194). Research literature concerning teacher agency has described teachers mediating policy through their professional judgments and actions, considering the social, cultural, and material conditions in which they work, as well as their personal and professional experiences (Biesta et al., 2017; Priestley et al., 2015).

The main themes described in this section correspond to diverse teacher responses to policy, namely compliance, resistance, and disengagement. The final part presents research literature discussing the role of experience in the achievement of agency.

2.3.1. Compliance

Drawing upon data collected within English schools, Hall and McGinity (2015) showed that teacher agency has been restricted by regulative and performative approaches to teachers' work within a neoliberal system. Hall and McGinity (2015) described the school leadership's role in using a discourse of promoting teacher professionalism to demand compliance with policy discourses of educational change and control. Consequently, they argued that higher levels of compliance leave almost no space for resistance. They added that compliance may also be associated with teachers' fear of sanctions. However, they noted the possibility of investigating "mini" resistances through a focus upon local practices in schools, involving the relationships between teachers and students that evade the logic of performativity and marketization.

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In a similar vein, the findings of an interview study in Sweden indicated that teachers were critical of and reported several negative consequences of external evaluations, but they still generally complied by participating in these evaluations to legitimate students' grades (Hult & Edström, 2016). Wang et al. (2014) conducted another study that linked compliance with a culture of fear in China. The findings showed that teachers complied with policy because of a reform that linked remuneration to performance. According to Wang et al. (2014), only teachers who performed well on empirical performance indicators were given opportunities for professional development and remuneration.

2.3.2. Resistance

This section shows that resistance can also be a response to policy.

Berry and Herrington (2013) indicated resistance as a response to policy in a qualitative study in Florida (USA). The findings showed that education actors used social media to engage in sense-making and organizing against district accountability policy.

Employing Foucauldian theory, Ball and Olmedo (2013) argued that the exchange of emails can be an instrument for reflexivity that helps teachers to criticize the practices of performativity and construct their own subjectivities and practices in the English context. Also inspired by Foucauldian theory, the study by Tesar et al. (2017) suggested that an online teacher forum in Slovakia was a strategy employed by early childhood education teachers to gain agency and to construct discourses more aligned with their professional values and beliefs. According to Tesar et al. (2017), the online discussions allowed for teachers to redefine their professional identity and challenge current policy discourses and influence shifts in the teachers' everyday work life. For example, these discussions could reinforce the role of freedom, creativity, and child-focused education in their professional practices against an educational provision focused on standards and competencies.

Drawing on agency literature in an ethnographic study in Australia, Robinson (2012) discovered teachers using strong collegial relationships as a strategy to construct their professional agency by adapting and adopting policy requirements to fit some practices and reshape others in the context of performance and accountability measures. This relationship between collegial relationships and professional agency resembles the idea of extended collegial autonomy presented in Section 2.2.2.

2.3.3. Disengagement

Disengagement can also be a response to accountability policy. Bjork (2009) described an educational reform in Japan designed to increase teacher autonomy. His study provided insights into the effects of this policy at the local level, teachers' views about this reform, and the Ministry of Education's ability to facilitate change in the schools. The findings revealed a lack of consistency and cohesiveness in the policy established by the Ministry of Education. Additionally, teachers had pedagogical skills to implement the reform plans, but they were not necessarily convinced of the discovery-orientated instructional approaches suggested by the reform and thus disengaged from the policy or followed the policy guidelines only at the surface level. Bjork (2009) explained that teachers are not influenced by national demands on their planning and teaching but by local situational circumstances, such as their impressions of local community priorities, ideas about effective instruction developed over time, and practical considerations related to students' academic futures. The next theme explores the role of experience in the achievement of teacher agency.

2.3.4. The role of experience in teacher agency

In addition, research has shown that the role of experience is important in providing a broader repertoire of maneuvers for teachers. Day (2002) conducted a literature review about school reform and transitions in teacher professionalism and identity. He observed that imposed changes in the control of curriculum and assessment and increased measures of public accountability have made the success of teachers' careers more dependent upon external definitions of quality, progress, and achievement. However, he noted that many experienced teachers have managed to maintain their identities, finding room to maneuver to keep their classroom autonomy, while younger colleagues have felt pressure to comply with competency-based agendas. This compliance has limited teachers' identities and negatively affected their motivation, efficacy, commitment, job satisfaction, and effectiveness.

In a small ethnographic study in Scotland, Biesta et al. (2017) echoed Day's findings (2002). Based on the ecological approach to agency, the authors argued that experienced teachers tend to have more resources to talk about and understand education, which can give them more room to maneuver in comparison with their younger colleagues. For example, while experienced teachers tend to resort to their often-rich experiences in the formulation of educational goals and objectives, younger teachers tend to make use of current educational

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policy discourses that limit their repertoires for maneuvering. However, Biesta et al. (2017) pointed out that it is not uncommon for both experienced and younger teachers to accommodate their practices to policy shaped by performativity.

This section demonstrates that teachers respond differently to accountability policy, which affects their potential to achieve agency. Teachers mediate policy through their professional judgement to respond to concrete situations at hand. The research literature has shown that teachers are not necessarily passive adopters of policy; in other words, they can also be policy translators adapting and changing accountability policy in their daily practices.

2.4. Summary

This literature review presented research literature on three themes: educational accountability, teacher autonomy, and teacher agency. The theme of accountability provided the context for discussing teacher autonomy and teacher agency. While these concepts have some overlap, they are understood as having different analytical potentials (Erss, 2018). Therefore, while teacher autonomy is focused on teachers' perceptions of their scope of decision-making and action in relation to state governance in an accountability context, teacher agency is focused on teachers' mediating policy marked by accountability demands.

This chapter presented research that found accountability policy as constraining teacher autonomy and/or different dimensions of it. It also problematized the fact that some teachers may perceive autonomy as a negative demand on their work that they must meet without receiving the necessary support; in contrast, others may not see accountability and autonomy as incompatible. Further, teachers may respond differently to accountability policy because of personal and contextual features. For example, some teachers comply with policy demands because of a culture of fear that links performance with remuneration, while others, despite a restrictive working environment, disengage or find strategies to resist accountability policy initiatives.

The next chapter provides theoretical grounds to discuss teacher autonomy and teacher agency in the context of accountability. These theoretical grounds include theory on institutional logics with the aim to explain teachers' contexts, theory on teacher autonomy to investigate the relationship between teachers and the state governing teachers' work through

accountability measures, and theory on teacher agency to explore teachers' responses to policy in this accountability context.

Chapter 3. Theoretical Framework

This study addresses teacher autonomy and teacher agency in different educational contexts marked by accountability. The research questions are:

- How do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers perceive their autonomy in an accountability context?
- How do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers respond to accountability policy?

I addressed these questions by interviewing teachers, analyzing educational policy, and examining secondary data. I take the view that teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency in schools are affected by the global and national contexts in which they are situated. As such, the global and national contexts shape teachers' behaviors in their local contexts of practice. However, teachers also interact with policy, thereby shaping their local contexts.

Two articles in this study use theories on teacher autonomy to explore teachers' perceptions of their autonomy under recent education reforms marked by accountability instruments and practices (Articles 1 and 3). One article uses theory on teacher agency to explore the ways teachers mediate policy to solve classroom situations (Article 1). Another article (Article 2) uses the institutional logic perspective to investigate how national curriculum policy adopts the logic of accountability as produced and disseminated by global actors such as the OECD. Hence, not all articles include all the theoretical perspectives. This chapter addresses the three theories in an integrated way and shows how each contributes to the discussion of the study's empirical findings in Chapter 6.

In summary, this study uses institutional logics to explain the contexts in which teachers are embedded. The theoretical framework also combines teacher autonomy theory to bring in the power perspective and teacher agency theory to explore the dynamic relationship between teachers and policy in their everyday work.

This chapter begins by presenting the debate about social structure and action that is characteristic of the social sciences. This debate allows the location of the institutional logics' perspective as a theory that accommodates the role of institutions and individual agency to explore the interplay between social structure and action. Next, this chapter elaborates on

the importance of power dynamics and the relationship between teachers and the state by presenting teacher autonomy theory. Then, teacher agency theory is used to address teachers' responses to policy. Finally, this chapter summarizes the theoretical framework of this study and highlights the main ideas and concepts for the study's discussion in Chapter 6.

3.1. Social structure and action

This section briefly describes the relationship between social structure and action, which is characteristic of the social sciences. The aim is to situate the institutional logics' perspective within this relationship in Section 3.1.1. Research has identified world culture theory as a theoretical perspective that places great emphasis on the role of social structure in the constitution of individuals' subjectivities and behaviors (Greenwood et al., 2008; McEneaney & Meyer, 2000; Waldow, 2014). Research has also pointed to other perspectives that seek to reframe this relationship, such as the works of Giddens and his theory of structuration (Giddens, 1984), Bourdieu's notion of habitus (Bourdieu, 1990), and Foucault's perspectives on agency (Foucault, 1994, 2001). According to Giddens (1984), structuration refers to the recursive interdependence of social structures and activities. Scott (1994) explained that Giddens' theory of structuration refers to an ongoing production and reproduction of social structures in which individuals act, creating, following, and utilizing resources available in social structures. However, researchers have criticized Giddens's theory for failing to properly elucidate the relationship between agency and structure, in which structure should precede agency in analytical importance (e.g., O'Boyle, 2013).

Researchers have also identified the works of Bourdieu and Foucault as contributing to the acknowledgment of social structure and power relations in social analysis (Sarup, 1993; Lechte, 1994). Bourdieu and Foucault have made different contributions to the social sciences (Pignatelli, 1993; Sarup, 1993). Bourdieu has been concerned with capitalist society and class domination (e.g., Bourdieu, 2005), while Foucault has questioned how power is enacted and has investigated the processes by which individuals are constituted as effects of power (e.g., Foucault, 1994, 2001). Moreover, Foucault has established an important view of the relationship between social structure and action. He highlighted that this relationship is not a zero-sum game but a complex and dynamic relationship between material and social conditions in a particular historical time and agency (Foucault, 1997).

This dynamic view between social structure and action has also been present in other theoretical perspectives, such as institutional logics (Thornton et al., 2012), which focus on the role of institutions shaping and being shaped by individuals and organizations. Likewise, this dynamic view has been explored in teacher agency theory (Ball & Olmedo, 2013; Priestley et al., 2012; 2015, Stickney, 2012), which emphasizes teachers acting within the structural conditions of educational systems.

This chapter combines the institutional logics' perspective with teacher autonomy and teacher agency theories to provide a theoretical framework for the analysis of the study's empirical findings. This chapter begins by introducing institutional theory and institutional logics before proceeding with the descriptions of teacher autonomy and teacher agency.

3.1.1. Institutional theory

Theoretical perspectives within institutional theory have differed in both their conceptualization of institutional contexts and in the extent to which individuals and organizations are being shaped by these contexts (Powell & Bromley, 2015, p.765). Hence, at one end of the social structure–action continuum, world culture theory has argued that the context constitutes individuals and organizations. World culture theory has also focused on isomorphism and standardization of material practices and organizational forms (Greenwood et al., 2008; McEneaney & Meyer, 2000; Waldow, 2014). At the other end of the continuum is institutional entrepreneurship, with depictions of entrepreneurs pursuing self-determined interests within a set of institutional constraints and supports and, in so doing, creating institutions (Greenwood et al., 2008; Powell & Bromley, 2015; Scott, 2014). Organizational institutionalism and institutional logics can be placed in the middle of this continuum.

According to Greenwood et al. (2018), organization studies have pictured organizations as agentic actors responding to situational circumstances. Organization studies have focused on the relationship between an organization and its context while examining how organizations adapt or attempt to adapt to secure legitimacy. Greenwood et al. (2018) explained that organization studies address socio-cultural, regulative, cognitive, and normative systems, although sometimes not in integrated ways (pp.14–15).

In this regard, Scott's theoretical framework (2014) was an attempt to bring order and integrate these systems by describing the normative, regulative, and cultural-cognitive pillars

or elements that underpin institutions. Organization studies have also accounted for how organizations are able to work in their institutional context in order to promote their interests, thus addressing organizational motivations and reasons for the adoption of institutional ideas and practices (Greenwood et al., 2008, p.17). However, the focus of organization institutionalism is primarily on organizations and organizational actors. In this regard, institutional logics bring individuals back to the analysis.

Lawrence et al. (2011) argued that the individual must be returned to institutional research by focusing on "the lived experience of organizational actors, especially the connection between this lived experience and the institutions that structure and are structured by it" (p.52). They focused on individual agency, intentionality, and effort as central to the lived experience of organizational actors. As an elaboration of Friedland and Alford's (1991) theory, the institutional logics perspective combined both society and individual agency in institutional analysis. By doing this, this perspective incorporated the role of individuals and organizations as not only being shaped by, but also shaping institutions (Thornton et al., 2012; Parish, 2019). These ideas will be further explored in the next section.

3.1.2. Institutional logics: explaining the contexts in which teachers are situated

The institutional logics perspective has considered institutions at multiple levels of analysis, namely individual, organizational, field, and societal (Thornton et al., 2012, p.13). In addition, this perspective has emphasized the interrelation of the symbolic and material aspects of institutions, as well as the role of agency in the organization of social life.

Thornton et al. (2012) defined "an institutional logic as the socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices, including assumptions, values, beliefs by which individuals and organizations provide meaning to their daily activity, organize time and space, and reproduce their lives and experiences" (Thornton et al., 2012, p.2). Based on this definition, an institutional logic has symbolic, material, and socially constructed elements.

First, an institutional logic is founded upon symbolic systems, that is, assumptions, values, and beliefs that are contextually and historically dependent. As a result, symbolic systems may change due to endogenous (e.g., within group, individual) or exogenous (e.g., state, public, market) demands, which involve different types of rationality valued in different times and contexts. Second, an institutional logic has material elements based on the organization of

resources, action, time, and space. As such, institutional logics have observable social relations that concretize these symbolic systems. Third, an institutional logic is socially constructed in context, meaning that individuals and organizations actively engage with institutional logics to shape and transform their conditions for action. Individuals and organizations reproduce and change symbols and material practices to make their actions meaningful.

In the institutional logic perspective, individuals are embedded, but also partially autonomous from social structure (Thornton et al., 2012, p.7). This autonomy allows individuals to engage with multiple and sometimes contradictory logics to fit their interests and practical needs in specific local contexts. Thornton et al. (2012) explained, "While actors may reproduce behaviors consistent with existing institutional logics, they also have the capacity to innovate and thus transform institutional logics" (p.4).

Accordingly, while the preferences, interests, and behaviors of individuals and organizations are shaped by institutions, individuals and organizations can exploit the multiple and sometimes contradictory logics of institutions, thus transforming institutional relations. For example, when institutions are in conflict, individuals and organizations may mobilize to defend the symbols and practices of one institution from the implications of changes in others. Alternatively, they may attempt to export the symbols and practices of one institution to transform another (Friedland & Alford, 1991, p.255).

In short, institutional logics are constituted by symbols and material practices. Further, society is composed of multiple institutional logics that are available to individuals and organizations as bases for action. These multiple institutional logics available to individuals provide meanings and bases for change. Hence, individuals can manipulate and translate symbols and practices to fit their purposes, but this ability depends on both personal attributes and environmental conditions (Thornton et al., 2012).

This study adopts the institutional logics perspective to explain the contexts in which teachers are situated. The institutional logics perspective moves away from a focus on over-determination of individuals and organizations and standardization of social phenomena (as in world culture theory) toward agency and institutional sources of heterogeneity, without disregarding the role of social structure. However, the institutional logics perspective applies

social and cognitive psychology to address the micro foundations of individual agency, which is not the focus of this study.

Further, the institutional logic perspective has been criticized for not addressing the profile of power relations. According to Powell and Bromley (2015), institutional logics do not explain, for example, the conditions in which organizations and their members are likely to have autonomy from their context and when they are more constrained, or the variable nature of constraints and capacities of particular actors in different contexts (p.768). In this regard, this study is interested in individuals' perceptions of their contexts and their possibilities for autonomy in these contexts, which are permeated by power dynamics (Ball, 1993).

Accordingly, this study embraces the institutional logic perspective to describe accountability logic as constituted by cultural symbols and material practices that are socially constructed in a specific time and in different contexts. The institutional logics perspective is integrated with teacher autonomy theory that addresses power relations and how the state governs education and teachers through policy. Teacher autonomy theory includes the role of state-level policies in shaping teachers' work, as described next.

3.2. Teacher autonomy theory: addressing power relations

Teacher autonomy provides a theoretical basis for discussing the conditions in which teachers have control over the contents and frames of their work and when they are more constrained. This study employs teacher autonomy theory to address how the state governs education and teachers through policy, enhancing or constraining teachers' scope for decision-making and action (Frostenson, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017; Wermke et al., 2019).

This section highlights different degrees of implementation of accountability policy affecting teacher autonomy (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019). According to Verger et al. (2019), in high-stakes accountability countries, teachers may perceive restricted teacher autonomy because of an accountability system of strong state control through learning standards and measurement, usually combined with incentive regimes. Conversely, in low-stakes accountability countries and countries that have unevenly implemented accountability, teachers may perceive extended autonomy because of a lack of strong control mechanisms. These findings allow for the consideration of teachers' scope of

decision-making and action, from restricted to extended, within educational systems (Frostenson, 2015; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014). Moreover, research literature has also shown that the relationship between accountability and teacher perceived autonomy is not necessarily linear. In other words, teachers can act as policy adopters in some contexts and/or situations, but also as policy shapers that decide on the contents and frames of their work in other contexts and/or situations (see Chapter 2).

In this vein, research has provided some insight into power dynamics and the possibility of seeing teachers acting within the structural conditions of the educational systems. According to Stickney (2012), teachers are "not as humanists struggling free of oppression or neo-liberal individuals making independent choices, but as practitioners cast into working relations within rules originating in and outside educational institutions" (p.650).

Ball and Olmedo (2013) argued that institutional contexts, marked by accountability, productivity, and competition, can both constrain and enable teachers' practices. In this sense, teachers may be able to engage critically with policy discourses as well as with their own practices, beliefs, and values (Ball & Olmedo, 2013, p.92). However, this critical engagement depends on teachers' will and capacity, shaped by their contextual conditions (Priestley et al., 2012, 2015; Biesta et al., 2017). This critical engagement refers to teacher agency, which is the topic of the next section.

3.3. Teacher agency theory: exploring teachers' responses to policy

Priestley et al. (2012) argued that teacher agency is largely about repertoires for maneuvering or the possibilities for different forms of action available to teachers at specific points in time. Teacher agency may be achieved to enrich and challenge current educational policy discourses. This maneuvering between repertoires is illustrative of the reflexivity and creativity involved in agency, without disregarding societal constraints and possibilities.

Drawing on the works of Archer (1998, 2000), Priestley et al. (2012) assumed that individuals are reflexive agents influenced but not determined by society. Individuals may act to change their relationships in society, contributing to a continually emergent process of societal reproduction and transformation (Priestley et al., 2012), which is in line with the assumptions of institutional logics presented in this chapter (Section 3.1).

The concept of teacher agency draws particular attention to the day-to-day work in classrooms and schools, considering teachers' personal beliefs, values, and attributes as well as the conditions of the educational settings, in the sense that teachers act on and are affected by the resources and constraints in which they are situated (Berg & Wahlström, 2018; Erss, 2018; Priestley et al., 2012, 2015).

Priestley et al. (2012, 2015) designed an ecological approach to teacher agency by incorporating individual and contextual factors with temporal dimensions. This approach was based on the works of Emirbayer and Mische (1998), who developed a temporal theme of agency. The ecological approach to teacher agency highlighted that the achievement of agency is informed by teachers' life and professional histories (iterational dimension), oriented toward the future in some combination of shorter-term and long-term objectives, values, and aspirations (projective dimension), and situated in concrete situations with different types of resources available to teachers (practical-evaluative dimension). The resources are cultural, related to cultural ways of thinking, understanding, and talking about the issues and situations with oneself and others; material, referring to aspects such as the building environment and physical resources; and, social, related to the social relationships supporting or hindering the achievement of agency (Priestley et al., 2015, p.34).

In summary, the ecological approach to teacher agency considers multiple influences and temporal dimensions. The core assumption of the ecological model is that the achievement of teacher agency is informed by multiple levels of influence at different times, including individual, cultural, material, and social influences from the past, present, and future. The ecological model provides a framework for understanding the multiple interacting factors that influence the achievement of teacher agency.

In short, teacher agency depends on the scope of action that teachers have or perceive to have in their working environments, but the focus is on teachers' action, mediating social, cultural, and material resources through professional discretion to respond to educational dilemmas at hand (Biesta et al., 2017; Priestley et al., 2015).

According to Priestley et al. (2015), the achievement of agency is influenced by the iterative and projective dimensions but occurs only in the practical-evaluative dimension. This dimension emphasizes the practical, or what is practically possible and feasible in concrete

situations, and the evaluative, or the ways in which teachers evaluate both the issues at hand and the possibilities for action in concrete situations (Priestley et al., 2015, p.34).

According to Biesta et al. (2015, 2017), agency can be understood as an emerging phenomenon of actor-social structure interplay, not just the capacity of individuals. In this sense, individuals act as embedded in contexts, but, more than that, individuals act to respond to situational circumstances. Biesta et al. (2015) explained that individuals do not act only by habit or because of a specific purpose. For example, teachers may be driven by a perceived need to maintain a normal desirable state in the classroom. This desirable state can relate to short-term aspirations, such as checking curricular boxes, delivering enjoyable lessons, keeping students engaged and interested, and keeping classes quiet and well behaved, as well as to long-term aspirations, such as the aim of fostering democratic values (Biesta et al., 2015).

This study employs teacher agency theory to examine how teachers mediate policy characterized by accountability demands. Teachers engage with symbolic and material elements of accountability within and during the process of policy adoption, translating them according to their beliefs, values, and needs in the interest of students and learning (Biesta et al., 2015; Priestley, 2012, 2015). In this sense, teachers can adapt elements of policy in the process of adoption. They can also resist or contest policy either to work actively in the interest of learning or sometimes to keep with old ways of working (Ball & OImedo, 2013; Stickney, 2012). Teachers may also conform to policy to secure access to resources due to reward and sanction mechanisms (Ball, 2003).

3.4. Summary

Table 3.1 illustrates the theoretical framework of this study and the main concepts used in the discussion of the empirical findings.

Table 3.1. Theoretical framework of this study

Theories	How they are applied	Main concepts
Institutional logics	Describe the context in which teachers are embedded, which is formed by symbolic, material, and social construction elements at multiple levels of analysis	Institutional logic; symbolic, material, and social construction elements of an institutional logic
Teacher autonomy	Describe the relation between teachers and the state as a societal institution controlling teachers' work through policy, enhancing or limiting their autonomy or scope of decision-making and action	Teacher autonomy; restricted and extended teacher autonomy; governing of teachers' work
Teacher agency	Describe teachers' responses to policy, including teachers acting reflexively in their everyday contexts to address classroom situations	Teacher agency; achievement of agency; resistance, adaptation, translation, and conformity

Having addressed the role of social structure and action in the social sciences, this chapter focused on the descriptions of institutional logics, teacher autonomy, and teacher agency. These theories provide important theoretical views and concepts that are used in the discussion of the study's findings (Chapter 6). In this chapter, I reflected on the complex and dynamic relations between social structure and action. I presented the institutional logic perspective as a useful theory to understand accountability as an institutional logic with symbolic, material, and social-construction elements at multiple levels of analysis. I also drew attention to power dynamics and the role of the state in controlling teachers' practices through policy, characterized by accountability instruments and practices. Further, I presented the possibility for teacher agency under structural constraints. The point made in this chapter is that teachers can achieve agency and respond to policy in different ways. In this study, teacher agency has a positive connotation related to teachers' capacity for critical reflection, creativity, and definition of their own practices under structural constraints. Before the presentation and discussion of the study's main findings (Chapters 5 and 6), the next chapter presents the comparative approach, research methods, and issues of research credibility.

Chapter 4. Methodology and data

As shown in the previous chapter, this study addresses teacher autonomy and teacher agency in educational systems marked by accountability. This chapter presents the study's methodology and data sources. Methodological issues and issues of data collection and analysis are influenced by ontological assumptions about the nature of reality and the nature of things (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2018). Ontological assumptions, in turn, give rise to epistemological assumptions related to the ways of researching and enquiring into the nature of reality and the nature of things (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2018). Added to ontology and epistemology is axiology, which refers to the values and beliefs that we hold (Bryman, 2012; Cohen et al., 2018). In this chapter, I begin by discussing the use of a comparative and multi-method approach, which is based in a pragmatism perspective of educational phenomena (Cohen et al., 2018). After that, I describe the methodological issues of data collection and how I have conducted the analyses of the different types of data. Finally, I discuss research credibility by addressing the reliability, validity, and generalizability of the study's findings, as well as axiological questions related to my positionality as a researcher.

4.1. Comparative approach

A major premise for this study is the assumption that comparative research is useful for the description and classification of social phenomena as well as for hypothesis testing and prediction (Landman & Carvalho, 2017). While the first two objectives are the basis for any comparison, the second ones allow researchers to make claims about the outcomes of social phenomena in different contexts or future outcomes in a particular context (Landman & Carvalho, 2017, p.10).

Comparative researchers have argued that any comparative study should establish the parameters for initial comparability of the chosen object of study (Manzon, 2014; Landman & Carvalho, 2017; Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). These parameters in which two or more cases or contexts can be compared is a prerequisite for a valid comparison (Manzon, 2014; Landman & Carvalho, 2017). With the aim of establishing parameters for case selection, Steiner-Khamsi (2014) described four cases of comparability. The first two cases focus on similar outcomes (Quadrants I and III). The other two concentrate on different outcomes (Quadrants II and IV).

Table 4.1. Case selection in comparative policy studies according to Steiner-Khamsi (2014)

	Similar Outcomes	Different Outcomes
Similar Countries	Similar outcomes across similar countries (I)	Different outcomes across similar countries (II)
Different Countries	**Similar outcomes across different countries (III)**	Different outcomes across different countries (IV)

This study focuses on similar outcomes across different countries (Quadrant III) since it compares two countries with striking socio-economic, cultural, and political differences apart from the implementation of accountability measures in response to PISA (Imsen & Volckmar, 2014; Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Therrien & Loiola, 2001). However, global ideas vary according to national and local contexts (Arnove, 2013; Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). Although both countries have been affected by the global context marked by accountability, Norway shows a low-stakes accountability, while Brazil has much more strict accountability measures and forms of control of the teaching profession (see Chapters 1 and 5). These similarities and differences are fruitful for comparing and exploring teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency at the national and local levels.

Accordingly, this study adopts different levels of analysis (Bray et al., 2014; Manzon, 2014) by investigating, at the global level, the OECD as a global actor creating and disseminating the accountability logic; at the national level, policy-makers and curriculum documents adapting and translating this logic to the Brazilian and Norwegian contexts; and, at the individual level, Brazilian and Norwegian teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency within the accountability logic. Table 4.2 shows the levels of analysis of this study.

Table 4.2. Levels of analysis of this study

Global level	OECD as a global actor creating and disseminating the accountability logic
National level	Policy-makers and curriculum documents adapting and translating this logic to Brazilian and Norwegian contexts
Individual level	Brazilian and Norwegian teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency within the accountability logic

The global and national levels provide the context for the individual level, although teachers are also able to reflect on their structural conditions to find solutions to problematic situations (Biesta et al., 2015), thus influencing the national and global levels.

According to Bray et al. (2014), multilevel analyses of education phenomena recognize the ways in which patterns at the lower levels in education systems are shaped by patterns at higher levels and vice versa (p.10). In a similar vein, Manzon (2014) observed that analyses at the upper levels can contribute to a broad and general framework of educational patterns. In addition, micro-level studies, for example, those investigating individuals, classrooms, and schools, can reveal meaningful insights that complement and complete the picture captured in analyses at the macro levels, for example, studies investigating educational systems and states (p.129).

Comparative education researchers have also noted the benefits of combining different types of data to capture diverse perspectives of a phenomenon. Therefore, while the qualitative data sources privilege the detailed descriptions of micro levels of analysis, the quantitative data sources allow for the possibility of finding patterns that add to the understanding of social phenomena at the macro level (Landman & Carvalho, 2017; Manzon, 2014). Accordingly, micro-level qualitative work can be informed by the quantitative contributions from large-scale cross-national comparative studies. Complementarily, macro-level studies can benefit from micro-level studies that investigate the rich diversity at the micro levels of the schools, classrooms, and individuals, thereby giving balance, depth, and completeness to these studies (Manzon, 2014, p.130). The combination of different data types is aligned with the multi-method approach described in the next section.

4.2. Multi-method approach

The use of multiple methods can be founded in a pragmatist perspective of educational research, which argues for the complementarity of different kinds of data to better understand the complexity of the social phenomenon under investigation (Cohen et al., 2018). In this vein, quantitative and qualitative data are brought together to complement each other.

In this study, while quantitative data have generated patterns about teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in a context of accountability across nations, qualitative data have explored how teachers perceived the contexts in which they were embedded and the subjective

meanings for their actions in two national contexts with different levels of accountability: Norway and Brazil (for more information on the differences in accountability measures of these countries, see Chapters 1 and 5, Section 4.1, Articles 1 and 3).

In this study, pragmatism has offered an ontological and epistemological justification for the use of a multi-method approach in this dissertation. Ontologically, pragmatism sees the social world as a complex entity, having both subjective and objective dimensions (Cohen et al., 2018). Epistemologically, pragmatism argues for employing both quantitative and qualitative data to understand the complexity of the social world (Cohen et al., 2018). Thus, combining data and methods of enquiry helps researchers to understand, research, and answer research problems and questions.

As shown in Table 4.3, the different types of data were used in separate stages (articles) that addressed different levels of analysis—global, national, and individual. For example, quantitative data were used at the individual level (teachers) in Article 3, and qualitative data (documents and interviews) were used at all three levels (global, national, and individual) in all the articles, although not necessarily concomitantly. I have selected the data sources that I found most suitable to investigate each level of analysis. Further, the theories used in Articles 1 and 2 provided concepts and hypotheses to be explored in the subsequent quantitative data of Article 3. Table 4.3 shows the three articles with their levels of analysis and the data sources used in the analysis of each level.

Table 4.3. Levels of analysis and data sources of the three articles

Articles	Levels of analysis	Data sources
Article 1 **Teacher autonomy and teacher agency: a comparative study in Brazilian and Norwegian lower-secondary education**	Individual level	Teachers' interviews
Article 2 **National curriculum policy in Norway and Brazil: translations of the global accountability logic**	Global and national levels	OECD's policy documents and curriculum policy documents in Norway and Brazil
Article 3 **Comparing teacher autonomy in different models of educational governance**	Individual level	Teachers' interviews and secondary data

In the following, I present in more detail the data sources and analyses employed in this study.

4.3. Data sources

The following sections describe interviews, policy documents, and secondary data as data sources in this study.

4.3.1. Interviews

Articles 1 and 3 used interviews as data sources with the aim of gaining access to individuals' perceptions of their autonomy and meanings related to their actions in their working environments. The semi-structured interviews consisted of a predefined set of questions to ask the participants, but as the researcher, I was free to vary the sequence of the questions and ask more questions in response to what I saw as meaningful leads (Bryman, 2012).

According to Bryman (2012), the advantage of using semi-structured interviews is that the researcher can maintain the focus of the study while allowing space for the emerging views of the participants and, thereby, new ideas on the issues under investigation. Moreover, in the case of comparative studies, semi-structured interviews offer "some structure in order to ensure cross-case comparability" (Bryman, 2012, p.472).

In this study, the interview guide comprised 23 questions divided into several sub-questions (Appendix 3). The themes covered (1) background information, including questions about age, gender, nationality, and educational and professional backgrounds; (2) teaching practices, covering decision-making in relation to educational goals, content of lessons, learning material, teaching methods, and students' assessment; (3) teacher autonomy, including questions about teachers' perceptions and beliefs of their autonomy in schools and classrooms; (4) teaching appraisal and feedback, asking questions about their perceptions and beliefs about these themes and including a statement of the OECD's TALIS report to discuss with the informants; (5) teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction, including teachers' perceptions of their relationships with students, colleagues, and school leadership and asking their opinion about a statement from TALIS about the relationship between their sense of self-efficacy and environmental conditions, such as class size and problems of indiscipline; (6) professional development, including questions related to teachers' experiences and opinions about their participation in professional development activities and the support they receive to engage in these activities; and (7) professional organization, covering their participation in

and opinions about the work of professional organizations at the local, national, and global levels.

I previously defined a sample from 9 to 12 lower-secondary teachers, distributed in 3 to 4 public schools in each country. I gained access to 3 public schools in 1 municipality of São Paulo Federal State (Brazil) and 2 schools in 2 municipalities of Innlandet county (Norway). The final sample for the interviews included 20 participants, 11 Brazilian and 9 Norwegian.

In this study, the sampling goal was to capture the perceptions of teachers with different backgrounds (e.g., gender, age, years of work experience, and subject taught) that could influence their perceptions of teacher autonomy and meanings related to their achievement of agency in their local contexts of practice (Table 4.4).

Table 4.4. Research participants

Participant	Gender	Age (years)	Years of teaching experience	Subject	School
BT01	F	51	22	History	B
BT02	F	53	33	Geography	A
BT03	M	31	3	History	C
BT04	F	54	33	History	A
BT05	F	53	34	Mathematics	A
BT06	M	33	12	English	B
BT07	F	49	26	Geography	A
BT08	F	37	9	History	B
BT09	M	54	30	Sciences	A
BT10	F	44	26	Sciences	A
BT11	M	41	17	Portuguese	C
NT01	M	28	18 months	English, Physical Education	D
NT02	F	35	11	Mathematics	E
NT03	F	37	10	English, Christianity, Religion and Ethics	E
NT04	F	23	6 months	English, French	D
NT05	M	Ca. 40	16	Norwegian, Physical Education	D
NT06	M	Ca. 40	10	Christianity, Religion and Ethics, Social Sciences, Mathematics	E
NT07	F	Ca. 40	17	Christianity, Religion and Ethics, Mathematics, Social Sciences	D
NT08	M	Ca. 50	23	Mathematics	D
NT09	F	Ca. 50	14	Mathematics, Physical Education	D

Note: BT means Brazilian Teacher, and NT means Norwegian Teacher. F means Female, and M means Male. The schools are anonymized by letters. A, B and C correspond to Brazilian schools and D and E to Norwegian schools.

In Brazil, I used my social positions and resources as a former teacher and having family members working in public schools to contact the first teachers who fulfilled the research criteria, which were teachers working in lower-secondary education in public schools. These teachers provided the contacts of other teachers and facilitated my visits to schools, where I

could contact other participants. Hence, the combination of the sampling techniques known as "snowball sampling" and direct contact with the participants ensured a minimum number of cases in Brazil. According to research on methods, "snowball sampling" consists of previously identified group members contributing to the identification of additional members to generate sufficient cases for the analysis (Bryman, 2012; Schreier, 2018; Thomas, 2006).

However, I was not able to choose my sample entirely freely, which caused some biases. For example, the number of teachers was not evenly distributed between the schools (Table 4.4). Of the participants, six were from school A, three from school B, and two from school C. In addition, since participation was voluntary, the research covered specific groups of participants, that is, those with whom I had some sort of relationship who were interested in educational issues and comparative research.

In Norway, the contact with teachers happened through the school principals, who were the gatekeepers responsible for informing the teachers about my study and getting their enrolment. I had no prior relationship with the school principals, and our communication happened by email. The principals provided teachers' emails so I could communicate with them to schedule the interviews. I interviewed nine teachers in Norway, six in school D and three in school E (Table 4.4). One problem with sampling in Norway was that I had no information about how the teachers were convinced to participate and, by extension, their level of commitment to the study.

I conducted the interviews in the official languages of these countries, Portuguese in Brazil and Norwegian in Norway. I recorded all the interviews and took notes during the interview process.

4.3.2. Policy documents

Article 2 employed policy documents as data sources with the aim of providing descriptions of the global and national contexts in which teachers were situated. Article 2 used the OECD's policy documents to illustrate how the OECD produces and disseminates the accountability logic in their reports. In addition, this article used white papers and national curricula as data sources to describe how these policy documents adopt accountability as a global logic at the national level. All the policy documents used in Article 2 are publicly available on official websites, which facilitated my access to them.

The OECD's documents were as follows:

- OECD (2014). A Teachers' Guide to TALIS 2013: Teaching and Learning International Survey. OECD Publishing. http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264216075-en
- OECD (2016). Ensuring Accountability in Education, in Education Governance in Action: Lessons from Case Studies. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264262829-7-en
- OECD (2020). TALIS 2018 Results (Volume II): Teachers and School Leaders as Valued Professionals. OECD Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1787/19cf08df-en

In this study, the white papers selected were the two most recent ones in Norway and the three in Brazil that dealt with core principles and values attached to basic education. The curriculum documents selected were the general part of the most recent curricula (for a detailed description of the selection criteria, see Article 2).

The Norwegian and Brazilian white papers and the Brazilian national curriculum were in their original language, and I translated the citations used in Article 2. The Norwegian core curriculum had an English version. The national curriculum documents were as follows:

- In Norway, Report to the Parliament no. 28 - Subjects - Specialization – Understanding. A Renewal of the Knowledge Promotion (MER, 2016), Report to the Parliament no. 21 - Desire for Learning - Early Efforts and Quality in School (MER, 2017), and The Core Curriculum - Values and Principles for Primary and Secondary Education and Training (DET, 2017).
- In Brazil, Report no. 07/2010, which defines General National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (NBE, 2010a); Reports no. 08/2010 and no. 03/2019, which deal with the minimum standards of quality education for Public Basic Education (NBE, 2010b; NBE, 2019) and Common National Curriculum Base for Child and Basic Education (ME, 2017), introductory chapters.

The next section describes the use of secondary data in this study.

4.3.3. Secondary data

Article 3 used secondary data to measure teacher autonomy through a concept defined and operationalized by the OECD. Some advantages of using secondary data are the possibility of having a scale, scope, and amount of data much larger and more representative than a single

researcher could gather (Cohen et al., 2018). The researcher does not face challenges with financing the data collection, finding time to collect data, gaining access to people, or obtaining permissions from gatekeepers, among other difficulties. Moreover, access to secondary data is often low-cost or even free of charge, with immediate accessibility typically without many rigid procedures. Some disadvantages are that this data may not be a perfect fit for the study's conceptual framework and, by extension, may not measure all the possible relationships between variables (Cohen et al., 2018). I describe the way I have addressed these disadvantages in Section 4.4.3.

In this study, access to secondary data was uncomplicated and free of charge. I worked with the sampling, sources of data, and scales of OECD TALIS 2018. The secondary data sources were as follows:

- TALIS 2018 Database. http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/talis-2018-data.htm. This database contains files in SAS, SPSS, and STATA formats.
- OECD (2019). TALIS 2018 Technical Report. OECD Publishing. http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/TALIS_2018_Technical_Report.pdf. This technical report details the steps, procedures, methodologies, standards, and rules that TALIS 2018 used to collect data. The primary purpose of the report is to support its readers and users of the public international database when interpreting results, contextualizing information, and utilizing the data.

4.4. Analyses

This section describes how I carried out the analysis of the data sources used in this study.

4.4.1. Analyzing interviews

This section deals with the analysis of interviews as reported in Articles 1 and 3.

I transcribed the records in their original language and in their entirety. Accordingly, the analysis of the interviews occurred in their original language, and I translated into English the passages used in this study.

The process of analysis consisted of finding examples in the documents of predefined themes informed by the research literature on teacher autonomy. The themes were internal and external control, individual, collegial, and professional teacher autonomy. According to

Mausethagen and Mølstad (2015), there are different sources of decision-making and control regarding teachers' work, one exercised by within school actors, which can be defined as internal control, and the other exercised by outside school actors, which can be defined as external control. The themes of individual, collegial, and professional autonomy were described in Chapter 2 and Articles 1 and 3. These themes allowed me to capture teachers' working conditions and scope for action in Norway's and Brazil's schools (Appendix 5 provides an example of the analysis).

According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), in this type of "direct content analysis," the themes emerge from existing theory and research in a deductive process. Generally, the process of coding begins with predefined themes, but new ones also emerge in the process of analysis. The findings offer supporting and non-supporting evidence for a theory, presented by showing themes with examples and by offering descriptions.

First, I highlighted in the Word documents of the transcriptions the passages that addressed the themes for teacher autonomy, which were internal and external control, individual, collegial, and professional teacher autonomy. Thus, the first phase of analysis consisted of coding the transcriptions based on predefined themes for teacher autonomy. After that, I selected examples of these themes to present in the articles by offering descriptions for each country case. Consequently, the empirical findings supported and extended research for teacher autonomy in an informed way.

Second, I employed an additional phase of analysis in Article 1. This additional phase involved coding the interviews using themes from teacher agency theory and then presenting new descriptions in the discussion section. The use of themes from teacher agency extended the discussion of the findings analytically by describing what teachers do with the scope for action that they perceive to have, or how they iteratively mediate policy to develop teaching practices. The first theme was "play it safe," which means that teachers may not agree with the content of the policy, but they follow it to avoid social and material sanctions. The second theme was "go with the flow," which refers to teachers internalizing policy without posing critical questions regarding the content of this policy. The third was "change," referring to teachers adapting policy according to their professional values and beliefs, such as using results of large-scale standardized tests for formative purposes like providing feedback and planning strategies to encourage students' development in the subject. The fourth was

"resistance," in which teachers do not identify themselves within the content of the policy and consequently, do not engage with policy. Article 1 placed "change" and "resistance" as examples of teacher agency in contrast to "play it safe" and "go with the flow" as counterexamples.

In Article 3, the empirical findings of the interviews were contrasted with the findings from the secondary data analysis, bringing balance, depth, and completeness to the quantitative results.

Even though Articles 1 and 3 used the same themes for teacher autonomy, I took care to select different quotes and a great variety of informants in the presentation of the empirical findings in these two articles.

4.4.2 Analyzing policy documents

This section addresses the analysis of policy documents conducted in Article 2 (Appendix 6 provides an example of the analysis).

Article 2 illustrated how national contexts adopt the accountability logic produced and disseminated by the OECD at the global level. With the aim of illustrating the OECD's policy discourses on accountability, I searched in the OECD's policy documents for passages connected to themes related to educational accountability, which were informed by research literature (e.g., Bergh, 2015; Mausethagen, 2013; Verger et al., 2019).

These themes were accountability and education for all, in which the use of accountability instruments makes students' learning outcomes visible to educational actors so that they can learn from countries and schools showing the "best results" and adjust their policies and practices to ensure better quality education for all. The second theme was managerial accountability, which refers to the role of the school leadership as a source of authority in establishing goals and applying the means to achieve specific goals, for example, linking the achievement of goals with formal and informal rewards and sanctions. The third theme was professional accountability, referring to formal and informal regulative mechanisms exercised by the professional community on individual teachers with the aim of increasing teachers' commitment to improving students' learning outcomes.

These themes were not exhaustive, which means that other themes could have been included in the analysis. However, they assisted in the presentation of the OECD's policy documents and in the analysis of the national curriculum documents.

Second, I searched for passages in the national curriculum documents connected to the themes previously presented. In the analysis of national curriculum documents, I was watchful for the emergence of new themes. One example was the theme "questioning of accountability" that emerged from the analysis of the Brazilian documents.

4.4.3. Analyzing secondary data

One advantage of using secondary data is the possibility of applying different approaches and perspectives not undertaken in the original research (Cohen et al., 2018, pp.587–588). I used the OECD's definition and scale of "satisfaction with classroom autonomy" to analyze individual teacher autonomy (Frostenson, 2015). In addition, I expanded this definition by using other definitions and scales from the OECD to approach collegial and professional teacher autonomy (Frostenson, 2015).

Further, I employed secondary data from OECD TALIS 2018 to investigate the hypothesis that teachers in countries with strong accountability instruments (i.e., independent variable) report low perceived autonomy (i.e., dependent variable), considering theory on models of educational governance (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

One challenge of using secondary data is that this data may not be a perfect fit for the study's conceptual framework (Cohen et al., 2018). In this study, the definition of teacher autonomy used in the original data was not a perfect fit for the research, and I expanded this definition by borrowing other OECD definitions and scales related to the concepts of collegial and professional teacher autonomy. In addition to this limitation, the OECD's scales did not address all the possible elements of the concepts of individual, collegial, and professional teacher autonomy. However, they did include critical aspects related to these concepts; as a result, they can be considered adequate proxies for analyzing the different dimensions of teacher autonomy (see Article 3 for a detailed description of the potentialities and limitations of the scales).

This study used the statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 26. I conducted descriptive analyses of the three scales corresponding to the three levels of teacher autonomy for all the sampled countries. In addition, I expanded the information provided by the OECD by calculating frequencies for all the items of the scales. I have divided the sampled countries into different categories of educational governance related to the implementation of accountability measures, as mentioned before (see also Article 3).

4.5. Research credibility

Research credibility highlights the notion of defensible research (Johnson & Christensen, 2017). In the following sections, I discuss the reliability, validity, and generalizability of this study before addressing axiological questions related to my positionality as a researcher.

First, one important observation to make is regarding my positionality as a researcher and the selection of theory, data sources, and methods. I have selected theory, data sources, and methods that I found most suitable to answer the research problem and questions. These selections were based on my personal, academic, and professional backgrounds. There are certainly other ways of addressing the research problem and questions, which could bring new perspectives to the phenomenon under investigation. In this regard, I have sought to be transparent regarding my positionality and methodological choices, describing the use of different types of data and methods so that other researchers can evaluate the reliability and validity of the findings, complementing, criticizing, and advancing the knowledge about the issues under enquiry.

4.5.1. Reliability

According to Johnson and Christensen (2017), research reliability is present when the same results would be obtained if the study were replicated (p.283). In this section, I address reliability in the use of interviews, policy documents, and secondary data.

Johnson and Christensen (2017) observed that qualitative research does not have the goal of generating findings that are replicable. Instead, this type of research describes the perceptions of a particular group of people about a particular phenomenon in a particular context. Despite the focus on particularities, patterns and hypotheses might emerge from the detailed description of participants and contexts. Based on these patterns and hypotheses, other researchers can verify their replicability to the same or other groups of people and contexts.

With the aim of promoting reliability in the use of interviews, I provided detailed descriptions about the number and backgrounds of the research participants, the process of selection of the research participants, the nature of my relationship with them, the method of data collection, and the strategy used for data analysis (Sections 4.3.1 and 4.4.1). Having these descriptions at hand, other researchers can decide whether and how the findings of this study can apply to the same or other groups of participants and contexts.

Regarding the use of interviews, one important observation to make is that the country cases are Brazil and Norway, but the sample of teachers was taken from schools in São Paulo State and Innlandet county. Other perspectives could have been captured if I had interviewed different teachers and teachers in other contexts. In this sense, the findings and conclusions related to the findings need to be viewed with caution.

In the document analysis, I sought to compare policy documents with a reasonable level of functional equivalence. In other words, the documents had similar functions in both countries. As described in Article 2, white papers are reports that can provide the basis for a draft resolution or bill at a later stage in the Parliament (Norway) or Congress (Brazil). Further, both countries have centralized national curricula that describe core competencies and minimum content with the aim of guiding assessments and other curriculum policies.

The description of the processes and criteria for selection of the documents combined with the description of the analyses aimed to ensure the study's reliability. In addition, these descriptions can enable other researchers to compare the findings of this study with the findings of other studies that use the same types of documents to verify their possible replicability.

In the secondary data analysis conducted for Article 3, I ensured that the variables used in this study had some level of consistency with the measures or scales from OECD TALIS 2018. I provided descriptions of the scales produced by the OECD and their fit with the theoretical concepts used in this article. I also informed the statistical tests used for Article 3. Therefore, other researchers can repeat the tests to obtain the same results.

4.5.2. Validity

Research validity refers to the correctness or truthfulness of the inferences that are made from the results of the study (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015; Johnson & Christensen, 2017). This

section describes several strategies that I have used to promote research validity, such as the use of multiple data sources and methods, member checking, and peer review.

According to Johnson and Christensen (2017), the use of multiple data sources adds different perspectives to the study's object, which results in a more complete understanding of the phenomenon (p.24). For example, the use of quantitative data provided knowledge about teacher perceived autonomy across countries to be explored in the interviews. In turn, the interviews provided detailed examples of teacher perceived autonomy that illustrated and balanced the quantitative data. In addition, the use of policy documents at the global and national levels provided contextual information for teachers' perceptions depicted in the interviews. The interviews showed how teachers related to policy at the national level.

Another strategy for promoting validity was the use of multiple methods. I combined the qualitative analysis of interviews and policy documents with the quantitative analysis of secondary data. In this regard, the results of one method balanced and completed the results of other methods. For example, the results of the secondary data analysis showed that Norwegian and Brazilian teachers were satisfied with their classroom autonomy. Accordingly, the interview findings supported the results of the secondary data, but they also showed that teachers acknowledged control mechanisms that are part of educational accountability.

I also employed member checking during the conduction of the interviews, which refers to the discussion of my interpretations with the study's participants for verification, insight, and deeper understanding (Johnson & Christensen, 2017, p.299). I adopted member checking during the interviews by using descriptions phrased very similarly to the participants' accounts to confirm their interpretations, thereby reinforcing the truthfulness of the inferences made from the interviews.

I also shared and discussed the study's theoretical constructs and empirical findings with other researchers so that they could identify any problems in them, a strategy known as peer review (Johnson & Christensen, 2017, p.299). This strategy provided useful challenges and insights, which made me in some cases go back to reanalyze the data and reread the theory with the aim of improving this study.

4.5.3. Generalizability

This section deals with the generalizability of the findings to and across groups of people, contexts, times, and outcomes (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Johnson & Christensen, 2017). Research literature has presented alternative concepts to the concept of generalizability, such as "transferability" (Schreier, 2018) and "analytic generalization" (Yin, 2012).

According to Schreier (2018), "transferability" refers to the possibility of empirical findings from one study being used in other studies. The researcher is responsible for providing a "thick description" of the empirical findings so that readers can judge their fittingness to other studies. In a similar vein, Yin (2012) described "analytic generalization" as researchers building a theory or identifying causal mechanisms from selected cases so that readers may depart from this theory or logic to verify their possible applicability to other cases.

Brinkman and Kvale (2015) reinforced the interdependency of the role of researchers and readers in the process of generalization by describing "researcher-based analytical generalization" and "reader-based analytical generalization." (p.297). The former refers to the researcher's ability to describe in what ways a theoretical explanation developed in a study fits the empirical findings. The latter refers to the reader's ability to judge whether the empirical findings can be generalized to other studies.

In this study, I sought to promote both "transferability" and "analytical generalization." First, I have provided a detailed description of the study's contexts, participants, data sources, analyses, and empirical findings. Second, I have sought to develop a study grounded in both theoretical constructs and empirical findings. By doing this, readers can engage with theory and findings to decide on their possible applicability to other studies.

4.5.4. Researcher's positionality and ethical considerations

My personal and professional backgrounds and experiences were important in the formulation and conduction of this study. They also brought some peculiarities and complexities that I address in this section.

Contemporary theories have portrayed culture as a set of practices, customs and beliefs, social positions, and resources that a particular group of people invokes when performing actions or telling stories. Different cultural norms emerge not only from external groups, but also within the researcher's own society when interviewing across gender, generation, social class, and

religion. However, they are usually not as pronounced as those differences across societies and countries (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

I am part of different cultures, making use of different social positions and resources as a woman, a former public-school teacher, a PhD candidate at a Norwegian higher education institution, a Brazilian living in Norway, and so on. Using a metaphor presented by Jackson and Mazzei (2012), I am "outside in" the educational machine. In Brazil, I am "in" because I worked as a teacher in different public schools, but I am "out" because I am living abroad and away from the classrooms for a couple of years. In Norway, I am "in" for being a PhD candidate studying teachers and the teaching profession and "out" for not mastering the practices and customs of this country. My positionalities and backgrounds affected issues related to sampling and gaining access to participants, as mentioned before, as well as issues related to building rapport with the participants.

Islam and Banda (2011) identified and acknowledged similarities and differences that cross-cultural researchers encounter in the field. I perceive the cultural differences between Brazil and Norway in a less striking way than those portrayed by these authors between the North (United Kingdom) and the South (Zambia and Bangladesh), or what they call universal knowledge from the North and indigenous knowledge systems from the South. The latter is generally seen as inferior and less scientific than the former. Additionally, they reflected on power relations and ethical issues, exploring the researcher's positionality (Islam & Banda, 2011).

Like Islam and Banda (2011), although I am or have been a member of the group, as a Brazilian and a public school teacher, the teachers saw me as someone who was no longer active, but studying and living abroad in a country with better conditions of life and work than Brazil. This perception may have inhibited the enrolment of more participants in the research. Teachers also saw me as someone who was part of or in direct contact with the Brazilian government.

Another commonality with Islam and Banda (2011) is the culture of rewarding respondents. In Brazil, letting teachers choose the location of the interviews, paying for coffees, and giving chocolates as gifts are forms of showing appreciation for their participation in the study. Therefore, they are not considered bribes that could cause participants any sort of embarrassment. Moreover, interviewing teachers with whom I had little or no previous

contact in out-of-school settings, such as coffee shops, even made the interviews more intimate and spontaneous. It is important to mention that, in Brazil, the schools I visited did not have offices and private rooms in which I could conduct the interviews. Consequently, some of the interviews that happened in the school settings, in the staff or Personal Computer rooms, suffered interruptions from colleagues, students, and the school leader, who wanted to communicate with the participant.

I conducted all the Brazilian interviews in Portuguese, which is my mother tongue. I also transcribed them in Portuguese and translated the passages used in this study into English, as described before (Section 4.4.1). Although I have translated the passages of the interviews from their original language to English, I sought to present with accuracy the participants' viewpoints by providing translations phrased very similarly to the participants' accounts with sufficient explanations, thus being respectful to their meanings and interpretations.

In Norway, I interviewed all the participants in school settings, in separate rooms that maintained the privacy and confidentiality of the interview. I had no gifts for participants, and they occasionally offered me a cup of coffee before starting the interview. I conducted the interviews in Norwegian so that they could feel more comfortable when talking. As explained before (Section 4.4.1), I transcribed the interviews in Norwegian and translated the passages used in this study into English, taking the same precautions that I took with Brazilian teachers to preserve the participants' viewpoints.

In general, the answers of the Norwegian teachers were straightforward with almost no digressions, which resulted in interviews with shorter durations in comparison with the Brazilian interviews. On average, each interview in Norway was 50 minutes versus 1 hour and 30 minutes in Brazil. On some occasions, I avoided asking directly about teachers' age in Norway because I felt that this could be too invasive for them. Consequently, this choice is reflected in the inaccuracy of ages for the Norwegian teachers in Table 4.4. However, I believe that I have established good relations, developing a sense of rapport that led to feelings of trust and confidence. As pointed out by Brenner (2006), cross-cultural interviewing is a collaborative performance where both interviewer and interviewee cross cultural boundaries in order to create a new kind of interpersonal context that requires trust and mutual understanding (pp.365–366), which I believe happened in Norway.

I took precautions to preserve the privacy of all the participants. According to Cohen et al. (2018), the "right to privacy means that a person has the right not to take part in the research, not to answer questions, not to be interviewed, not to have their home intruded into, not to answer telephones or emails" (p.129). Hence, I asked for the consent of all participants and explained the background and purpose of the study as well as what participation in the research implied. I also informed them that they could withdraw from the study at any time without the need to provide any reasons (see the information letter to participants in the English version in Appendix 2).

I also addressed privacy and protection from harm by keeping the anonymity of the participants. Cohen et al. (2018) explained that "[t]he essence of anonymity is that information provided by participants should in no way reveal their identity" (p.129). Ensuring anonymity is important since divergent opinions and practices could result in negative consequences for the participants. For example, they could experience stigma and receive formal or informal sanctions if their responses or practices were not part of the mainstream and could be traced to them.

In this regard, I did not write down personal data that could uniquely identify the participant from the information provided. In addition, I identified teachers by numbers instead of a person's name. I also ensured non-traceability by identifying schools by letters so that the data could not be combined to identify an individual. Cohen et al. (2018) stated that "[o]ne way of protecting a participant's right to privacy is through the promise of confidentiality: not disclosing information from a participant in any way that might identify that individual or that might enable the individual to be traced" (p.130).

The fact that teachers knew that their answers were confidential potentially led them to address more openly their beliefs, values, experiences, and relations to students, colleagues, and school leaders. Therefore, with the aim of keeping my promise of confidentiality, I took care not to pass on information to others in any form that could identify individuals.

Regarding the use of documents as data sources, specifically the ones in their original language, I sought to present with accuracy the quotations translated in this study by providing sufficient explanations and complete references to be defensible to their original meanings. The same applied to the other documents and secondary data. I acknowledged the

ownership of the policy documents and the secondary data (i.e., national governments and the OECD). I also took precautions in reporting and dissemination, for example, reporting the findings in an honest, true, and fair manner, and in a format that the audiences of the research will be able to access and understand (Cohen et al., 2018, p.139).

Finally, this study received ethical clearance from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data, which is a national center and archive for research data that has the goal of ensuring that data about people and society can be collected, stored, and shared, both safely and legally (for the Approval of the research, see Appendix 1).

4.6. Summary

This chapter started by discussing the use of a comparative approach in educational research. It presented four reasons for comparison, starting from the less complex processes of description and classification to the most complex processes of hypothesis testing and prediction (Landman & Carvalho, 2017). Accordingly, this chapter showed that this comparative study covered the four reasons for comparison proposed by Landman and Carvalho (2017). First, this study provided descriptions of contexts and individuals' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency in the country cases. Second, this study created classifications based on theoretically derived criteria to categorize educational systems marked by accountability, teachers' perceptions of their autonomy, and achievement of agency in these different contexts. Third, a hypothesis regarding the relationship between accountability systems and teachers' perceptions of their autonomy was tested. Finally, this study provided new empirical knowledge about teacher autonomy and teacher agency in different educational systems marked by accountability.

This chapter also provided parameters for the comparison of the country cases. Besides my personal and professional backgrounds that favored the investigation of these two countries, I chose the countries because they represent similar outcomes across different contexts (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). Both countries implemented educational reforms with accountability purposes in the 2000s in response to the PISA results, as indicated by literature about Norway (Camphuijsen et al., 2020; Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Imsen & Volckmar, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015) and Brazil (Barreto, 2012; Therrien & Loiola, 2001; Villani & Oliveira, 2018). However, Norway represents a low-stakes accountability system, while Brazil can be characterized as having a high-stakes accountability system (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020;

Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019; see also Chapter 1, Section 1.2). Therefore, by accommodating both convergence and divergence, this study adds to the understanding of teacher autonomy and teacher agency in the context of educational accountability.

Further, this chapter presented the use of a multi-method approach, in which each kind of data relates to different levels of analysis. In this study, I have used documents to investigate the global and national levels alongside interviews and secondary data to investigate the individual level. The global and national levels provided the contexts for teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency at the individual level. The combination of data and methods of enquiry took a pragmatist perspective that argues for the complementarity of different kinds of data to better understand the complexity of the social phenomenon under investigation (Cohen et al., 2018).

This chapter also addressed issues of credibility by providing detailed descriptions of the data sources, the processes of selection, and the analysis of the data. It also described strategies to ensure reliability and discussed validity issues. Finally, this chapter addressed my positionality as a researcher and ethical considerations. My personal and professional backgrounds and experiences are important in the formulation and conduction of this study. They have also brought some peculiarities and challenges that I sought to ethically address in this study. The next chapter is a summary of the articles that form this dissertation.

Chapter 5. Summary of the articles

This chapter presents a summary of each of the three articles in the dissertation, with emphasis on the main findings (see Appendix 6 for a table summarizing the articles).

5.1. Article 1

Lennert da Silva, Ana Lucia, & Mølstad, Christina Elde. (2020). Teacher autonomy and teacher agency: a comparative study in Brazilian and Norwegian lower-secondary education. *Curriculum Journal (London, England)*, 31(1), 115–131. https://doi.org/10.1002/curj.3

Article 1 aimed to explore established theory on teacher autonomy and teacher agency, using empirical data gathered in a comparative study between Norway and Brazil. The research questions were:

- How can Brazilian and Norwegian teachers' autonomy be interpreted with respect to nation-specific characteristics of the respective school settings in an accountability system?
- What might teacher autonomy mean for Brazilian and Norwegian teachers' agency in an age of accountability?

The data collection was based on semi-structured interviews conducted with teachers working in public lower-secondary education in Brazil and Norway in 2018 (for a description of the themes covered by the interview guide as well as participants and schools involved in this study, see Section 4.3.1; for the Interview guide, see Appendix 3).

The process of data analysis consisted of coding the interviews based on themes derived from the literature on teacher autonomy and teacher agency, as described in Chapter 4 (Section 4.4.1). The main findings showed that teachers responded in different ways to accountability policies, depending on the features of the national and local contexts in which they were located.

Regarding the national contexts, both countries have national education systems with strong control mechanisms. In Brazil, the state centralizes the design of the curriculum and testing, the hiring of personnel, the allocation of resources, and the bonus payment for school staff

members who meet performance targets. Municipal authorities support the central state by passing on orders, providing short-term professional development courses, receiving school reports, and monitoring schools. The Brazilian informants reported that they must write daily reports on their work with the aim of improving students' learning outcomes. Some of them perceived the requirements of report writing as negative and representing an extended demand over their work. The Brazilian informants also explained that they adjust their teaching to meet the contents and competencies provided by the curriculum. Additionally, they were recommended to use a booklet produced by the educational authority, which indicated a restricted individual teacher autonomy. However, constrained teacher autonomy does not necessarily mean restricted teacher agency. In this case, some of the Brazilian informants resisted using the booklets for several reasons. One teacher expressed that the content of these booklets was too basic, while another stated that the lessons were too difficult for the students. A third informant explained that the activities were disconnected from the reality of the classroom, and one simply stated that she has her own way to work with students.

In Norway, the state centralizes the design of the curriculum and testing and gives monetary support to municipalities to invest in professional development courses in specific areas of interest, such as mathematics, information and communication technologies, and student mentoring. However, despite strong national control, the Norwegian informants reported that they could create their own teaching material in accordance with the goals and competencies of the national curriculum, which indicates some possibility for individual teacher autonomy. In addition, some of the Norwegian informants perceived the curriculum as helpful in ensuring equal access to a decent standard of educational provision. They also reported planning their teaching in line with the national curriculum and results of national large-scale assessments to foster students' development in the subject. Conversely, some of the Norwegian informants were critical to the use of large-scale assessment results because they ignore students' particularities and refuse to use them in their planning.

Regarding the local contexts, the Norwegian schools presented lighter forms of control than the Brazilian schools. Norwegian teachers mentioned collegial work, classroom observation, and teaching sharing as forms of control over their work that also functioned as supportive practices. By contrast, Brazilian teachers reported that the possibilities for collegial work were

scarce due to an intensive workload and lack of support from the school leadership. In addition, the Brazilian schools had cameras in classrooms and hallways to monitor the behavior of students and teachers, which indicates strong surveillance practices. However, this working climate of low trust did not hinder some of the informants from resisting by showing indifference to the use of cameras in classrooms, as in the case of a teacher who explained that this practice does not affect her way of being and teaching.

In summary, the Brazilian teachers suffered greater control and perceived constrained opportunities for decision-making and action compared to their Norwegian counterparts. However, the relationship between restricted teacher autonomy and the achievement of teacher agency is not necessarily linear. The Brazilian informants achieved agency using creativity in some cases. For example, Brazilian teachers have manipulated skills and used creativity to solve problems regarding a lack of material resources, as the case of the teacher who paid Internet access to use with students' mobile phones during lessons. The same can be stated for the Norwegian teachers. They were also able to manipulate the demands made on them to get extra help and to participate in professional development activities when they perceived them as necessary. Moreover, in the case of Norway, the practice of collective work allowed for the achievement of teacher agency because of the possibility of reflection and collective construction of teaching plans and strategies that frame and legitimize their work. The Norwegian informants, particularly the news to the profession, perceived collective work as positive because it allowed them to plan and share good practices, increasing their sense of autonomy in the classroom.

5.2. Article 2

Lennert da Silva, Ana Lucia, & Parish, Karen. (2020). National curriculum policy in Norway and Brazil. *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 4(2), 64–83. https://doi.org/10.7577/njcie.3721

Article 2 aimed to study how national curriculum policy adopts accountability as a global logic promoted by the OECD. The research question was:

- In what ways does the national curriculum policy of Norway and Brazil adopt the accountability logic?

In this article, I employed thematic analysis of national curriculum policies in Brazil and Norway. The selection of the documents and the process of analysis are described in Chapter 4 (Sections 4.3.2 and 4.4.2).

The findings showed that both Brazilian and Norwegian curriculum policies aligned with the OCED's policy discourses that produced and disseminated the global accountability logic. Both Brazilian and Norwegian curriculum policy aligned with the global logic of accountability combined with the promotion of the social value of a better-quality education for all, as promoted by the OECD (Schleicher, 2019). In Brazil, the documents showed that the adoption of accountability was a way of aligning with the international scenario as well as reducing inequalities by offering the same learning opportunities for all students (ME, 2017; NBE, 2010b). In Norway, the adoption of accountability ensured equal conditions for all students to perform well on national and international tests, irrespective of their backgrounds (MER, 2016, 2017). The Norwegian documents presented the argument that closing performance gaps ensures that all students get the same benefits from the educational offer, helping them in further education as well as participation in the labor market and society (MRE, 2017), which indicates an alignment with the OECD's policy discourses.

In addition, the curriculum documents in both countries argued for a decentralization of responsibilities to schools, which also aligned with policy recommendations from the OECD (OECD, 2020). However, while Brazilian documents highlighted a democratic model of accountability where local actors use knowledge of student achievement to overcome local

weaknesses and reduce inequalities (NBE, 2010a), the Norwegian documents focused on a hierarchical form of accountability where the school leadership uses knowledge of student achievement to organize resources and strategies to improve students' learning outcomes (MER, 2017).

In a related vein, professional collaboration in Norway appeared to be a legitimate control mechanism intended to hold teachers' accountable for improving students' learning outcomes (MER, 2017), as in the OECD's policies (OECD, 2014). In contrast, the Brazilian documents described a democratic form of school management in which the school and the local community cooperated to decide on goals to improve educational quality (NBE, 2010b), which does not necessarily mean that this happens in practice.

This article showed that Norwegian curriculum policy presented a cohesive adoption of the global logic of accountability. There was no direct contestation in the documents analyzed (MER, 2016, 2017). By contrast, the Brazilian curriculum policy argued that the use of indicators and statistical data should be one of many other tools in the process of democratic construction of educational quality (NBE, 2010a, 2010b), a position supported by groups with critical political views (Macedo, 2019). The Brazilian curriculum policy also contained arguments that the use of indicators and standards does not take into account regional characteristics and aspects related to the government's economy; as such, they should not be used as criteria for educational investments (NBE, 2019). This view is carried by ultraliberal groups that have dominated the political scenario in Brazil in recent times (Macedo, 2019).

In summary, the findings showed commonalities and differences in the adoption of the accountability logic produced and disseminated by the OECD, highlighted by coherence and contradictions that have emerged from the analysis of the two countries' curriculum documents. One of the commonalities was the assumption in both Norway and Brazil that accountability can lead to better-quality education for all, which provides legitimation for the adoption of testing systems, in line with the global accountability logic as produced and disseminated by the OECD.

The differences were expressed by the existence of coherent and contradictory logics in the national curriculum policy of these two countries. For example, Norwegian policy documents presented the adoption of accountability as a way of ensuring quality education for all, which

justified the implementation of a testing system, the redistribution of responsibilities to schools, and the focus on collaboration as a form of holding teachers accountable for students' learning outcomes. Conversely, the Brazilian policy documents reflected the existence of different social groups and tensions in policy-making evidenced by contradictions within the same piece of documents. These documents presented arguments for the adoption of accountability alongside critiques of accountability that suggested their abolition.

5.3. Article 3

Lennert da Silva, Ana Lucia (2021). Comparing teacher autonomy in different models of educational governance. *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy*. https://doi.org/10.1080/20020317.2021.1965372

This article addressed teacher autonomy in different models of educational governance using quantitative data from OECD TALIS 2018 and qualitative data from a study on teacher autonomy conducted in Norway and Brazil. This article asked whether a high degree of educational accountability correlates with a low degree of teacher perceived autonomy, and vice versa.

In this article, I viewed teacher autonomy as a multidimensional concept referring to decision-making and control in relation to state governance (Frostenson, 2015). Further, the different degrees of implementation of accountability measures across countries determine the models of educational governance (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

This article borrowed scales of OECD TALIS 2018 that partially fit the three levels of autonomy (for a detailed description of the scales, see Article 3). The sample size comprised 19 countries and 59790 lower-secondary teachers (for more details, see Article 3).

The quantitative data showed no clear pattern between teacher autonomy and models of educational governance. In general, teachers perceived that they had good control over teaching and planning at the classroom level. For example, despite differences in models of educational governance, the quantitative data showed that Brazilian and Norwegian teachers were satisfied with their individual teacher autonomy. In Brazil, 93.4% of the teachers were satisfied with their individual autonomy. In Norway, this value corresponded to 95.8% of the teachers.

However, the qualitative data showed that both groups of teachers perceived suffering from control by external actors. For example, Norwegian informants talked about the imposition of digital tools in their teaching practices and the impossibility of choosing the kinds of professional development activities to undertake. The Brazilian informants described the

pressure to use test results, write teaching plans, and develop strategies to improve students' performance data. In addition, Brazilian teachers have been held more individually accountable for improving students' outcomes than their Norwegian counterparts because of the system of economic incentives related to students' performance. In summary, these findings indicated that both groups of teachers organized their teaching practices based on the influence of large-scale assessments.

Regarding the possibilities for collegial teacher autonomy, the quantitative findings indicated that a larger group of Norwegian teachers perceived that they collaborated often in schools in comparison with their Brazilian counterparts (25.2% in Norway and 17.1% in Brazil). However, this number still represented less than 30% of the Norwegian lower-secondary teachers. The qualitative findings also indicated that Norwegian teachers perceived that they collaborated more often than their Brazilian counterparts did. They also perceived that professional collaboration can both constrain and promote their individual teacher autonomy. The younger informants primarily perceived the positive sides of professional collaboration. This finding leads to consideration of professional collaboration that can enhance individual teacher autonomy because it can contribute to support the preferences and pedagogical ideals of individual teachers (Frostenson, 2015; Elo & Nygren-Landgärds, 2020; Vangrieken & Kyndt, 2019). As in Norway, the Brazilian respondents reported that school leadership also initiates collegial meetings, but they are mainly used to pass on orders from the educational authority, leaving almost no space for teachers to collegially influence and decide on their work at the school level. As a result, not all professional collaboration promotes collegial teacher autonomy. In other words, professional collaboration can be used as an instrumental form of collegiality with the aim of implementing agendas determined by others (Dias, 2018; Frostenson, 2015; Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990).

The quantitative data gave some insight into professional teacher autonomy. The scores regarding teachers' perceptions about their value and policy influence showed that 6.8% of the Brazilian teachers and 23.9% of the Norwegian teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their views were valued by policy-makers; 13.8% (Brazil) and 23.4% (Norway) that they were valued by the media; and 59.1% (Brazil) and 24.1% (Norway) that they could influence educational policy. The qualitative findings from Brazil showed that teachers did not perceive their professional organization to influence policy-making. However, OECD TALIS data showed

that 59.1% of the Brazilian teachers reported that they could influence educational policy. By contrast, the qualitative findings from Norway showed that the Norwegian teachers perceived having space for influencing decision-making at the policy level. However, OECD TALIS data indicated that only 24.1% of the Norwegian teachers reported that they could influence educational policy. Further studies could explore these findings regarding aspects of professional teacher autonomy in these countries.

In conclusion, this article argued that combining quantitative and qualitative approaches can contribute to a better understanding of the multiple dimensions of teacher autonomy across different models of educational governance. Finally, this article showed that there is not a clear pattern between teacher autonomy and models of educational governance. In general, teachers perceive that they have good control over their work at the classroom level. However, teachers report that they participate to a lesser degree in decision-making processes at the school and education system levels, which can indicate restricted collegial and professional teacher autonomy.

Chapter 6. Discussion

In the previous chapters, I presented the literature review, theoretical framework, methodology, and data, as well as providing the findings of the three articles. These chapters form the background and base for this chapter. Here, I seek to examine teacher autonomy and teacher agency in different educational contexts marked by accountability by addressing the following research questions:

- How do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers perceive their autonomy in an accountability context?
- How do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers respond to accountability policy?

This study applies a comparative and multi-method approach. It also uses empirical data gathered in an interview study conducted in Norway and Brazil, complemented with document analysis of national curriculum policy and secondary data (see Chapter 4). The focus is on teachers' perspectives in Brazilian and Norwegian public schools that offer lower-secondary education.

The remainder of this chapter is as follows: Section 6.1 presents educational accountability as a context for the study of teachers' perceptions of autonomy and responses to policy in Norway and Brazil. Section 6.2 presents and discusses teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in these two countries as a complex and non-linear phenomenon. Section 6.3 introduces and discusses teachers' responses to policy, potentially achieving agency in their responses. Section 6.4 provides a summary of this chapter.

6.1. Educational accountability

Teacher autonomy and teacher agency are important aspects to consider in a global educational context marked by accountability, as evidenced by research literature on educational accountability (Grek, 2009; Lingard et al., 2013; Maroy, 2008; Ozga, 2009; Sellar & Lingard, 2013). In general, this logic of accountability is supported by an instrumentalist view that accountability instruments and practices facilitate the monitoring of teachers' work and students' learning outcomes and, by extension, the adjustment of teachers' work to improve students' learning outcomes on large-scale assessments (Lingard et al., 2013; Sobe, 2014). This global context offers evidence that accountability has restricted teacher autonomy (see

Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1) and/or different dimensions of it (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2). Empirical studies have shown that teachers have complied with accountability policy demands because of a "culture of fear" that links performance outcomes with sanctions and rewards (see Chapter 2, Section 2.3.1).

In this context of accountability, Norway and Brazil are fruitful cases to investigate because they represent similar outcomes in different countries (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014; see also Chapter 4). Both countries have implemented educational reforms with accountability purposes in the 2000s in response to PISA results, as indicated by literature about Norway (Camphuijsen et al., 2020; Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Imsen & Volckmar, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015) and Brazil (Barreto, 2012; Therrien & Loiola, 2001; Villani & Oliveira, 2018). However, Norway and Brazil represent different models of educational governance based on the implementation of test-based accountability systems (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

Brazil has a high-stakes accountability system because of the use of indicators, report writing, and target setting with bonus payments for schools and teachers that achieve performance targets (Villani & Oliveira, 2018; Verger et al., 2019; see also Chapters 1 and 5, Articles 1 and 3). Comparatively, Norway has low-stakes accountability because of the use of testing for formative purposes and the fact that no sanctions or rewards are associated with performance data (Mausethagen, 2013; Tveit, 2014; Verger et al., 2019; see also Chapters 1 and 5, Articles 1 and 3). However, this situation seems to be changing and converging into a high-stakes accountability system, as indicated by Camphuijsen et al. (2020).

Therefore, besides being concerned with isomorphism and standardization of global phenomena, as proponents of world culture theory are (Greenwood et al., 2008; McEneaney & Meyer, 2000; Waldow, 2014), this study also considers the agency of individuals (teachers) and organizations (schools) in the shaping of social institutions (education) and institutional logics (accountability). In addition, this study assumes that individuals and organizations are bounded by their contexts. As such, they are not free actors pursuing self-determined interests, as advocated by institutional entrepreneurship theory (Greenwood et al., 2008; Powell & Bromley, 2015; Scott, 2014). Therefore, this study aligns with researchers who argue for the relevance of social structures in the analysis of social phenomena (Sarup, 1993; O'Boyle, 2013).

Both institutional logics (Thornton et al., 2012; Parish, 2019) and the ecological model of teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2012, 2014) consider the role of social structures as influencing but not determining individual subjectivities. While the focus of attention of teacher agency theory is on the individual actor, institutional logics highlight the role of social structures as affecting individuals' actions in their contexts.

In this vein, this study adopts the institutional logic perspective to address the contexts in which teachers are situated and their relationship with the logic of accountability. From an institutional logic perspective, educational accountability has symbolic, material, and social construction elements that can be investigated at multiple levels of analysis, which are individual, organizational, field, and societal (Thornton et al., 2012, p.13). The symbolic elements of accountability logic include values such as equity, transparency, control, and answerability (Lingard et al., 2013; Sobe, 2014). The material elements include the implementation of national and international large-scale assessments, league tables, indicators, and learning standards. The social construction elements include the organization of time, space, and practices. For example, policy-makers organize the school curriculum to prioritize skills and learning outcomes covered by large-scale assessments, school leaders organize time and space in schools for the implementation of these assessments, and teachers organize practices, such as report writing and teaching to the test. These are some examples that can be found around the world, as illustrated by the cases of Brazil and Norway.

At the societal or global level, this study shows the role of the OECD as a powerful global actor that produces and disseminates the accountability logic by claiming that the use of large-scale assessments and performance data ensures equity and the provision of "quality education for all" (see Chapter 5 and Article 2). The OECD also promotes "managerial accountability," where school leadership is responsible for target setting and monitoring of teachers' work, and "professional accountability," where professional collaboration ensures mutual control and conformity to meet performance targets (see Chapter 5 and Article 2). This study argues that the blending of accountability logic with other symbolic elements strengthens the legitimacy of this logic and ensures its widespread adoption at multiple institutional levels, from the global to the individual.

In line with this assumption, research literature has shown many "versions" of the accountability logic (see Chapter 2, Section 2.1.1), indicating that the accountability logic may

coexist with other logics in coherent and contradictory ways (e.g., Camphuijsen et al., 2020; Maroy & Pons, 2019; Pagès, 2020; see also Article 2). Moreover, national contexts and actors adopt this logic in heterogeneous ways. Accordingly, policy-makers actively engage with the global accountability logic, adapting this logic to justify educational reforms or provide support for existing policy directions (Steiner-Khamsi, 2003, 2014). For example, in the cases of Norway and Brazil, policy-makers engaged with the accountability logic to implement national quality assessment systems based on national and international large-scale assessments, league tables, indicators, learning standards, etc. Moreover, this engagement was not without tensions and contradictions, particularly in the case of Brazil (see Chapter 5 and Article 2).

I argue that national actors and contexts play an important role in the process of adoption and adaptation of accountability logic. For example, national curriculum policy translates the accountability logic in coherent and contradictory ways, which reveals the relevance of national actors and contextual particularities in the adoption and translation of accountability at the national level (see Chapter 5 and Article 2).

In this regard, both national curricula combine a discourse on the use of large-scale assessments and performance indicators with a discourse on equity. Equity is a fundamental value permeating the Norwegian welfare state, as well as the Brazilian developing state, which has been fighting to reduce historical ethnic and socioeconomic inequalities in the country. Both countries argue for the use of accountability measures with the aim of providing all students with an equal right to quality education, measured and secured by indicators and students' performance on large-scale assessments.

The divergences are expressed by the existence of coherent and contradictory logics in the national curriculum policy of these two countries. For example, Norwegian curriculum documents coherently present the adoption of accountability as a way of ensuring quality education for all, which justifies the implementation of a testing system, the redistribution of responsibilities to schools, and the focus on collaboration as a form of holding teachers accountable for students' learning outcomes. Conversely, the Brazilian curriculum documents present contradictions that reflect the existence of competing social groups in policy-making. In this regard, arguments are presented for the adoption of accountability, alongside critiques of accountability practices and instruments and suggestions for their abolition (see Chapter 5 and Article 2). These different translations of the documents reveal the social construction

aspects of the logic of accountability and the relevance of the agency of educational actors translating accountability to national contexts.

Comparative education researchers have noted a dialectic at work between the global and the local, by which global forces interact with national and local actors and contexts to be modified and transformed (Arnove, 2013; Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). Based on this dialectic between the global and the local, this study shows that Brazil has stronger control mechanisms than Norway (see Chapter 5 and Article 1). In Brazil, the São Paulo state government centralizes curriculum design and testing, the hiring of staff, the allocation of resources, and the bonus payment of employees who meet performance targets. Municipal authorities support the central state by passing on orders, providing short-term professional development courses, receiving school reports, and monitoring schools. Accordingly, teachers must comply with a curriculum centralized by the state, use test results, and write daily reports on their work with the aim of improving student performance. Teachers are also recommended to use a booklet produced by the educational authority.

By contrast, the Norwegian national government centralizes the design of the curriculum and testing and gives monetary support to counties and municipalities to invest in professional development courses in specific areas of interest. In Norway, teachers must comply with a curriculum centralized by the state and use test results to improve students' learning outcomes. However, they can create their own teaching materials and strategies in accordance with the goals and competencies of the national curriculum.

Moreover, contextual particularities play a role in the adoption of accountability at the local level. The Brazilian schools in this study are permeated by a hierarchical culture, in which the logic of accountability is amplified (see Chapter 5, Articles 1 and 3). The Brazilian informants reported a school culture of contrived collegiality (Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990), where the school leadership organized staff meetings to pass on orders from the educational authority. The Brazilian informants also reported that the school leadership required daily reports of teaching plans and strategies to improve students' learning outcomes. These reports were intended for the educational authority as a way of monitoring teachers' work (Lingard et al., 2013; Sobe, 2014). In addition, the Brazilian schools visited had cameras in classrooms and hallways to monitor the behavior of students and teachers, indicating strong surveillance practices.

By contrast, the Norwegian informants reported a school embedded in a collaborative culture, in which control was exercised in a softer way than in Brazil (see Chapter 5, Articles 1 and 3). The Norwegian informants mentioned that they worked collectively in the development of teaching plans and activities, observed each other's lectures, and shared teaching responsibilities. They perceived these activities as supportive, but also as forms of control over their work. They also mentioned annual appraisals conducted by the school leadership and students' surveys as forms of control over their work. These findings show that contextual particularities also play a role in the adoption of accountability at the local level.

In summary, this study employs institutional logics to explain the contexts in which teachers are situated. Based on the results, it seems Brazil has stricter accountability instruments and practices than Norway and that national and local actors adopt and translate this logic according to national and local contexts. Further, this study uses teacher autonomy theory to address the conditions in which teachers are more likely to have autonomy or be restrained by their context. In this regard, this study is interested in individuals' perceptions of their contexts and their possibilities for autonomy in these contexts, which are permeated by power dynamics (Ball, 1993). The next section presents and discusses the findings related to teachers' perceptions of their scope of decision-making and action in Norway and Brazil.

6.2. Teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in Norway and Brazil

This section addresses teachers' perceptions of their autonomy as a complex and non-linear phenomenon. Contrary to the literature that has equated accountability with a "culture of performativity" resulting in restricted teacher autonomy (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.1), this study shows that teacher autonomy is formed by multiple dimensions and that restricted autonomy in one dimension does not necessarily mean restricted autonomy in another (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2; Chapter 5, Articles 1 and 3).

For example, both Norwegian and Brazilian teachers expressed satisfaction with their individual autonomy at the classroom level (see Articles 1 and 3). However, they acknowledged forms of control over their work within and outside school settings. For example, Norwegian and Brazilian teachers reported being required to plan and teach based on the goals and competencies of the prescribed curriculum. They also reported planning their teaching with the aim of improving students' performance on large-scale assessments. This finding applies especially to the Brazilian teachers since the São Paulo state government

connects bonus payments with students' performance on these assessments. This mechanism of material rewards and sanctions indicates a strong governing of teachers' work that constrains teacher autonomy (see Articles 1 and 3).

However, if one looks at the possibilities for collegial and professional teacher autonomy (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2), the levels of satisfaction are not the same as in individual teacher autonomy. Norwegian teachers reported having more opportunities for professional collaboration than their Brazilian counterparts (see Chapter 5, Articles 1 and 3), although the percentages of teachers who reported engaging at least once a month in professional collaboration activities were modest in both countries (see Chapter 5 and Article 3). This convergence indicates limited possibilities for collegial autonomy in both groups of teachers, meaning that they may not be able to collectively construct their own practices or influence and determine teaching practices at the school level (Frostenson, 2015; see also Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2).

This study reached a similar conclusion regarding teachers' perceptions of social value and policy influence that can give insights into professional teacher autonomy (Frostenson, 2015; see also Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2). The qualitative findings of Articles 1 and 3 indicate that Norwegian teachers perceived that their professional organizations had influence at the policy level. The Brazilian teachers reported the opposite from their Norwegian counterparts. However, the quantitative findings of Article 3 showed that the scores of both groups of teachers were quite low regarding social value and policy influence, which may indicate restricted professional teacher autonomy, in which teachers do not have space to decide on the framings of their profession at the policy level (Frostenson, 2015). Therefore, teachers' perceptions of their autonomy are complex and not necessarily linear.

Another finding is that teachers may aspire to autonomy in some domains and may not aspire to autonomy in others, such as the planning demands of the documentation (Mellegård & Pettersen, 2016, see also Chapter 2, Section 2.2.3). These different perceptions regarding their autonomy can be influenced by factors such as working experience and professional status (see Chapter 2, Sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4). Research literature has indicated that younger teachers welcome the safety of documenting their planning and do not see accountability demands as irreconcilable (Betteney, 2010; Storey, 2007; Wilkins, 2011). Studies have also shown that teachers' perceptions of high professional status may positively affect their

perceived autonomy (Errs, 2018). Other studies (Philippou et al., 2014) have indicated a single individual teacher assuming contradictory positionings in relation to their perceived autonomy, which reveals contradictions in the blending of the accountability logic with cultural elements restricting teacher autonomy.

This study shows that some of the Brazilian informants did not aspire to meet the planning demands in the documents and instead reacted against them because they represent extended demands over their work (see Chapter 5 and Article 1). By contrast, some of them perceived planning demands and regulations as positive to the development of their work. Some of the Norwegian informants also mentioned regulations as helpful working tools that reduced complexity by defining particular standards (see Chapter 5 and Article 1). In summary, these different perceptions of teacher autonomy show that this is a complex and dynamic phenomenon related to individual and contextual features. Further, teachers' perceptions of their autonomy can result in different responses to policy, which is the topic of the next section.

6.3. Teachers' responses to policy in Norway and Brazil

This section presents and discusses teachers' responses to policy, potentially achieving agency in their responses. According to Priestley et al. (2015), the achievement of agency occurs in concrete situations, in which teachers evaluate both the issues at hand and the possibilities for action in these situations (Priestley et al., 2015, p.34, see also Chapter 3).

This study shows that the teaching practice is surrounded by accountability instruments and practices that can restrict teachers' autonomy, but that this does not necessarily mean that teachers cannot achieve agency. As a result, there is not a linear causation between accountability and teaching practices, where the dissemination of accountability discourses, instruments, and practices determines the outcomes of practice. Accordingly, teachers may conform to accountability, but they may also be able to resist and change this logic (see Chapter 2 and Article 1).

This study's findings show that Brazilian and Norwegian teachers comply with accountability demands because of formal and informal sanction mechanisms. For example, Brazilian teachers reported writing daily teaching plans and strategies to improve student performance data on large-scale assessments to avoid sanctions and ensure material rewards. Brazilian

teachers also conformed to a hierarchical and restrictive school culture and asked school leaders to consent with the organization of collective projects (see Chapter 5, Articles 1 and 3). In a similar vein, the Norwegian teachers reported using performance data to plan their teaching because they perceived that this was socially expected from them (see Chapter 5, Articles 1 and 3).

However, the interviewed teachers sometimes responded creatively and incrementally to this logic. In this process, they also shaped accountability. For example, both Brazilian and Norwegian informants navigated the system to have their beliefs, values, and needs fulfilled in the interest of students and learning. The Brazilian informants manipulated skills and used creativity to solve issues of lack of material resources with the aim of providing good learning opportunities for their students (see Chapter 5 and Article 1). The Norwegian informants were also able to manipulate the demands made on them to get extra help in classrooms and to participate in professional development activities when they felt such activities were needed. In addition, the Norwegian teachers reported using performance data for formative purposes, with the aim of helping students' development in the subject (see Chapter 5 and Article 1). Therefore, despite structural constraints, teachers saw possibilities within constraints and achieved agency by using reflexivity and creativity in some cases.

Teachers may also resist and disengage from accountability measures (see Chapter 2, Sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3). For example, some of the Norwegian teachers reported that they did not use performance data to plan their teaching because they perceived the focus on student performance as negative (see Chapter 5 and Article 1). In the same vein, some Brazilian teachers refused to use the booklets recommended by the educational authority, and they provided reflective reasons for this decision (see Chapter 5 and Article 1).

This study questions whether contradictions in curriculum policy may give teachers increased opportunities to resist the accountability logic and engage with other logics, which may be the case in Brazil. By contrast, coherence in curriculum policy could result in homogenic and not necessarily agentic practices that enrich and challenge current policy discourses. These hypotheses can be explored in further research.

This study shows that teachers can use their capacities and agency to respond to the accountability logic in different ways, sometimes complying, sometimes adapting, and

sometimes resisting this logic. Moreover, teacher capacities need to be considered in relation to environmental conditions, which can extend or restrict teachers' repertoires for maneuvering or the possibilities for different forms of action available to teachers at specific points in time (Priestley et al., 2012; see also Chapter 3).

6.4. Summary

This study applies a theoretical framework to address teacher autonomy and teacher agency in educational systems marked by educational accountability. This study argues that the institutional logic perspective enables an explanation of the accountability context in which teachers are embedded and which is formed by symbolic, material, and social construction elements at different institutional levels (Thornton et al., 2012; Parish, 2019). The accountability logic includes symbolic elements such as equity, transparency, control, and answerability (Lingard et al., 2013; Sobe, 2014). This logic is formed by material elements, such as national standards, high-stakes testing, league tables, indicators, inspections, and various forms of incentives and sanctions resulting from performance data (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019). These material elements are socially constructed in time and space and influence individuals' perceptions and actions.

This study applies teacher autonomy theory to address teachers' perceptions of their scope of decision-making and action in relation to state governance (Frostenson, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017; Wermke et al., 2019). Finally, this study applies teacher agency theory (Priestley et al., 2012, 2015) to describe teachers' responses to policy, potentially achieving agency in this process.

Section 6.2 shows that teacher autonomy is a complex and non-linear phenomenon. Even though Brazilian and Norwegian teachers reported being satisfied with their individual teacher autonomy, they perceived forms of control over their work, which are characteristic of educational systems marked by accountability. Moreover, in this study, teachers reported that they do not collaborate often with their colleagues, which can restrict the exercise of collegial teacher autonomy. The study's findings also show that teachers perceived having low social status and policy influence, which can give insights into professional teacher autonomy. These results indicate that teachers' perceptions of their autonomy are not linear and that extended teacher autonomy in one dimension does not necessarily imply extended teacher autonomy in other dimensions. The study's findings likewise indicate a discourse of increased individual

teacher autonomy that is not necessarily followed by support mechanisms that can contribute to extended teacher autonomy, especially in the case of Brazil. Further, the discourse of individual teacher autonomy is generally followed by increasing demands over teachers' work (e.g., report writing, teaching to test) that usually devalue other domains of teacher autonomy.

Section 6.3 shows the dynamic relationship between teacher agency and accountability. This study shows that, despite an educational environment of restricted teacher autonomy, teachers can resist and adapt accountability, thus achieving agency. In this sense, some of the Brazilian informants acted reflexively and creatively to solve classroom situations, despite an environment of restricted teacher autonomy. The same can be stated of the Norwegian teachers. Some of them have managed to mediate policy demands in the interest of students and learning. This study questions whether contradictions in curriculum policy may give teachers increased opportunities to resist the accountability logic and engage with other logics, which may be the case in Brazil. By contrast, coherence in curriculum policy could result in homogenic practices that do not necessarily enrich and challenge current educational policy discourses. These hypotheses can be explored in further research. In summary, teacher agency theory shows that teachers can use their capacities and agency to respond to the accountability logic in different ways. In addition, teacher capacities need to be considered in relation to environmental conditions, which brings us back to the concept of teacher perceived autonomy and the relationship between teachers and the state governing teachers' work through accountability.

Chapter 7. Conclusion

This chapter illustrates the relationship between the extended abstract and the articles. This chapter ends by pointing to the study's contributions, limitations, and possibilities for future research.

7.1. Relationship between the extended abstract and the articles

The table below shows how the articles have contributed to addressing teacher autonomy and teacher agency and answering the research questions.

Article 1 investigated teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency in Brazilian and Norwegian public schools, combining individual, school, and national education system levels. This article showed the interaction between teachers with state governance at the school and education system levels. It pointed to the importance of considering the local and national contexts in which teachers are embedded, which affects their perceptions and actions in these contexts. The article also indicated that restricted teacher autonomy does not necessarily mean that teachers cannot achieve agency. For example, Brazilian teachers work in an environment marked by an intensive workload, contrived collegiality, and excessive school paperwork, but they are able to find opportunities within constraints and navigate or resist the system to have their beliefs, values, and needs fulfilled in the interest of students and learning. They also demonstrate indifference to the use of cameras in classrooms, use skills and creativity to solve issues of lack of material resources, and ask school leaders to consent to the organization of collective projects. The Norwegian teachers also manipulate the demands made on them to get extra help in the classroom, use test results for formative purposes, and participate in professional development activities when they feel these are needed.

Table 7.1. Relationship between the extended abstract and the articles

Article 1 Empirically shows teachers' perceptions of their autonomy and achievement of agency in different contexts	Research Questions 1 and 2
Article 2 Empirically shows how national curriculum policies from different contexts translate the accountability logic	Research Problem, addressing accountability
Article 3 Empirically shows teachers' perceptions of their autonomy using OECD TALIS 2018 quantitative data and interview data from a study with Brazilian and Norwegian lower-secondary teachers	Research Question 1

Article 2 demonstrated how national curriculum policies from Brazil and Norway translate the accountability logic as framed by powerful international organizations such as the OECD. In this article, the role of educational actors was viewed as translating the accountability logic according to the cultural and political features of the national contexts. One manifestation of the global accountability logic is the implementation of accountability measures, such as national standards, high-stakes testing, league tables, indicators, inspections, incentives, and sanctions mechanisms. However, this implementation (and justifications for it) happens with adaptations that depend on the historical, cultural, and political features of each national context. In this sense, the accountability logic may be a hegemony, but this does not mean homogeneity or isomorphism in policy. Accordingly, the role of educational actors is central in adapting the accountability logic to national contexts, which creates heterogeneity and local particularities. Therefore, this article illustrated convergences and divergences of the accountability logic, recognizing the specificity of national contexts and actors in the shaping of this logic in policy documents. This article did not directly respond to the research questions of the extended abstract, but it provided the context for discussing teacher autonomy and teacher agency in this text.

Article 3 presented teachers' perceptions of their autonomy using OECD TALIS 2018 quantitative data and interview data from a study with Brazilian and Norwegian lower-secondary teachers, combining individual and national education systems levels and taking a bird's eyes view by employing secondary data from OECD TALIS 2018. The findings of Article 3 also pointed to convergences and divergences in the two national contexts. Further, they showed that teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in education systems marked by accountability are complex and dynamic, meaning that accountability does not have a linear impact on teachers' perceptions of their autonomy across countries.

Therefore, this study accommodates some level of convergence by addressing accountability as an institutional logic while recognizing the specificity of national and local contexts and the agency of teachers navigating accountability in multiple ways.

7.2. Contributions, limitations, and possibilities for further research

This study offers three main contributions. The first contribution is the focus on teachers' perspectives that highlights teachers as shapers of accountability, thus avoiding conclusions

based solely on the perspectives of international organizations and national governments as shapers of this logic.

The second contribution is showing that teachers' actions may be constrained but not determined by their contexts. Accordingly, teachers act in these contexts to obtain some degree of control and choice that is also connected to how they perceive their autonomy. In this regard, despite structural constraints, the study's findings reveal that teachers perceive having control over teaching and planning at the classroom level, which are core elements of the teaching profession (see Chapter 5, Articles 1 and 3).

The third contribution is showing that teachers can be more than policy adopters. In other words, they can be translators of policy in their local contexts of practice. In this sense, they can adopt behaviors consistent with the accountability logic, "going with the flow" or "playing it safe," but they also have the capacity to critically reflect and, in this process, "resist" and "change" this logic (see Chapter 4, Section 4.4.2, Chapter 5 and Article 1).

Therefore, learning about how teachers perceive their autonomy and achieve agency can be an important vehicle for assisting other teachers to learn from such experiences. This study's findings can raise teachers' awareness of their potential to mediate policy demands, make sense of them, enact them, and work upon them. Thus, these different experiences can be seen as alternatives and used by teachers in their daily actions—and more specifically in their own attempts to deal with problematic situations that confront them in their day-to-day work.

This study's findings can also assist policy-makers in acknowledging and investing in initiatives that promote teacher autonomy, as can be the case of professional collaboration initiated by the teachers, thus enabling teacher agency and the improvement of teaching practices.

Certainly, the choice of theory, methodology, and data used in this study is only one of many possibilities to approach the research problem and questions, which means that this study has limitations. For example, it does not explore teachers' backgrounds, personal and professional histories, or short-term and long-term educational goals, which can be linked to their personal and professional beliefs and values (Priestley et al., 2012, 2015; Biesta et al., 2015, 2017; see also Chapters 2 and 3). These issues could enrich the discussion about teacher agency and provide further insights into the complex and dynamic interplay between teacher agency and

accountability in the country cases. In this regard, this study encourages further research to address these issues.

It would also be fruitful to explore the opportunities for professional collaboration that can foster collegial and individual autonomy. For example, future studies could explore the diverse kinds of professional collaboration and their effects on teachers' autonomy. These studies could be complemented with an investigation of historical and cultural elements that can explain a culture of collectivism, as could be the case in Norway (Helgøy & Homme, 2007), versus a culture of individualism, for example.

Further studies could also go in depth, observing teaching practices and interviewing teachers and other educational actors to more closely examine teacher autonomy and teacher agency in these or other contexts. For example, researchers could explore how and under what local conditions the accountability logic is activated, accommodated, and resisted, as well as how subjective factors help teachers relate to accountability in particular contexts to reproduce and/or transform this logic or some aspects of it. Studies could likewise examine how teachers are able to articulate different logics to respond to their day-to-day situations.

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Appendices

NSD

Ana Lucia Lennert da Silva
holstegata 31
2318 HAMAR

Vår dato: 10.04.2018   Vår ref: 59800 / 3 / AMS   Deres dato: Deres ref:

Tilrådning fra NSD Personvernombudet for forskning § 7-27

Personvernombudet for forskning viser til meldeskjema mottatt 13.03.2018 for prosjektet:

59800	The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) and the teaching profession in Brazil and Norway
Behandlingsansvarlig	Høgskolen i Innlandet, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Daglig ansvarlig	Ana Lucia Lennert da Silva

Vurdering
Etter gjennomgang av opplysningene i meldeskjemaet og øvrig dokumentasjon finner vi at prosjektet er unntatt konsesjonsplikt og at personopplysningene som blir samlet inn i dette prosjektet er regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. På den neste siden er vår vurdering av prosjektopplegget slik det er meldt til oss. Du kan nå gå i gang med å behandle personopplysninger.

Vilkår for vår anbefaling
Vår anbefaling forutsetter at du gjennomfører prosjektet i tråd med:
• opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet og øvrig dokumentasjon
• vår prosjektvurdering, se side 2
• eventuell korrespondanse med oss

Meld fra hvis du gjør vesentlige endringer i prosjektet
Dersom prosjektet endrer seg, kan det være nødvendig å sende inn endringsmelding. På våre nettsider finner du svar på hvilke endringer du må melde, samt endringsskjema.

Opplysninger om prosjektet blir lagt ut på våre nettsider og i Meldingsarkivet
Vi har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet på nettsidene våre. Alle våre institusjoner har også tilgang til egne prosjekter i Meldingsarkivet.

Vi tar kontakt om status for behandling av personopplysninger ved prosjektslutt
Ved prosjektslutt 31.12.2020 vil vi ta kontakt for å avklare status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Se våre nettsider eller ta kontakt dersom du har spørsmål. Vi ønsker lykke til med prosjektet!

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Vennlig hilsen

Marianne Høgetveit Myhren

                                    Anne-Mette Somby

Kontaktperson: Anne-Mette Somby tlf: 55 58 24 10 / anne-mette.somby@nsd.no
Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Personvernombudet for forskning

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is The aim of this study is, from a comparative perspective, to investigate differences and similarities on teachers' perceptions regarding their roles and work, which is dependent on different levels of contexts: the international level (TALIS documents), the national level (curriculum provided by the state governance) and the local level (school and classroom).

The research questions are: How does the teaching profession relate to the social, political and cultural properties that shape Brazilian and Norwegian schools? What is the teachers' understanding of the local and national demands around their work versus the demands defined and disseminated by international organizations such as the OECD? How do teachers perceive their autonomy in their work?.

INFORMATION AND CONSENT

According to your notification form the sample will receive written and oral information and will give their consent to participate. The information letter we have received is well formulated.

SENSITIVE DATA AND SECURITY

It is indicated that you intend to process sensitive personal data about ethnic origin or political/philosophical/religious beliefs and trade-union membership.

The Data Protection Official presupposes that you will process all data according to the Høgskolen i Innlandet internal guidelines/routines for information security. We presuppose that the use of a mobile storage device is in accordance with these guidelines.

PROSJECT ENDING

The estimated end date of the project is 31.12.2020. According to your notification form/information letter you intend to anonymise the collected data by this date. Making the data anonymous entails processing it in such a way that no individuals can be identified. This is done by:
- deleting all direct personal data (such as names/lists of reference numbers)
- deleting/rewriting indirectly identifiable personal data (i.e. an identifying combination of background variables, such as residence/work place, age and gender)
- deleting digital audio

HØGSKOLEN i INNLANDET

_____

Request for participation in research project

The OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) and the teaching profession in Brazil and Norway

Background and Purpose

I, Ana Lucia L. da Silva, am a PhD candidate in the area of professional-oriented teacher education, Department of Social and Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences – INN, University, Norway (www.inn.no), and responsible for this project.

The purpose of the project is, from a comparative perspective, to investigate differences and similarities on teachers' perceptions regarding their roles and work, which is dependent on different levels of contexts: the international level (TALIS documents), the national level (curriculum provided by the state government) and the local level (school and classroom). The main topics are teacher profession, teacher autonomy, national and international surveys, curriculum.

You have been requested to participate as a teacher working in public school in the lower secondary level of education, which is the level of education covered by the TALIS survey.

What does participation in the project imply?

The data will be collected through documents (TALIS documents, national curricula, local and school documents) and interviews with teachers. The interviews will take approximately one hour. The questions will concern teachers' beliefs and personal commitments regarding their roles and work; how they organize their work in relation to the definition of educational goals, content and teaching methods; their experience with different forms of evaluation; their relationships with different actors of the education system, and working conditions. I will tape the interviews and take notes.

What will happen to the information about you?

All personal data will be treated confidentially. Only I, as responsible for this project, will have access to personal data.

The data from the interviews will be used in articles, but individuals will be made anonymous so that they cannot be identified. However, with your consent, I will mention the country you live, your gender, years of professional experience and the name of the subject you teach in publications connected to this project. Other information that can be connected to your person, such as your name, the name of the city you live and work in, the name of the school, will be omitted in the articles and reports connected to this research. This means that you will not be recognizable in any publication.

The project is scheduled for completion by December 2020. After the end of the project, all personal data about you will be made anonymous. This entails deleting and physically destroying the list of names and reference numbers in the name list that can identify you as research informant; also deleting audio-recordings and destroying audiotape devices.

Voluntary participation

It is voluntary to participate in the project, and you can at any time choose to withdraw your consent without stating any reason. If you decide to withdraw, all your personal data will be made anonymous by the means mentioned before.

If you would like to participate or if you have any questions concerning the project, please contact me. My contact information is Ana Lucia L. da Silva, PhD candidate, Department of Social and Educational Sciences, Faculty of Education, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences – INN, University, Norway, email: analucia.dasilva@himn.no, tlf: +47 98 81 96 01.

The study has been notified to the Data Protection Official for Research, NSD - Norwegian Centre for Research Data.

Consent for participation in the study

I have received information about the project and am willing to participate

----
(Signed by participant, date)

<table>
<tr><td>HØGSKOLEN i INNLANDET</td><td>**Fakultet for lærerutdanning og pedagogikk (LUP)**

Postadresse for hele høgskolen: Høgskolen i Innlandet Postboks 400 - 2418 Elverum</td><td>Sentralbord: 62 43 00 00 (08:00–15:30)
Opptakskontor: 62 43 00 04 (10:00–14:00)

E-post:postmottak@inn.no
www.inn.no</td></tr>
</table>

I want to record this interview. If that is ok, I would like to start recording now.

I have a document for you on the topic of my PhD project. The project deals with teacher profession and teacher autonomy in Brazil and Norway.

The goal of the project is to investigate differences and similarities in teachers' experiences and perceptions about their roles and work as professionals, which are dependent on different contexts. The local context (schools and classrooms), the national context (national policies drawn by the Ministry of Education) and the international context (which, in this project, is illustrated by the Teaching and Learning International Survey - TALIS, organized by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - OECD).

In the document I gave you, there is information that the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) has approved and accepted the project. The document clarifies that I will treat all personal information confidentially and that you will not be identified in any publication connected to this project.

The document also explains that it is voluntary to participate and you can withdraw at any point without providing a reason. If you would like to be part of the interview, I would appreciate if you could sign this consent form.

Background information

Age, gender, nationality

Educational background. Which course?

Professional background. How many years of experience? Which type of contract (full/part-time, permanent/temporary)? Which subject(s) do you teach? In which grades?

Teaching practices

Q01. Could you give examples on how do you choose?

    a. Educational goals,
    b. Content of lessons,
    c. Learning material,
    d. Teaching methods and
    e. Students' assessment.

Q02. Could you describe some of the teaching methods you use?

Q03. How do you perceive the influence of external factors (e.g. people, institutions, policies) in the definition of your work?

    - Types of factors,
    - Modes of operation (providing resources and/or constraints?)
    - Feelings about this external influence

Autonomy

Q04. What is teacher autonomy for you?

Q05. Could you give an example where you experienced autonomy in your work in a positive way?

Q06. Could you give an example of a downside (if any) related to autonomy in your work?

Q07. How do you describe the degree of autonomy you have in your work?

Teaching appraisal and feedback

Q08. How do you experience teaching appraisal and feedback in your work?

- Which types of appraisals and feedback do you experience?

- In which levels (national and/or local)?

- How did they influence your practice?

Q09. The TALIS report (2013) states that teachers feel that teacher appraisal and feedback are largely done to fulfil administrative requirements and do not affect their work in the classroom. What is your opinion about this statement?

Teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction

Q10. How do you describe your relationship with students?

Q11. TALIS reports (2008, 2013) show that it is not the number of students, but the kinds of students that affect teachers' feelings of self-efficacy (or their ability to teach). What is your opinion about this statement?

- How is your experience with the number of students per classroom?

- Could you give an example on how behavioral problems affect your work?

Q12. Who (e.g. people) or what (e.g. institutions, policies) do you think has responsibility for dealing with issues of class size and students' behavioral problems?

Q13. How do you describe your relationship with colleagues?

- How do you participate in collaborative work in your school?

- Could you give an example of the last time you worked in collaboration with others?

Q14. How do you describe your relationship with the school leadership (school principal, coordinator)?

- How do you participate in decision-making in your school?

Q15. How satisfied are you with your working conditions?

- What would you change?

Professional development

Q16. How do you participate in activities related to professional development?

- Types, content and people involved,

- Effects on teaching practices,

- Reasons given for participation (or not),

- Suggestions of other relevant activities.

- What do you prefer or need?

- What do you see as important for you and why?

Q17. How do you think the school level supports professional development activities?

Q18. How do you think the national level supports professional development activities?

Professional organization

Q19. How do you describe your participation in teachers' professional organization?

- Affiliation (or not),

- Which organization,

- Participation (or not) within the organization.

Q20. What is your opinion about the work performed by the teachers' professional organization at the local level?

- Does it support professional development activities? How?

Q21. What is your opinion about the work performed by the teachers' professional organization at the national level?

Q22. How do you think the teachers' professional organization relates to the international discourses on education?

Concluding remarks

Q23. I have no further questions. Is there anything else you would like to bring up, or ask about, before we finish the interview?

After the interview

Thank you very much for your cooperation! I will transcribe the interview as soon as possible.

Then I will send the transcription to you, so that you can have the possibility to check if it is ok

and make any adjustments if you like.

Appendix 4. Example of analysis of the interviews

Phase 1 – themes based on concepts for teacher autonomy (How can we describe teacher autonomy in Norway and Brazil using these concepts?)	Excerpts of the interviews	Phase 2 – themes based on concepts for teacher agency (What do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers do with the autonomy they have?)
Internal control, strong	*I am sure she [the school principal] says, 'Look! That one is sitting there. That one is standing there', right? But, I do not care. I am the same person (BT08)*	Resistance
Internal control, strong	*I think the camera helps them to see the blind spots. For example, there is a group chatting that I could not see, because a classroom is very dynamic, all the time. So, when we are giving attention to one group, the other is not always doing what needs to be done, what has been asked [Interviewer: Has someone looking at the TV monitor come to help you?] Yes, yes, already (BT10)*	Play it safe, go with the flow
Internal control, moderate to low	*The principal trusts that you are doing your job, and then you have the opportunity to be flexible [in the use of working time], as long as you show that you take the job seriously and meet up when you should, then you have freedom to do, as you want, occasionally. It is not so strict. So, it fits well. (NT05)*	Possibility for agency
External control, strong	*So, there are the results, and then, for example, they ask me to make a timeline with the skills and competences according to this here. So, here on top of the results, I plan the activities I want to develop with them, focusing on the skills that I need to deepen with them, right? (BT01)*	Go with the flow
External control, strong	*I do not need the national test to tell me at which level my students are because I can see here in my lesson. I can see when he writes an adventure and fails to write in English. I believe this testing is unnecessary. (NT03)*	Resistance
Restricted autonomy, but teachers do not perceive as such	*Each teacher can choose the topics to teach and can choose the way to teach. So, I find this autonomy very interesting, having this freedom. I cannot choose the topics that I am going to teach in a general way, but within what is obligatory, I can choose what to teach, what to teach more, and how to teach (BT04).*	Go with the flow
Restricted autonomy, but teachers do not perceive as such	*I am really free to decide on approaches within the framework that is set. Everyone has to apply the curriculum; everyone has to apply the regulations of the Education Act; everyone has to apply the general part of the curriculum overriding part that has now come. So, I have some frames, but within those limits, I experience quite a lot of freedom, both in the way I plan instruction and how it is implemented.*	Go with the flow

Appendix 5. Example of analysis of the documents for Article 2

Themes	Norway	Brazil
Accountability and education for all	**Quotes** *A good school educates and forms, evens out social disparities, providing equal opportunities regardless of whether you grow up in Alta, in Alna, or in Arendal* (MER, 2017, p.6) *Today, the content and quality of the education offer will have a greater impact on economic growth and future welfare.* (MER, 2017, p.10) *There are relatively large variations in student performance on national tests between schools, municipalities, and counties.* (MER, 2016, p.13)	**Quotes** *The results of Prova Brasil [large-scale assessment], as well as those of SAEB [educational indicator], showed, on the educational side and with a very precise focus, the existence of many "Brazils". (…) [This] reflects a very unequal school system, where most Brazilians do not have the same learning opportunity, creating profound social inequalities, both local and regional. Based on these considerations, it is worth asking: how to build a more just and egalitarian country through education? What obstacles lead to such disparate results in the Brazilian educational system? How can the differences between schools be reduced and thus allow a fairer comparative analysis of the assessment results?* (NBE, 2010b, p.7)
	Comments Use of accountability measures as a way of ensuring equal conditions for all students perform well in national and international tests.	**Comments** Use of accountability measures as a way of aligning with the international scenario and reduce inequalities, offering the same learning opportunities for all students.
Managerial accountability	**Quotes** *International research shows that the decentralization of decisions about organizing, solving tasks, and using resources has positive effects on students' learning, given that the local level has the competence and willingness to take responsibility. Among other things, it is important to have a great deal of freedom to allocate resources, make appointments, determine salaries, and develop teaching. The local level usually has better knowledge of its circumstances, greater ability to utilize resources, and can develop more effective measures than the state level.* (MER, 2017, p.12)	**Quotes** *As is known, the ENEM and Prova Brasil [large-scale standardized] assessments are state policies that subsidize the systems in the formulation of public equity policies, as well as providing aspects to the municipalities and schools to locate their weaknesses and promote actions, in an attempt to overcome them, through integrated goals.* (NBE, 2010a, p.7)
	Comments The role of school leadership using the knowledge on student achievement, organizing resources and strategies to improve students' learning outcomes.	**Comments** The role of local actors using the knowledge on student achievement to overcome their weaknesses and reduce inequalities.
Professional accountability	**Quotes** *School should be a professional environment where teachers, leaders and other members of staff reflect on common values, and assess and develop their practice* (DET, 2017, p.21) *(…) teachers and leaders in well-functioning communities: feel a shared responsibility for all students' learning; are committed to documenting learning outcomes; work together to develop a common understanding of how classroom practices can be improved; jointly plan educational curricula and educational strategies, and evaluate the effects on teaching; share and further develop teaching that proves to be effective.* (MER, 2017, p.26)	**Quotes** *(…) while democratic management introduces legitimacy, on the one hand, it strengthens school autonomy on the other; greater autonomy is associated with greater accountability and social transparency of the decisions taken. This requires greater integration between the school and the local community.* (NBE, 2010b, p.15)
	Comments Professional collaboration increases transparency and control among teachers to improve students' learning outcomes.	**Comments** Cooperation between school and local community deciding on goals to improve educational quality.

Questioning accountability	Quotes Non-applicable	Quotes *Do these programs take into account the identity of each system, each school? Would not the failure of the student, as ascertained by these assessment programs, be expressing the way the assessment takes place, not the way the school and the teachers plan and operate the curriculum? Would the applied assessment system be related to what actually happens in Brazilian schools? As a consequence of this external assessment method, would not the students be punished with terrible results and terrible news?* (NBE, 2010a, p.7)
	Comments Non-applicable	Comments Use of indicators and statistical data should be one of many other tools in the process of collective construction of educational quality. Use of indicators and standards does not consider regional characteristics, as well as aspects related to the government's economy and thereby should not be the base for investments in education.

Appendix 6. Summary of the Articles

	Article 1	Article 2	Article 3
Title	**Teacher autonomy and teacher agency: a comparative study in Brazilian and Norwegian lower secondary education**	**National curriculum policy in Norway and Brazil: translations of the global accountability logic**	**Comparing teacher autonomy in different models of educational governance**
Research Questions	How can Brazilian and Norwegian teachers' autonomy be interpreted with respect to nation-specific characteristics of the respective school settings in an accountability system? What might teacher autonomy mean for Brazilian and Norwegian teachers' agency in an age of accountability?	In what ways does the national curriculum policy of Norway and Brazil adopt the accountability logic?	Whether does a high degree of educational accountability correlate with a low degree of teacher perceived autonomy, and vice versa?
Aims	The goal is to explore established theory on teacher autonomy and teacher agency, using empirical data gathered in a comparative study between one European and one Latin American country.	The aim is to study how national curriculum policy adopts accountability as a global logic promoted by the OECD.	The aim is to compare teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in different models of educational governance.
Methods	Thematic analysis of interviews	Thematic analysis of curriculum policy documents	Secondary data analysis and thematic analysis of interviews
Data Sources	Semi-structured interviews with teachers working in public lower secondary education in Brazil and Norway	OECD policy and national curriculum policy in Brazil and Norway	OECD TALIS 2018 secondary data and semi-structured interviews with teachers working in public lower secondary education in Brazil and Norway
Analytical framework	Established theory on teacher autonomy (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007; Frostenson, 2015; Wermke et al., 2019, etc.) and teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2015).	Institutional logics perspective (Thornton et al., 2012).	Established theory on teacher autonomy (e.g. Frostenson, 2015) and theory on models of educational governance and implementation of accountability measures (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).
Main findings	Teachers respond in different ways to accountability, depending on their perceptions of their scope of action, and on the national and local contexts in which they are located. In general, Brazilian teachers have a constrained scope of action and possibilities for achieving agency in comparison with their Norwegian counterparts. However, they do achieve agency using their creativity in some cases. Norwegian teachers also have their individual autonomy constrained by extended state control over the curriculum and testing. However, the practice of collective work opens up for the achievement of teacher agency because of the possibility of reflection and collective construction of teaching plans and strategies that frame and legitimize their teaching work.	The study found commonalities and differences in the adoption of the global accountability logic. One of the commonalities is the assumption that accountability can lead to better-quality education for all, which provides legitimation for the adoption of test-based accountability systems. This assumption is in line with the OECD global logic of accountability. The differences were expressed by the existence of coherent and contradictory logics in the national curriculum policy of the country-cases. Norwegian policy documents presented a cohesive adoption of the multiple aspects of the accountability logic. On the other hand, the Brazilian policy documents reflected the existence of competing social groups in policy making. Within the same documents, arguments were presented for the use of accountability measures, alongside with critiques of these measures that suggested their abolition.	The quantitative results show that there is not a clear pattern between teacher autonomy and models of educational governance. In general, teachers perceive that they have good control over teaching and planning at the classroom level. However, teachers report that they participate to a lesser degree in decision-making processes at the school and education system levels, which can indicate less opportunities for collegial and professional teacher autonomy. These results apply to all sampled countries, independent of their models of educational governance. In addition, this article closely examined two countries that represent different models of educational governance. The qualitative data from the country-cases have provided detailed information of aspects of teacher autonomy and complemented the quantitative results.

Dissertation articles

1

Teacher autonomy and teacher agency: a comparative study in Brazilian and Norwegian lower secondary education

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Teacher autonomy and teacher agency are positively related to teachers' motivation and engagement in teaching. This paper combines the concepts of teacher autonomy and teacher agency to study how Brazilian and Norwegian lower secondary teachers respond to an accountability system marked by a centralised outcomes-based curriculum and testing. Teacher autonomy concerns the relations between teachers' scope of action and the state's role in providing resources and regulations that extend or constrain this scope of action. Teacher agency refers to teachers' professional action based on their perceptions and experiences of their scope of action as they navigate accountability to respond to educational dilemmas at hand. The findings show that teachers navigate policies in a variety of forms to fit their needs and beliefs and those of their students. Brazilian teachers have a constrained scope of action and possibilities for achieving agency in comparison with their Norwegian counterparts. Norwegian teachers also have their individual autonomy constrained by extended state control over the curriculum and testing. However, the practice of collective work opens up for the exercise of agency because of the possibility of reflection and collective construction of teaching plans and strategies that frame and legitimise teaching work.

Keywords: teacher autonomy; teacher agency; accountability; comparative research; teachers' perceptions

Introduction

While researchers (e.g. Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Priestley *et al.*, 2015) use teacher autonomy and teacher agency to explore teachers' work, they do not often combine these concepts. This paper combines the concepts of teacher autonomy and teacher agency to explore teachers' perceptions and actions in response to accountability in education across different cultural settings, specifically Brazil and Norway. Very few studies have combined these two concepts, especially from a comparative perspective (Erss, 2018). The goal is to explore established theory on teacher autonomy and teacher agency, using empirical data gathered in a comparative study between one European and one Latin American country.

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Teacher autonomy is a key aspect of the teaching profession (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014) that is positively related to perceived self-efficacy, job satisfaction and positive work climate (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007; Wermke *et al.*, 2019). These factors are crucial to teachers' motivation and commitment to providing effective learning opportunities for students (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007). The same can be said for teacher agency (Priestley *et al.*, 2012, 2015; Erss, 2018). Employing a qualitative approach, we conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers to gather their personal understandings of their experiences and relationships in classrooms and schools to observe how they respond to accountability across different cultural settings. The research questions are: How can Brazilian and Norwegian teachers' autonomy be interpreted with respect to nation-specific characteristics of the respective school settings in an accountability system? What might teacher autonomy mean for Brazilian and Norwegian teachers' agency in an age of accountability?

Accountability in education is a complex and dynamic system that comprises modes of disclosing and assessing the work of teachers through the production and use of data from large-scale studies, league tables and monitoring systems such as formal appraisals, report writing and direct observation of classroom teaching (Ball, 2003; Maroy, 2008; Ozga, 2009). At the international level, the production and use of data, such as the publication of league tables of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), have triggered countries to implement educational reforms with increasing accountability (Steiner-Khamsi, 2003; Grek, 2009). These actions give rise to complicated issues of governance, control and professional practice of teachers in national and local contexts (Ball, 2003; Maroy, 2008; Ozga, 2009) that affect teacher autonomy and teacher agency in schools.

Researchers have addressed the issue of accountability as a global phenomenon in different ways. According to world culture theory, globalisation has increased standardisation in educational arrangements, programs and policies without regard to national contexts and history (Dale, 2000). As such, accountability may be a manifestation of the broad culture in which all countries are immersed because they have similar idealised models of society around which education and curricula are built (McEneaney & Meyer, 2000). In contrast, the culturalist theory attempts to 'point to the importance and perseverance of local contexts, showing how world culture may be resisted or processed, adapted and appropriated to local conditions, leading to hybridisations and new local particularities' (Waldow, 2012, p. 413). The culturalists have argued that the mechanisms through which globalisation affects national policy vary, producing different types of responses from national governments. In this study, we align with the culturalist position, seeking to apply alternative ways to explore how the state regulates and governs teachers through more sensitive, nuanced and contextual descriptions of the restructuring of teacher autonomy, as suggested by Klette (2002), hence, lifting up the complexity of autonomy and agency of teachers. This study addresses the call by Priestley *et al*. (2012) for more theorising of teachers' agency to understand the dynamic processes that teachers navigate within educational settings, including different contexts as Brazil and Norway.

Brazilian and Norwegian education contexts

In both Brazil and Norway, the national government centralises curriculum development and testing. Following the international education scenario, Brazil adopted an outcomes-based curriculum in the early 2000s and national testing in 2005 (Barreto, 2012; Villani & Oliveira, 2018). Norway introduced national testing in 2004 and an outcomes-based curriculum in 2006 in response to increased criticism after the publication of the first PISA study, in which the country scored barely above the average (Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Imsen & Volckman, 2014; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015).

Despite these similarities, Brazil and Norway have very different national contexts. Norway has historically had low class, gender and income differences along with few actors in private education. The idea of social integration and egalitarianism through an equal right to education is persistent in the country (Imsen & Volckman, 2014). Conversely, Brazil has historically experienced high economic and educational inequalities. The Brazilian middle class typically does not support decisions to increase taxes or implement a social redistribution system. In addition, since 1990s, the Brazilian government has adopted open market and privatisation measures in education (Barreto, 2012; Villani & Oliveira, 2018), increasing the participation of private actors and introducing measures such as target setting with bonus payments for schools that achieve performance targets. Given these differences, it is relevant to study how a centralised outcomes-based curriculum and testing have affected teacher autonomy and teacher agency in these two countries.

Theory and previous research

The multidimensionality of teacher autonomy

Teacher autonomy is a multidimensional concept that can be studied by examining who makes the decisions regarding teachers' work and who controls the outcomes of the decisions made. Specifically, researchers can examine whether teachers or other actors within the school (internal control) or outside the school (external control) make decisions (Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015). Wermke *et al.* (2019) explained that the decisions made by teachers or other actors regarding teaching work can relate to different domains within the school setting. These domains are educational, referring to lesson planning, instruction and assessment; social, related to the development of discipline policies, tracking of students and treatment of students with special needs; developmental, regarding plans of action and decisions related to professional development of school staff; and administrative, referring to decisions concerning timetabling and use of resources (Wermke *et al.*, 2019).

In addition to being a multidimensional concept, teacher autonomy is a complex and relational phenomenon, which means that the autonomy of one individual and/or group affects the autonomy of others (Bergh, 2015; Frostenson, 2015). The context of marketisation of the school system in Sweden illuminates how the economic discourse framed by national and local groups has affected teacher autonomy and practices at different levels. For example, decreased professional autonomy can foster collegial autonomy, while decreasing individual autonomy at the level of practice (Frostenson,

2015). However, depending on the domain of decision making, individual autonomy may coexist with collegial autonomy (Frostenson, 2015). According to Frostenson (2015, p. 22), general professional autonomy of the teaching profession consists of teachers acting as a professional group or organisation to decide on the framing of their work through, for example, influencing the general 'organisation of the school system, legislation, entry requirements, teacher education, curricula, procedures, and ideologies of control'. Frostenson (2015, pp. 23–24) defined collegial professional autonomy in the teaching profession as 'teachers' collective freedom to influence and decide on practice at local level' and individual autonomy as 'the individual's opportunity to influence the contents, frames and controls of the teaching practice'.

Cribb and Gewirtz (2007) combined the professional and collegial dimensions in the concept 'collective teacher autonomy', referring to teachers acting in groups within schools or politically through trade union activity or lobbying at the national policy level. Wermke and Forsberg (2017, p. 157) used the term 'service autonomy' to refer to the concept of individual autonomy and the term 'institutional autonomy' to refer to the concept of general professional autonomy of the teaching profession.

From a governance perspective, teacher autonomy is seen in relation to how the state regulates and controls education (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014). The state can concentrate the instruments of governance at the national level or decentralise them to municipal and school levels. Examining which tasks the state assigns to municipal and school levels is crucial to understanding the effects of the redistribution of responsibilities on the autonomy of individual teachers and teachers collectively. For example, in Norway, the national government gave increased responsibilities to municipalities and principals in terms of school development and student outcomes that intensified accountability (e.g. requirements of report writing), which challenged traditional interpretations of teacher autonomy as pedagogical freedom and lack of control (Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015).

Teacher autonomy and teacher agency

Researchers have defined teacher autonomy as the capacity of teachers to make key decisions that affect the content and conditions of their work within a frame of regulations and resources provided by the state (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Frostenson, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017; Wermke *et al.*, 2019). Conversely, teacher agency seems to depend on the perceptions that teachers have of their scope of action (Erss, 2018). Teachers achieve agency through their judgments and actions, considering the social, cultural and material conditions in which they work (Priestley *et al.*, 2012, 2015; Biesta *et al.*, 2017).

Although some definitions of teacher autonomy and agency overlap, it is possible to argue that teacher autonomy emphasises teachers' capacity to make decisions on their own, individually or as a group, with varying degrees of external constraints (Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017; Wermke *et al.*, 2019). Teacher autonomy also refers to the relationship between teachers and the state, that is, how the state regulates and governs education, thereby reducing or increasing teachers' room to make decisions and take action

(Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014). In contrast, teacher agency focuses on the capacity for professional action given the resources and limitations of their working environment (Erss, 2018). Teacher agency pays particular attention to the day-to-day work in classrooms and schools, considering teachers' personal beliefs, values and attributes as well as the local and national characteristics of the school settings, in the sense that teachers shape and are shaped by their working conditions (Priestley *et al.*, 2012, 2015; Biesta *et al.*, 2017).

Therefore, teacher autonomy includes both teachers' capacity to decide the content and conditions of their work and their will and capacity for justifying and developing practices (Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015). In this process, they must be able to critically reflect and find alternative courses of action, provided the social, cultural and material conditions of their working environment, thereby exercising agency (Priestley *et al.*, 2012, 2015; Biesta *et al.*, 2017).

Teacher autonomy and teacher agency in relation to state control and regulations

Researchers have also studied teacher autonomy in relation to regulations and resources provided by the state, which can empower (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007; Smaller, 2015) or de-professionalise teachers (Ball, 2003, 2010). Cribb and Gewirtz (2007) showed that restricted teacher autonomy might empower teachers and enhance teacher agency because experienced teachers know that official rules, guidance and norms are important resources in framing and supporting decisions. In consonance with this argument, Mausethagen and Mølstad (2015) found that Norwegian teachers generally experience frameworks provided by the state as helpful. Wermke and Forsberg (2017) added that teachers in Sweden may see state frameworks as forms of complexity reduction that define particular standards guiding teachers' work but that do not necessarily define the teaching profession itself. Moreover, regulations are important to frame and support the teaching profession, for example, by protecting learners from harm through delimitations of what teachers are able to do and ensuring equal access to a decent standard of educational provision through definition of academic standards and introduction of accountability instruments (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007).

However, the increase in accountability may also reduce teacher autonomy and teacher agency, leading to a culture of performativity, where tensions between professional commitments and beliefs and the imperative to meet performative requirements affect teachers' subjectivities, causing lack of creativity, professional integrity and fun in teaching and learning. Such changes occur in very different national contexts, as noted by Ball (2003, 2010) in England and Dias (2018) in Brazil.

One can argue that teacher agency relates to teachers' capacity to mediate policy through a process of iterative bending; hence, policy mutates from one setting to the next. As such, teacher agency illuminates how teachers make sense of policy and the varied factors that affect the process (Priestley *et al.*, 2012). Further, Priestley *et al.* (2012) have identified different responses of teachers to accountability. In our words, some teachers may 'play it safe' within the system, such as teaching to the test; in these situations, such an attitude inhibits agency. Other teachers may internalise the language of accountability and 'go with the flow'. When teachers react this way,

they use words such as 'outcomes' and 'measurability' instead of responding carefully to educational dilemmas. Still other teachers may use the logic of schooling in new situations, for example, using summative feedback for formative purposes. Smaller (2015) found that, despite—or even because of—new standards and tests, many teachers become more creative and skilled in their attempts to meet new demands. One can argue that this is a way of exercising agency. Mausethagen and Mølstad (2015) added that contradictions between policies and teachers' values and knowledge sometimes resulted in teachers' disengagement from local development initiatives in the Norwegian case. Priestley *et al.* (2012) explained that such resistance may also be a form of agency.

Altogether, these arguments can be seen as reasons for limiting teacher autonomy, but they can also be seen as reasons for limiting or extending state control. The relation between autonomy and control is not simple, and increasing control does not necessarily decrease autonomy or vice versa (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007). Further, autonomy does not always correlate to agency. In this paper, we apply the different ways to see autonomy for analytical purposes in the findings and use perspectives on agency to illuminate the discussion.

Methods

The research sites were three public schools in one municipality of São Paulo Federal State (Brazil), one school in one municipality of Oppland County (Norway) and one school in one municipality of Hedmark County (Norway), where we gained access. Moreover, we were concerned with exploring how such different countries, which are supposed to be unrelated, may show connections regarding teacher autonomy and teacher agency in an educational context marked by global ideas, such as the relevance of testing and accountability to improve the quality of education measured by student outcomes (Steiner-Khamsi, 2003; Grek, 2009).

The research population consisted of teachers working in lower secondary education. In Norway, lower secondary education is from grades 8 to 10, ages 13 to 15. Brazilian lower secondary education has a different organisation than the Norwegian. In Brazil, lower secondary education is from years 6 to 9, ages 11 to 14, under the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCE) of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The sampling of participants was purposive and heterogeneous (Thomas, 2006; Schreier, 2018) because we selected teachers with different genders, ages, years of work experience and subjects. We used this approach to provide us with rich data that gave us a sense of the multifaceted complexity of the subject under examination (Given, 2008). Previously identified group members indicated additional members of the population to generate a sufficient number of cases for the analysis, as in the snowball sampling technique (Thomas, 2006; Schreier, 2018). The sample size was 20 (11 Brazilian and 9 Norwegian teachers).

The use of semi-structured interviews allowed us to get an in-depth understanding (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015) of teachers' perceptions on their autonomy as well as possibilities and constraints for achieving agency. The topics covered by the interview

guide were teaching practices, teachers' perceived autonomy, teaching appraisal and feedback, teaching self-efficacy, job satisfaction and work climate and participation in professional development activities and professional organisations.

The method of analysis of the interview transcripts was qualitative content analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Bowen, 2009). We adopted a directed approach to content analysis, which means that analysis started with a theory as guidance for initial codes or themes; as analysis proceeded, we revised and refined the initial codes and developed additional codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Hsieh and Shannon (2005) explained that 'the main strength of a directed approach to content analysis is that existing theory can be supported and extended' (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283). First, the analysis started with the initial themes of the interview guide. Then, we coded the interview transcripts using theoretical concepts that address the relation between autonomy and accountability, which are national versus local governance; internal versus external control; and individual, collective and professional autonomy (Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015). We also analysed the transcripts in light of ideas related to teacher agency (Priestley *et al.*, 2012, 2015; Biesta *et al.*, 2017).

To promote research validity during the interview process, we adopted the use of descriptions phrased very similarly to the participants' accounts to confirm their interpretations related to teacher autonomy (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015; Johnson & Christensen, 2017). During the research process, we engaged in peer review (Johnson & Christensen, 2017) by discussing our actions and interpretations with other researchers familiar with but not directly involved with the research, which provided useful challenges and insights.

During data collection, we asked for the consent of the participants and explained the background and purpose of the study as well as what participation in the research implied. All the responses were treated confidentially, and individuals and schools cannot be identified by any means. Maintaining confidentiality and anonymity for the teachers is crucial to avoid harm, since divergent opinions and practices could result in negative consequences to them. For example, they could experience stigma or receive formal or informal sanctions if their responses or practices could be identified and were not part of the mainstream. In this regard, maintaining anonymity preserved teachers' integrity and allowed them to openly address their beliefs, values, experiences and relations to students, colleagues, principals and others from different domains of their work. This study received ethical clearance from the Norwegian Social Science Data Services.

Findings

National versus local governance

The Department of Education of São Paulo state administers large-scale student tests in primary and secondary education in parallel with the tests conducted by the Brazilian Ministry of Education. The Department also has its own educational indicator and applies it combined with the results of student tests to determine economic incentives for all school staff from schools that achieve performance targets. It also elaborates its own curriculum guidelines, which all public state schools are mandated

to follow, with descriptions of goals, competences, teaching strategies and assessment practices. Accordingly, it charges municipalities with tasks such as administering tests and reporting test results, providing short-term courses and seminars to teachers, and monitoring daily work in schools.

The Brazilian teachers questioned the orders that came from the state, which they received from the school leadership. Such orders included the need to constantly report on teaching plans and strategies to increase student outcomes. Despite this questioning, they showed understanding of the pressure that leaders felt to produce results. They said that the leaders were overworked from external demands, as one participant indicated below:

> *The pedagogical leader does a very good job. She tries to help us, [to give us] what we need, she does, to give us support, and we are always asking for help. Poor her. She is in trouble [laughing]. […] Not to mention the bureaucratic things that we do not see, and we know that there are many. There was a lot of stuff that came from the Department of Education.*

The Department of Education also provides a booklet-based teaching system with detailed instructions for each lesson as a support material for all subjects of primary and secondary education. Regarding the use of booklets, some teachers stated that they refused to engage in this initiative for several reasons. One expressed that the content of these booklets was too basic, while another stated that the lessons were too difficult for the students. A third informant explained that the activities were disconnected from the reality of the classroom, and one simply stated that she has her own way to work with students.

The Department of Education of São Paulo state also centralises the distribution of economic and material resources to schools, including the hiring, allocation and payroll of the school staff with the support of the municipal education authority. That is, the school has restricted autonomy to make monetary decisions. The state education authority takes charge of these decisions, and this action affects teacher autonomy. For example, one informant explained she could not give printed tests to students because the state does not provide a copy machine or printer for her school. Instead, she used the blackboard to post evaluation questions or gave other forms of evaluation, such as written individual or group reports based on textbooks. Another informant explained that he paid for Internet service for his students to use with their mobile phones because the school had no financial resources to afford the Internet or computers.

In Norway, all the schools use the same national curriculum in accordance with the same laws and regulations, and they are all mandated to participate in large-scale student tests administered by the Directorate for Education and Training, agency under the Ministry of Education and Research. Three Norwegian informants talked about the school leadership's responsibility to help teachers improve student outcomes by providing additional resources when necessary. For example, the leadership may need to allocate an extra teacher in the classroom to help students with more difficulties, as the following participant explained:

> *If there were very bad results [on national tests], it might put some pressure on the leadership in relation to extra resources to in a way raise them or those who needed [extra help] in the classroom.*

The school leadership also supports teachers who want to participate in professional development activities, such as conferences, seminars, courses and further education. Teachers can choose between receiving a scholarship without reduced workload or having their workload and pay reduced, while attending further education. However, the teachers expressed that they could not freely decide which activities to undertake. They had to choose amongst those offered by the municipal education authority in partnership with higher education institutions in key areas set by the national government agenda. The offerings included courses on digital competences, mathematic skills and student mentoring. Two informants felt that their opinions on certain matters (e.g. iPad use and digital tools in the classroom) were ignored in decisions that came from the municipal education authority and were passed on to them by the school leadership.

Internal versus external control

Strong internal control in Brazil and moderate internal control in Norway. In Brazil, the schools visited had cameras in the classrooms or hallways, which is a common surveillance practice in public schools of São Paulo state. The teachers explained that the school leaders justified the use of cameras as a protective measure to avoid thievery or violence carried out by students against teachers and peers, but some teachers experienced the use of cameras in classrooms as a form of internal control, as expressed below:

> *I am sure she [the school principal] says, 'Look! That one is sitting there. That one is standing there', right? But, I do not care. I am the same person.*

> *I think the camera helps them to see the blind spots. For example, there is a group chatting that I could not see, because a classroom is very dynamic, all the time. So, when we are giving attention to one group, the other is not always doing what needs to be done, what has been asked [Interviewer: Has someone looking at the TV monitor come to help you?] Yes, yes, already.*

School leadership often engages in direct inspection of teaching when parents issue complaints about certain teachers. Given these findings, it seems that Brazilian teachers feel that they have pedagogical freedom, but they struggle for control over teaching practices because of the use of cameras in the classrooms and direct inspection in some cases.

Regarding internal control in the Norwegian case, the practice of direct inspection of classroom teaching by the leadership is not common. The Norwegian teachers felt that their school leaders trusted their work, as seen below:

> *The principal trusts that you are doing your job, and then you have the opportunity to be flexible [in the use of working time], as long as you show that you take the job seriously and meet up when you should, then you have freedom to do, as you want, occasionally. It is not so strict. So, it fits well.*

Four informants stated that they shared teaching responsibilities with colleagues or that they invited colleagues to observe their lessons, to discuss activities and to provide suggestions for improvement. In addition, three of these informants had student teachers from higher education institutions observing and discussing teaching

practices. Furthermore, four informants also mentioned the relevance of informal practices of student assessment on their teaching as instruments guiding their work.

Strong external control in Brazil and Norway. The Department of Education of São Paulo state implements standardised student tests in primary and secondary education. The Department also provides a digital platform with test results that teachers are expected to use in the planning and development of teaching strategies, as one informant explained below:

> *So, there are the results, and then, for example, they ask me to make a timeline with the skills and competences according to this here. So, here on top of the results, I plan the activities I want to develop with them, focusing on the skills that I need to deepen with them, right?*

In Norway, the Directorate for Education and Training organises national testing and a digital platform with test results that help teachers to locate competences for development, especially for those students who are in the 'danger zone' or 'the weakest ones', which seems to constrain teacher autonomy in terms of pedagogical freedom over teaching practices. Nevertheless, some teachers reported that they do not rely on tests results when planning teaching activities, as in the following:

> *I do not need the national test to tell me at which level my students are because I can see here in my lesson. I can see when he writes an adventure and fails to write in English. I believe this testing is unnecessary.*

This informant planned her teaching based on her own judgments, informed by her daily relationships with students.

Individual, collective, and professional autonomy

Constrained individual autonomy in Brazil and Norway. Brazilian teachers stated that they are satisfied with the freedom they have to decide content and methods of instruction, despite requirements to adapt to a curriculum predefined by the Department of Education. For example, one informant explained:

> *Each teacher can choose the topics to teach, and can choose the way to teach. So, I find this autonomy very interesting, having this freedom. I cannot choose the topics that I am going to teach in a general way, but within what is obligatory, I can choose what to teach, what to teach more, and how to teach.*

Norwegian teachers are also required to adapt to a curriculum predefined by the state. They expressed that it is important and part of the teaching profession to relate to school frames and curricula, as seen here:

> *I am really free to decide on approaches within the framework that is set. Everyone has to apply the curriculum; everyone has to apply the regulations of the Education Act; everyone has to apply the general part of the curriculum overriding part that has now come. So, I have some frames, but within those limits, I experience quite a lot of freedom, both in the way I plan instruction and how it is implemented.*

Norwegian teachers perceived that they have freedom to decide on their classroom practices, as illustrated above.

Constrained collective autonomy in Brazil and extended collective autonomy in Norway. Brazilian teachers stated that they work mostly individually because they do not have time to meet and plan together with other teachers due to their intensive workload. Whenever they want to work together, they suggest collective projects (e.g. sport competitions, cultural fairs) to the school leadership, which provides some space for discussion and organisation of these events in the collective meetings that happen once a week. Nevertheless, these meetings are generally held to relay instructions and recommendations from the municipal school authority and to discuss school projects and the status of students in general, leaving no room for discussions in small groups or about specific topics.

The Brazilian informants perceived working together to discuss and plan pedagogical activities as sporadic and generally occurring in quick meetings in the hallway or in the staff room in the interval between classes, as stated here:

> *In the hallway, sometimes in the planning, there is a little time for us to discuss, right? Here at this school a little more; in most schools it does not work, it does not work.*
> *So, in the interval we use a little space to do this, but we end up never doing the activities, making a project happen.*

In the case of Norway, the school leadership organises meetings by school grade and subject, so teachers take part in weekly meetings to discuss and plan pedagogical activities together. Teachers, especially beginning teachers, experienced this arrangement as positive because it allow them to plan and share good practices, as described below:

> *It is a very good environment here. We work a lot in teams, and I think we have a good working environment where we are open to new ideas and accept the feedback from each other. We have a good tone at school.*

Three beginning teachers explained that they also adapted and supplemented teaching plans already developed by experienced colleagues according to their needs and those of the students. However, in some cases, teachers perceived teamwork as control and as restrictive to their work, as this informant explained:

> *I had a meeting yesterday, and it was not good at all. We were going to talk about the next period in Norwegian. It was as if the easiest is just to run the same as we did three years ago, the two others think. So, I thought that maybe it was a little simple; the plan was quickly finished somehow. They were very clear about what we were going to do. It was like two against one in a way. So, sitting there was quite a bad feeling.*

Nevertheless, one informant pointed to collective control as a way to avoid 'private practitioners' or 'that one [teacher] that does not relate to anything other than what oneself thinks'. In addition, such control may protect learners from harm, according to three other informants.

Constrained professional autonomy in Brazil and extended professional autonomy in Norway. Regarding participation in professional organisations, 7 out of 11

Brazilian teachers were disillusioned or indifferent to trade union activities. Only one informant knew who the union representatives at school were. The Brazilian informants described the union as immersed in power struggles and concerned about meeting its own interests as an organisation, not fighting for teachers' rights. For example, one informant stated,

> *I do not even know if the union is very concerned about what happens in the education system today. […] I see many personal interests. This is my view. In my daily life, I do not see them acting. I do not see that the union's activity changes my work. For this reason, I do not engage with them.*

Three other teachers defended the trade union's work, questioning, on the one side, teachers' lack of interest in political issues and, on the other side, the lack of opportunity for union representatives to meet teachers collectively within school settings, as seen here:

> *There is no space for the union. […] Because the representatives come either in the break time, or during the pedagogical meetings. But, in these meetings, there are also bureaucratic issues that the leadership has to pass on to the teachers, and there is little time left for them to talk, to discuss. […] What I see about the union is the lack of space and time so that they can act more.*

Norwegian teachers knew who their union representatives at school were, and two of them described situations where they asked for the representatives' intermediation to solve workload and salary issues. However, two teachers, who also have leadership positions in the school, criticised the union's role, as demonstrated by the following informant's statement:

> *I am very dissatisfied with the local trade union. They do not focus on the pupils, only on the rules that teachers can or cannot do. […] For me, who plans the schedules, I see that, if everybody wants to take the day off after each extra activity they do, it will not work. And this affects the pupils because we cannot offer extra activities.*

According to this informant, the extremely protective role of the teachers' union undermines learning situations.

Discussion

We set out to explore teachers' perspectives on their autonomy and agency. The findings indicated that teachers in Brazil are highly controlled compared to their Norwegian counterparts.

As previously illustrated, Brazilian teachers have restricted individual autonomy (Frostenson, 2015) because they must comply with a standardised state-based curriculum and testing when developing practices. In addition, they seem to achieve limited agency (Priestley *et al.*, 2012, 2015; Erss, 2018) because they adapt to the curriculum defined by the state, as illustrated by the teacher who explained how she adjusts to the topics provided by the curriculum. Despite few collective meetings due to time constraints and a vertical school culture that does not facilitate teamwork and participation in professional organisations, Brazilian teachers seem to navigate the system to find opportunities to meet and discuss practices. One example of such an

opportunity occurred when teachers asked school leaders to consent to the organisa-tion of collective projects.

Norwegian teachers also adapt to a standardised curriculum provided by the state, reflecting constrained individual autonomy. They believe that it is part of their work to apply state acts and regulations, revealing a constrained agentic response to curric-ulum frameworks. However, they use collective working to construct and legitimise practices, as when they described how working teams share, discuss and agree upon teaching plans. These practices foster reflective responses, as illuminated by begin-ning teachers adopting and supplementing these plans according to their needs and those of their students. The will and capacity of these teachers for reflecting on and developing practices (Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015) can be seen as their achieve-ment of agency (Priestley *et al.*, 2012, 2015; Biesta *et al.*, 2017).

Nonetheless, collective working can be restrictive, as demonstrated by a teacher who wanted to do things differently but encountered resistance from his working team who wanted to keep the same practices that had worked for years. In gen-eral, Norwegian teachers perceived collective working as positive because it helped them to define particular standards, guiding their work and protecting students from harm, as explained by some informants. Cribb and Gewirtz (2007), Mausethagen and Mølstad (2015), and Wermke and Forsberg (2017) have also observed these positive perceptions of teachers regarding professional frames in different contexts.

Brazilian teachers face strong internal control (Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015), illustrated by the use of cameras in classrooms. Even so, many of them negotiate this work climate of low trust by showing indifference to surveillance practices, as in the case of the teacher who explained that these practices do not affect her way of being and teaching. Brazilian teachers also endure strong external control (Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015) through obligatory participation in student tests. In addition, they are required to use test results to plan strategies to improve students' outcomes and to write reports on these strategies and students' progress, manifesting a working environment with increasing accountability (Steiner-Khamsi, 2003; Grek, 2009). Brazilian teachers who meet performance targets receive economic incentives from the state, which may be why many of them internalise the language of accountability and 'go with the flow' or even 'play it safe' (Priestley *et al.*, 2012) to guarantee their bonus payments. One informant explained how she uses the digital platform and test results to plan teaching strategies, illustrating the internalisation of the language of accountability. The external control also extends to the regulations framed by the curriculum and the resources provided by the state in the form of a booklet-based system. Regarding the use of booklets, some teachers resist or refuse to engage in this initiative for several reasons, as mentioned in the findings, showing the Brazilian teachers' sense of agency.

Norwegian teachers experience moderate internal control because of a school cul-ture of trust combined with collective control through group meetings, shared teach-ing and classroom observations by colleagues or student teachers. This lighter level of control allows them to navigate the system and be flexible during their work time if they behave in the ways expected of them, as one teacher explained. In addition, Norwegian teachers experience strong external control since they have to implement

the state-based curriculum goals. They also have to participate in national testing, and they are supposed to use test results to locate competences for improvement. Nevertheless, some teachers experience teaching to the test as something negative, and some do not use test results to plan teaching because they feel that their daily contact with students is the best way to know students' needs and potential. These responses revealed resistance or lack of engagement as expressions of agency (Priestley *et al.*, 2012; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015).

Brazilian teachers seem to adapt to state regulations and the need to constantly report on teaching strategies to improve students' outcomes. They are also affected by the centralisation of the provision of financial and material resources to schools. In this regard, they navigate the system by manipulating skills and using creativity to achieve their educational goals. As previously mentioned, one teacher paid for Internet access to use with the students' mobile phones during lessons.

In Norway, teachers are also responsible for improving student outcomes, and the school leadership has an important role in providing resources (e.g. extra teachers, iPads) and facilitating participation in professional development activities. However, local municipal authorities outside the school determine the content of these activities and the use of technologies in instruction with the goal of meeting the national education agenda. As such, the redistribution of responsibilities by the state affects teachers' capacity to make decisions without external constraints (Cribb & Gewirtz, 2007; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015). Even so, Norwegian teachers are able to manipulate the demands made on them to get extra help or to participate in professional development activities when they feel such activities are needed. This iterative process of bending in relation to policy demands shows their exercise of agency (Priestley *et al.*, 2012). Norwegian teachers also turn to the union, which has an active role in school, to solve issues related to their working conditions, indicating an extended general professional autonomy, according to the definition by Frostenson (2015).

In summary, in both countries, teachers' perceptions of their scope of action in relation to curriculum frameworks lead them to 'play it safe' (Priestley *et al.*, 2012), often adapting to curriculum policies. Compared to their counterparts in Brazil, teachers in Norway have more possibilities to process and appropriate the curriculum, achieving agency through collective working. Both Brazilian and Norwegian teachers mediate or even resist the internal and external dimensions of accountability (Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015), manifesting agency in instances such as the different uses of national tests results by Norwegian teachers and of the booklets by Brazilian teachers. Norwegian teachers also mediate policy through attending to expectations to gain some benefits, such as flexibility in the use of working time in school. In addition, Brazilian and Norwegian teachers manipulate skills and information, using creativity to achieve their goals and meet their needs despite the different working conditions extending or restricting teacher autonomy and the possibilities for exercising agency for both groups. The exercising of agency is especially creative in the Brazilian context, as opposed to the findings of Dias (2018).

Final reflections

In this paper, we showed that teachers navigate policies in a variety of ways, resisting or processing, adapting or appropriating the logic of accountability to fit their needs and beliefs and those of their students. Brazilian teachers have a constrained scope of action and limited possibilities for achieving agency in comparison with their Norwegian counterparts due to a school culture of power, low trust and surveillance practices as well as the requirements of adopting a state-based standardised curriculum and testing. Even so, they manage to respond to accountability in different ways. Norwegian teachers also have their individual autonomy constrained by extended state control over the curriculum and testing; however, the practices of collective working open up for reflection and construction of teaching plans and strategies that frame and legitimise their work. As such, even though Brazilian and Norwegian teachers experience similar accountability policies, which may indicate a global trend, they perceive and respond to these policies in different ways because of the different social, cultural and material conditions in which they work. Hence, one pattern of teacher autonomy may suit one system but not be fit for a different system, and this discrepancy affects teachers' potential to achieve agency.

The concept of teacher autonomy allowed us to discuss teaching practices as regulated and controlled by actors within and outside schools, including the resources and regulations provided by the state. Conversely, the concept of teacher agency enabled us to explore the capacity and will of teachers to construct their agency within these frames by adopting and adapting policies to justify some practices and change others. The analytical framework had some limitations. For example, it revealed that teachers' perceptions of their autonomy differed from the constraints placed on their work, as both groups of teachers perceived that they had freedom to decide the content and methods of instruction despite the centralised outcomes-based curricula, testing and increasing requirements for reporting results. The concept of teacher agency provided us with different perspectives on how the teachers described their work. Our findings reveal that teachers act on and construct their professional identities and practices within the boundaries of accountability, which constrains but also informs their roles and practices as professionals.

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National curriculum policy in Norway and Brazil: translations of the global accountability logic

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Abstract

This paper addressed in what ways national curriculum policy in Norway and Brazil adopted the global accountability logic of which OECD and other international organizations are proponents. It borrowed from an institutional logics perspective to explain the complexity found within the accountability logic across these two nation-states. The method used was thematic analysis of the national curriculum policy. The findings revealed that national curriculum policy is informed by the international context, but translated within national contexts. Norway elaborated the accountability logic to encompass multiple aspects of this logic that reinforced each other to create a cohesive policy. In Brazil, tensions between different social groups resulted in a curriculum policy with contradictory aspects of the accountability logic. The translations of the global accountability logic reflected the context-specific features of each country and illustrated both homogeneity and heterogeneity that still exists in different educational contexts.

Keywords: national curriculum policy, accountability, institutional logics, comparison

1 Introduction

The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), facilitated by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), has been a driver for national educational reforms with increasing accountability (Grek, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2003). Powerful international organizations have written policy documents with recommendations for action, and promoted initiatives to enforce accountability, by mobilizing multiple cultural symbols, one of them being the right to quality education for

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all (e.g. UNESCO, 2017; OECD, 2016). As a consequence of this international influence, many countries adopted national large-scale assessments and test-based accountability systems (Verger et al., 2019), which have put much pressure on teachers' work (Ball, 2003) and affected different dimensions of teacher autonomy (Lennert da Silva & Mølstad, 2020).

However, it is unlikely that international policy uniformly shapes national and local educational contexts. A reason for this is that diverse policy actors at different levels translate rather than simply implement policies (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). Therefore, to address national specificities in the study of policy adoption this paper borrows from an institutional logics perspective, a branch of institutional theory that focuses on how belief systems shape and are shaped by individuals and organizations (Thornton, Ocasio & Lounsbury, 2012; Thornton & Ocasio, 2013; Powell & Bromley, 2013; Parish, 2019). It focuses on the following cases, one developed country (Norway) and one developing country (Brazil).

The research question is:

In what ways does the national curriculum policy of Norway and Brazil adopt the accountability logic?

The authors recognize that there is an accountability logic found at different institutional levels, from the global to the local (cf. Thornton et al., 2012; Author, year). Further, this logic is influenced by its situation in multiple social spaces, in an inter-institutional system (Thornton et al., 2012; Thornton & Ocasio, 2013). Accordingly, diverse policy actors, with the aim to respond to the needs and problems at hand, can combine aspects of different institutional orders, for example, the state, the market, the corporation, and the profession. Moreover, as will be shown in this article, complementary or competing aspects of the accountability logic might co-exist, affecting its source of legitimacy and how this logic is likely to be enacted in different contexts.

This study adopts a 'most different system design' as it intentionally compares different countries while concentrating on key similarities (Landman & Carvalho, 2017). In this case, comparing two countries that present striking socio-economic, cultural, and political differences apart from the implementation, in the 2000s, of quality assessment systems to improve education and students' learning outcomes as a response to the disappointing results in PISA (Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Therrien & Loyola, 2001). Further, both countries have a testing system centralized by the national state (Lennert da Silva & Mølstad, 2020), which indicates a common presence of accountability measures.

On the other hand, by concentrating on these two cases, this study can gain a deeper understanding of the contextual specificities of each country, as well as their similarities and/or differences (Landman & Carvalho, 2017) in the adoption of the global accountability logic. Moreover, this study is attentive to the need of having "context qualified" researchers to carry out the research (Brisard et al., 2007, p. 224). That is to

say, the authors' backgrounds and experiences have influenced the study design, and facilitated the access to the policy documents under examination.

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: the next section presents the institutional logics perspective and how aspects of this perspective are used in this study. Then, this paper describes the data sources, methodological approach, and study contexts. In the findings section, each country is described in relation to the themes that emerged from the literature and the analysis of the documents. This paper then discusses how national curriculum policy adopts the accountability logic, followed by the concluding remarks.

2 Institutional logics perspective

In comparative education, the role of international policy ideas in national educational systems can be addressed by three main theoretical approaches (Verger, 2014). The first is institutionalism that emphasizes "the impact of ideas once they become institutionalized at a range of scales" (Verger, 2014, p. 17). These ideas "are embedded in a broad range of institutions, such as international regimes, systems of values and norms, and policy paradigms" (Verger, 2014, p. 17), which shape policy actors' behaviors and preferences. The second is rationalism that understands policy-makers as rational actors making decisions to boost their educational systems based on evidence of 'what works' (Verger, 2014, p. 18). The third is constructivism "that places ideas at the center of analytical models" (Verger, 2014, p. 20). This approach does not deny that ideas can work as embedded in institutions, but it is more interested in the social processes, often marked by power relations, by which ideas that were initially held by a minority become widely adopted and institutionalized (Verger, 2014, p. 20).

This paper builds upon Verger's (2014) institutionalism approach since it is interested in studying how the national curriculum policy of Norway and Brazil adopts the global accountability logic. Adoption is explored by borrowing from an institutional logics perspective, a branch of institutional theory that focuses on how belief systems shape and are shaped by individuals and organizations (Thornton et al., 2012; Thornton & Ocasio, 2013; Powell & Bromley, 2013; Parish, 2019).

Thornton et al. (2012, p. 2) defined an institutional logic "as the socially constructed, historical patterns of cultural symbols and material practices, including assumptions, values, and beliefs by which individuals and organizations provide meaning to their daily activity, organize time and space, and reproduce their lives and experiences". According to an institutional logics perspective, an institutional logic has symbolic, material, and socially constructed aspects (Thornton et al., 2012; Thornton & Ocasio, 2013). Firstly, an institutional logic is founded upon cultural symbols, that is, assumptions, values, and beliefs that are context-dependent. Secondly, an institutional logic has a material aspect based on the organization of resources, action, time, and space. Thirdly, an institutional logic is socially constructed in context, meaning that individuals and organizations can

activate or mobilize different aspects of an institutional logic and order to respond to their needs and interests.

Thornton et al. (2012) presented an inter-institutional system of institutional orders in which each order represents a different set of expectations for social relations and individual and organizational behavior. This inter-institutional system includes seven orders, which are market, corporation, community, profession, state, family, and religion. The institutional logics perspective views the actions and interactions of individuals and organizations as embedded in multiple institutional orders, however, at the same time, constructing and constituting these institutional orders (Thornton & Ocasio, 2013).

Based on the institutional logics perspective and literature on accountability in education (e.g. Bergh, 2015; Mausethagen, 2013; Verger et al., 2019), the authors define the global accountability logic as symbolic and material practices, that are related to making visible and reporting students' learning outcomes to the public, and to interested social groups and individuals, by which school actors and schools provide meaning to their practices and organize their work in schools. In this article, the authors explore different aspects of the logic of accountability. For example, cultural aspects, by connecting the logic of accountability to the value of human rights and education for all. Material aspects, by describing the implementation of quality assessment systems, with large-scale tests as their main component. Social construction aspects, by observing how policy-makers borrow aspects of this logic, drawing on the different institutional orders to provide meaning, organize and reproduce material practices and resources.

The authors identify three main themes in which the global logic of accountability, primarily through the work of the OECD, disseminates and promotes the global accountability logic by borrowing aspects of different institutional orders to strengthen the legitimacy of this logic and ensure its enactment by individuals and organizations at the national level. These are as follows.

Accountability and education for all

Firstly, the justification for the logic of accountability can be seen to have its roots in the promotion of the value of human rights and education for all. As seen in the quotation below, the OECD's justification for PISA is education for all. For the OECD, education is one of the major avenues for achieving its aim of social and economic development in its member and partner countries (Schleicher, 2019). This can also be seen as a strategy of many nation-states, to increase and redistribute community goods to its citizens (Thornton et al., 2012, p.73). OECD advocates the use of accountability tools by nation-states, such as the use of educational indicators, with the aim to adjust policies and ensure quality education for all, as illustrated here:

> PISA is not only the world's most comprehensive and reliable indicator of students' capabilities, it is also a powerful tool that countries and economies can use to fine-tune their education policies… That is why the OECD produces this triennial report on the state of education around the globe: to

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share evidence of the best policies and practices, and to offer our timely and targeted support to help countries provide the best education possible for all of their students (Schleicher, 2019, p. 2).

This blending of accountability and the symbolic human rights promoting the value of education for all provides meaning to OECD's activities and organization of the use of material resources, such as large-scale comparative surveys, league tables, policy documents with recommendations for action, etc. Moreover, by connecting the accountability logic with wider socially accepted cultural frames, as the right to quality education, OECD justifies the legitimacy of this logic and contributes to its widespread adoption by policy actors at different levels, which impacts on national educational systems, schools, and individual teachers.

Managerial accountability

Secondly, the OECD promotes and disseminates its' accountability logic through the use of accountability tools by public managers, who are responsible for promoting efficiency through standards and the measuring, monitoring, and controlling of performance outputs, in a managerial model of accountability (Sinclair, 1995, p. 222). According to Bergh (2015, p. 594), student achievement has become the prime indicator of the quality of education, assisting schools in the task of measuring the distance between goals and outputs. This understanding of accountability borrows from the institutional orders of the market and the corporation. The former having as a strategy to increase efficiency, and the latter having the top management as a source of authority to apply the means to achieve specified aims (Thornton et al., 2012, p.73). The OECD's policy recommendation below highlights the importance of the role of school leadership:

> The understanding of the main components of school leadership has evolved over the years. It has encompassed a series of aspects, such as establishing goals, providing pertinent professional development and taking action for development of curriculum and improvement of instruction, while not losing sight of managerial aspects of the school (OECD, 2020, p. 180).

Professional accountability

Thirdly, the OECD promotes and disseminates its' accountability logic through control mechanisms exercised by the professional community on individual teachers. In this sense, the institutional order of the professional group can reinforce the commitment to common values and ideology (Thornton et al., 2012, p.73), such as education for all. This makes visible individual actions and can lead to accountability and compulsion by teachers to adjust their practices to protect their professional status and reputation (Thornton et al., 2012, p.73). The OECD recommends that schools leaders encourage such professional cooperation as a way to increase teachers' responsibility for improving students' learning outcomes, as illustrated here:

School leaders can set the tone for teachers by encouraging teachers to co-operate with each other to develop new teaching practices and take responsibility for improving their teaching skills, and by ensuring that teachers feel responsible for their students' learning outcomes (OECD, 2014, p.11).

Therefore, the professional community itself exerts pressure to improve students' learning outcomes. Consequently, teachers might adopt a performance-oriented responsibility, organizing their work to meet performance targets (Mausethagen et al., 2018; Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2014).

These three themes presented above are not exhaustive, which means that the global accountability logic might contain other aspects. However, these are the three main themes identified by the authors that will be used to assist in the thematic analysis, as described in the methods section, and in the organization of the findings and discussion sections.

3 Methods

This study employs an analysis of policy documents. Using national policy in research is useful because they are authentic documents (Bryman, 2012). Usually, contemporary policy documents are available on official websites facilitating public access. Further, these documents have a clear and comprehensible meaning. They reflect the beliefs, values, attitudes, and the like of a given society at a particular time (Bryman, 2012), being relevant sources to study the accountability logic in the two country-cases. Some researchers have pointed to problems of reliability in policy documents, that they may show biases, emphasizing some ideas rather than others. Nevertheless, as Bryman (2012, p.550) explains, "such documents can be interesting precisely because of the biases they reveal", featuring issues of social interest in the current educational scenario.

The aim is to establish a reasonable level of functional equivalence between the compared national curriculum policies. This study adapts the model presented by Mølstad and Hansén (2013), comparing curriculum as a governing instrument. This model has three levels of hierarchy according to the institutional level where decisions are made and the nature of the decisions made at each level. The model moves from strict and very specific normative prescriptions on level one to less rigid, but often more detailed recommendations on level three (Mølstad & Hansén, 2013, p. 743).

Table 1. Governing instruments of compulsory public education in Norway and Brazil

	Norwegian governing body	Brazilian governing body
Level one:		
Act (law)	Parliament	Congress
Decree	Non applicable	President
Level two:		
White papers and Regulations	Parliament and Ministry of Education and Research	National Board of Education
National curriculum	Directorate for Education and Training	Ministry of Education
Level three:		

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Circular letters	Directorate for Education and Training	Decentralized to federal-state education systems

Adapted from Mølstad and Hansén (2013). Elaborated by the authors.

This paper focuses on level two policies, that is, white papers and national curricula, since they are functionally equivalent for comparison. The white papers selected were the two most recent ones in Norway and the three in Brazil that deal with core principles and values attached to basic education. The curriculum documents selected were the general part of the most recent curricula. In Norway, these documents correspond to the years 2016 and 2017, and, in Brazil, to the period 2010-2019. One limitation is that the time frame of the documents available is not exactly the same, although showing some overlap. In Norway, the documents provide information limited to the present time, and, in Brazil, the documents allow for consideration of a short period of time that reveal differences in political contexts, however, also depicting the current state of the accountability logic in this country.

White papers

In both countries, white papers are reports that can provide the basis for a draft resolution or bill at a later stage in the Parliament (Norway) or Congress (Brazil). In Brazil, the discussion and voting of resolutions on educational matters generally occur internally at the National Board of Education (NBE) agency under the Ministry of Education, formed by experts chosen by the President of the Republic. In Norway, a group of experts selected by the Ministry of Education and Research prepares white papers (Meld.St.) to present educational matters to the Parliament (Storting).

National curricula

Both countries have centralized national curricula. In Norway, groups of experts, teachers, and union representatives, facilitated by the Directorate for Education and Training (DET), an agency under the Ministry of Education and Research (MER), are responsible for the preparation of the national curriculum. The latter is a set of documents prepared and disseminated separately, consisting of the general part and curricula in subjects, based on the Education Act and the principles of the last school reform, known as Knowledge Promotion (Mølstad & Hansén, 2013). In Brazil, a group of experts selected by the Minister of Education (ME) is responsible for the elaboration of the national curriculum. This document is a one-piece document, describing core competencies and minimum content with the aim to guide assessments and the preparation of textbooks and other curriculum policies within Brazil.

Translation and use of documents

The white papers and the Brazilian national curriculum are in their original language and the authors directly translated the citations used in this paper. The Norwegian core curriculum has an English version. The following documents are examined:

In Norway, (1) Report to the Parliament no. 28 - Subjects - Specialization – Understanding. A renewal of the Knowledge Promotion (MER, 2016), referred to as Report to the Parliament no. 28 – A renewal of the Knowledge Promotion. (2) Report to the Parliament no. 21 - Desire for learning - early efforts and quality in school (MER, 2017), referred to as Report to the Parliament no. 21 – Desire for learning. (3) The core curriculum - values and principles for primary and secondary education and training (DET, 2017).

In Brazil, (1) Report no. 07/2010, which defines General National Curriculum Guidelines for Basic Education (NBE, 2010a), referred to as Report no. 07/2010 – General Curriculum Guidelines. (2) Reports no. 08/2010 and no. 03/2019, which deal with the minimum standards of quality education for Public Basic Education (NBE, 2010b; NBE, 2019), referred by their numbers. (3) Common National Curriculum Base for Child and Basic Education (ME, 2017), introductory chapters.

Thematic analysis

This study applies thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Ryan & Bernard, 2016) of the documents. This analytical approach is useful because it can be used to identify patterns within and across data sets guided by the research question (Clarke & Braun, 2017, p. 297). The process of analysis consisted of two phases:

Phase 1 – The deductive process focused on searching for data related to accountability informed by the literature on the topic and the three themes identified by the authors above (accountability and education for all, managerial accountability, and professional accountability).

Phase 2 – The inductive process sought to find data related to accountability that emerged from the reading of the documents. In this phase, what emerged was the theme of questioning accountability, referring to direct criticism regarding the use of accountability measures by the national government. This theme appeared markedly different in the documents of the two countries analyzed. As such, the authors considered it important to be addressed in the findings and discussion sections.

4 Contexts

This section provides background information on the educational policy contexts of each country, having the logic of accountability as the focus of the description.

Norway

In Norway, the logic of accountability is associated with the beliefs of ensuring educational quality, promoting learning, and improving education. The discussion on accountability dates back to 1988 when an OECD report questioned whether the country had sufficient tools for monitoring the quality of its education system and proposed several accountability measures to ensure educational quality (Mausethagen, 2013; Tveit, 2014). However, it was only in 2004, with the 'PISA shock', where the country scored barely above the average despite its high levels of spending on education (Karseth & Sivesind, 2011), that a national quality assessment system with accountability purposes was implemented.

In the Norwegian country background report that provided information for the OECD thematic review on Evaluation and Assessment Frameworks for Improving School Outcomes, accountability is "understood as being synonymous with control and supervision – through such actions as measuring of results or undertaking inspections". "This term also covers the goal of promoting learning so operators in the system can achieve continuous improvement" (DET, 2011, p. 2).

According to Tveit (2014), national tests are the best-known component of the national quality assessment system, which also includes the School Portal (Skoleporten), international studies, education statistics, user surveys, and inspections (DET, 2011). Mausethagen (2013, p. 13) explained that the purpose of the national tests was to publish the results of individual schools to hold schools accountable and drive them to improve results. However, school ranking prompted school competition and received widespread public criticism (Mausethagen, 2013; Tveit, 2014). As a consequence of this criticism, the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training, responsible for the tests, suspended their application for one year and strengthened their formative purpose through providing information on the student's competencies to assist teachers in feedback and planning of strategies with a view to development in the subject. Nevertheless, this does not mean that tensions between accountability demands and formative purposes were solved, as they continue to co-exist in this instrument (Tveit, 2014).

Brazil

In Brazil, the implementation of a national assessment system, in the end of the 1990s, is associated with the belief of increasing efficiency and performance in international comparisons (Therrien & Loyola, 2001). The Brazilian National Education Plan (NC, 2014) has included the PISA average as an indicator of educational quality. PISA is also part of the country's educational assessments along with national assessments (NC, 2014).

According to Villani and Oliveira (2018), national indicators are used to measure and analyze the efficiency of inputs (e.g. material resources, teachers' qualifications and working hours) to produce desirable outputs. These are evidenced by the improvement of

students' school flux progression and performance in national and international tests (Villani & Oliveira, 2018, p. 1347).

Macedo (2019) identified three major signifiers in Brazilian national curriculum policy. (1) Demands for accountability that come from institutional bureaucracies responsible for educational management and private sectors, focused on the assessment of students' performance. (2) Demands for social justice are framed in terms of redistributive policies or learning rights by social groups and networks linked to critical political positions as academic movements, academics, and teachers. (3) Demands for liberty as minimum regulation of the economy and some aspects of education. The actors and networks of this group are religious conservative groups (Catholics as well as evangelical), ultraliberal financial capital, and military sectors that demand the freedom to educate their children and for liberating the country from a leftist political ideology. Macedo (2019, p. 190) explained that accountability and liberty are the current hegemonic signifiers, which does not mean that social justice demands are not present in national curriculum policy as its supporters constantly seek to increase their scope of influence in the curriculum making processes.

5 Findings

This section describes each country-case with the following themes that were found or emerged from the literature and the analysis of the documents: accountability and education for all, managerial accountability, professional accountability, and questioning accountability.

Norway

Accountability and education for all

Norway aligns with the global accountability logic that connects accountability measures with the right to education, as disseminated by international organizations (e.g. UNESCO, 2017; OECD, 2016; Schleicher, 2019). The Norwegian documents highlight that the school's role in today's' society is to give all students opportunities to learn and develop their abilities, regardless of their backgrounds, as the example below:

> A good school educates and forms, evens out social disparities, providing equal opportunities regardless of whether you grow up in Alta, in Alna, or in Arendal (MER, 2017, p.6, authors' translation).

Both Reports to the Parliament (MER, 2016; 2017) use the disparities in the results of national tests to argue for a good school for all. Both documents call attention to large variations in students' performance on national tests between and within schools, indicating discrepancies in the educational offer, as illustrated below:

> There are relatively large variations in student performance on national tests between schools, municipalities, and counties (MER, 2016, p.13, authors' translation).

Closing performance gaps ensures that all students get the same benefits from the educational offer, helping them in further education, participation in the labor market and society, as a basis for a good life, as well as economic growth and future welfare of the country, as in the following:

> Today, the content and quality of the education offer will have a greater impact on economic growth and future welfare (MER, 2017, p.10, authors' translation).

In the Report to the Parliament no. 21 – Desire for Learning (Chapter 3), the quality of education is characterized by: (1) a good and inclusive learning environment as a goal in itself and as means to improve students' learning outcomes. (2) Students mastering basic skills and acquiring good academic competencies as evidenced by results in international and national tests. (3) More students complete secondary education with competencies valued in the labor market or higher education (MER, 2017, p.16, authors' translation).

Managerial accountability

Both Norwegian white papers express the role of the national government setting goals and standards and monitoring students' learning outcomes, while the local level is responsible for organizing the means to improve students' learning outcomes. The Report to the Parliament no. 21 – Desire for learning justifies the distribution of responsibilities in the educational system, as seen here:

> International research shows that the decentralization of decisions about organizing, solving tasks, and using resources has positive effects on students' learning, given that the local level has the competence and willingness to take responsibility. Among other things, it is important to have a great deal of freedom to allocate resources, make appointments, determine salaries, and develop teaching. The local level usually has better knowledge of its circumstances, greater ability to utilize resources, and can develop more effective measures than the state level (MER, 2017, p.12, authors' translation).

The Report no. 28 – A renewal of the Knowledge Promotion presents five principles that serve as a basis for the governing of schools: clear national goals, knowledge of students' learning outcomes, clear responsibilities, great local freedom of action, and a solid support and guidance apparatus (MER, 2016, p.9, authors' translation). With the granting of increased autonomy to schools, local actors are encouraged to use the knowledge on student achievement, organize resources and strategies to improve students' learning outcomes.

Professional accountability

Professional cooperation is as a key to evaluating and developing practices, as illustrated below:

School should be a professional environment where teachers, leaders and other members of staff reflect on common values, and assess and develop their practice (DET, 2017, p .21).

Cooperation within schools and between schools and municipalities is a central element in the Report to the Parliament no. 21 – Desire for learning (Chapter 4). According to this document, professional cooperation contributes to control mechanisms that have significantly higher legitimacy among the teaching profession than state control by itself (MER, 2017, p. 32). Another example of the relevance of professional cooperation as a form of holding teachers accountable is illustrated below:

(…) teachers and leaders in well-functioning communities: feel a shared responsibility for all students' learning; are committed to documenting learning outcomes; work together to develop a common understanding of how classroom practices can be improved; jointly plan educational curricula and educational strategies, and evaluate the effects on teaching; share and further develop teaching that proves to be effective (MER, 2017, p.26, authors' translation).

The assumption that participation in a professional community can reinforce a commitment to common values (i.e. effective teaching that improves students' learning) is also present at the global level as exemplified by OECD's policy recommendations (OECD, 2014). Policy actors use professional cooperation as a legitimate control mechanism. Accordingly, teachers feel committed to documenting learning outcomes. They also develop a sense of self-discipline and adjust their plans and strategies in relation to their professional group with the aim to improve students' learning outcomes (Mausethagen et al., 2018; Solbrekke & Sugrue, 2014).

Questioning accountability

This study did not find any direct criticism in the Norwegian documents regarding the use of accountability measures.

Brazil

Accountability and education for all

The national curriculum (ME, 2017) establishes a set of core competencies to which all students are entitled throughout their school life. This document expresses an alignment with the international scenario, mentioning the focus on competencies of international assessments organized by the OECD and other international organizations (ME, 2017, p. 5, 13).

This policy also recognizes that school education should promote global human development and formation, encompassing intellectual, physical, affective, social, ethical, moral, and symbolic dimensions, with the aim of building a just, democratic and inclusive society (ME, 2017, p. 14, 16, 25).

The Report no. 08/2010 on minimum quality educational standards presents a table with Norway, Ireland, Finland, England, and Spain, on the one side, and Iran, Brazil, India, and Bangladesh, on the other side, showing the strong correlation between positive students' learning outcomes and high levels of country's human development and per capita wealth indexes (NBE, 2010b, p. 3). Those countries presented in the same group as Norway are seen as examples of high per capita achievement in the areas of health, education, and income leading to better educational results, as opposed to those countries in the same group as Brazil. Finland is also mentioned as an exemplary case of teacher recruitment and efficiency in the use of resources per student in relation to PISA results.

Managerial accountability

According to Report no. 07/2010 - General Curriculum Guidelines, large-scale assessments subsidize education systems in formulating equity policies to ensure a good educational provision for all students, as illustrated here:

> As is known, the ENEM and Prova Brasil [large-scale standardized] assessments are state policies that subsidize the systems in the formulation of public equity policies, as well as providing aspects to the municipalities and schools to locate their weaknesses and promote actions, in an attempt to overcome them, through integrated goals (NBE, 2010a, p. 7, authors' translation, clarification in brackets).

The Brazilian curriculum has reallocated autonomy to regional and local education systems and schools, while defined the common core competencies and basic knowledge that they have to address (ME, 2017, p.16). As seen above, local actors are responsible for using the knowledge on student achievement to overcome their weaknesses and reduce inequalities. Besides the centralization of the curriculum, the central state promotes actions and policies in different institutional levels regarding assessment (such as the large-scale assessments mentioned in the citation above), elaboration of teaching material, and the criteria for the offer of adequate infrastructure (ME, 2017, p.21).

Report no. 08/2010 is an example of a policy that establishes minimum quality educational standards for all Brazilian schools. These minimum quality standards are seen as a way to promote economic development and reduce social and regional inequalities in the country, as seen here:

> The results of Prova Brasil [large-scale assessment], as well as those of SAEB [educational indicator], showed, on the educational side and with a very precise focus, the existence of many "Brazils". (…) [This] reflects a very unequal school system, where most Brazilians do not have the same learning opportunity, creating profound social inequalities, both local and regional. Based on these considerations, it is worth asking: how to build a more just and egalitarian country through education? What obstacles lead to such disparate results in the Brazilian educational system? How can the differences between schools be reduced and thus allow a fairer comparative analysis of the assessment results? (NBE, 2010b, p. 7, authors' translation, clarification in brackets)

This policy suggests three measures to improve the quality of education: (1) valuing the teaching profession, (2) increasing educational investments, and (3) implementing

minimum quality standards for all schools (NBE, 2010b). This document also provides suggestions for strengthening teacher professionalism (e.g. providing training and better remuneration for teachers) and describes in detail investments in infrastructure and material resources to ensure a minimum quality standard for all students in schools.

Professional accountability

The Brazilian national curriculum policy refers to the collective construction of educational practice (NBE, 2010a; NBE, 2010b). There is an assumption that cooperation between school and local community can reinforce the commitment to improve educational quality, as in the following:

> (...) while democratic management introduces legitimacy, on the one hand, it strengthens school autonomy on the other; greater autonomy is associated with greater accountability and social transparency of the decisions taken. This requires greater integration between the school and the local community (NBE, 2010b, p.15, authors' translation).

As seen above, democratic management is also a form of accountability that controls and makes visible the actions of school professionals. In this form of accountability, the school professionals together with the local community decide on goals according to their needs and interests.

Questioning accountability

Even though the Brazilian documents express the need for accountability tools to improve and ensure education for all, this discourse comes together with a criticism of accountability. Report no. 07/2010 – General Curriculum Guidelines questions the use of large-scale assessments by the national government as disconnected from the reality of schools and creating exclusions, from a learning rights perspective (Macedo, 2019):

> Do these programs take into account the identity of each system, each school? Would not the failure of the student, as ascertained by these assessment programs, be expressing the way the assessment takes place, not the way the school and the teachers plan and operate the curriculum? Would the applied assessment system be related to what actually happens in Brazilian schools? As a consequence of this external assessment method, would not the students be punished with terrible results and terrible news? (NBE, 2010a, p. 7, authors' translation).

According to this policy, the school community should jointly construct the quality of the school from its local conditions. As such, the use of indicators and statistical data should be one of many other tools in this process of collective construction of educational quality. The document also states that the formative character of assessment in supporting learning should predominate over the quantitative (NBE, 2010a, pp. 17-18, 48).

Groups with an ultraliberal ideology (Macedo, 2019) have also challenged the use of educational indicators and minimum quality standards as grounds for investment in Brazilian schools. In a more recent policy (NBE, 2019) the concept of quality education of previous policies (NBE, 2010b) is refuted. Report no. 03/2019 advocates for a greater

debate on the definition of quality to go beyond investment. This white paper argues that there are not enough studies linking increased investments in schools with results from large-scale assessments. This report also states that setting a minimum quality standard for schools does not take into account regional characteristics, as well as aspects related to the government's economy. This policy focuses on the discussion of material resources and investments, as measured by the cost per student index, and the inability of the national government to meet these expenses rather than the roles and responsibilities of different actors and institutional levels in ensuring a good educational provision for all students.

6 Discussion - comparison

This section discusses and compares how national curriculum policy adopts the global accountability logic by borrowing from the institutional logics perspective, as presented in the theory section (Section 2). In particular, the construction of the accountability logic as evidenced through policy documents and the cultural symbols and material practices connected to them.

Accountability and education for all

In Norway, there is a belief that accountability instruments, mainly large-scale tests, can ensure quality education for all. In the findings section (Section 5), the accountability logic combined with the value of the right to education (e.g. UNESCO, 2017; OECD, 2016, Schleicher, 2019). The focus is on the provision of equal conditions for all students to perform well in large-scale tests regardless of their backgrounds (MER, 2016, 2017). Further, good performance in these tests is positively associated with opportunities to continue in further education and enter the labor market, which, in turn, advance economic growth and welfare of the country (MER, 2017). This combination of the value of education for all and an economic view of education is one aspect of the accountability logic in the Norwegian case, which aligns with the OECD global logic of accountability.

Similarly to Norway, Brazilian curriculum policy combined the assumption that accountability instruments ensure equal access to a good standard of educational provision for all students, contributing to reduce social and economic inequalities in the country (NBE, 2010a, 2010b). In both of these cases, the underlying value behind accountability is that of education for all in line with the global accountability logic promoted by the OECD.

At least at the national policy level, both of these cases accept the symbolic notion that accountability can lead to better quality education for all and wealth growth and redistribution. This symbolic notion provides legitimation for the adoption of national quality assessment systems, in line with the OECD global logic of accountability.

Managerial accountability

The managerial accountability aspect of the global logic also manifests in the material practices and tools, as in the case of national quality assessment systems and the use of indicators to measure educational outcomes. Norway implemented a national quality assessment system in 2004 (Karseth & Sivesind, 2011), as has been recommended by OECD policies since the 1980s (Mausethagen, 2013; Tveit, 2014). As shown in the findings section, this system is coupled with decentralization of responsibilities to the local level, giving local actors increased autonomy and responsibility to organize their work to improve students' learning outcomes (MER, 2016, 2017).

Likewise in Brazil, the concern with efficiency and international comparisons led to the development of a curriculum based on competencies and focused on the assessment of outcomes (Therrien & Loyola, 2001; ME, 2017). Brazil implemented large-scale assessments and educational indicators as accountability tools to improve educational efficiency and performance in international assessments, such as PISA (Therrien & Loyola, 2001). The Brazilian curriculum policy uses PISA averages as an indicator of educational quality, and PISA is also part of the national assessment system (NC, 2014; Villani & Oliveira, 2018). As with Norway, Brazilian curriculum policy decentralizes responsibility for the use of accountability tools and the elaboration of policies and organization of strategies to regional and local educational systems and schools (NBE, 2010a; NBE, 2010b). Further, the Brazilian government set a minimum quality standard for school infrastructure and material resources to ensure a common basis for the improvement of the quality of education (NBE, 2010b).

In both cases, the managerial aspect of the global logic of accountability has been adopted in national policy documents leading to the decentralization of responsibility to improve learning outcomes at the regional and local levels.

Professional accountability

In the case of Norway, there is a strong focus on the need for professional collaboration as a way to promote student learning, in line with the OECD's policy recommendations (OECD, 2014), and policy actors use professional collaboration as a legitimate control mechanism to improve student learning as measured by students' learning outcomes. In the case of Brazil, accountability is deferred to both the professional school and local community to work in collaboration to promote learning. Both cases have adopted the professional accountability aspect of the global accountability logic, although professional accountability featured more strongly in the Norwegian policy documents than in the Brazilian ones. In the Brazilian curriculum policy, school professionals together with the local community decide specific goals and organize the means to achieve these goals, which are not necessarily related to student performance in large-scale assessments, as shown in the policy documents (NBE, 2010a; NBE, 2010b).

Questioning accountability

Whilst in both cases the three aspects of the global accountability logic have been adopted in national policy documents to a certain extent, tensions are evident in the policy documents that require attention. In Norway, demands for accountability have created tensions between the concern for students' achievement and students' learning. The latter meaning the use of test results as a source of information to assist teachers in the process of feedback and planning of strategies to promote students' learning (Tveit, 2014). In the Norwegian curriculum policy, the tension between demands for accountability creating school competition (Mausethagen, 2013) and formative educational purposes that foster students' learning (Tveit, 2014) seems to be conciliated by teachers working in a professional community and jointly planning educational curricula and strategies to improve students' learning (MER, 2017). However, this blending of accountability and formative aspects has not taken away the focus on students' performance in large-scale assessments (MER, 2016; MER, 2017).

Brazilian policy seems to go beyond the focus on students' learning outcomes, stating the relevance of the formative process of education in its various dimensions (ME, 2017). This view of education also reveals the cultural values associated with the accountability logic in the Brazilian case. Brazilian curriculum policy, whilst adopting the three aspects of the global accountability logic, reveals tensions in the social construction of this logic. These tensions can be seen in the existence of policy actors with different beliefs and values in national policymaking (Macedo, 2019). The first group advocating accountability as a means to improve the quality of education and students' performance in large-scale assessments. The second being sceptical of the use of accountability tools and arguing for a parsimonious use of these tools in the collective work of constructing educational quality. The third criticizing expenditures with accountability measures, arguing that they do not give the expected results in student achievement and that students' performance in large-scale assessments cannot justify investments in a minimum quality standard for all schools. The cultural symbols and values of the first and second groups appeared in the same pieces of documents (NBE, 2010a; NBE, 2010b), while those of the third group were clear in the white paper of the 2019 (NBE, 2019), as shown in the findings section. The national curriculum (ME, 2017) overall reflects an alignment with the three aspects of the global logic, however, these tensions identified to reduce the cohesion of the documents which could lead to heterogeneity in how the policy is implemented in schools.

In sum, the Brazilian curriculum policy presents contradictory aspects of the accountability logic, which reflect the beliefs and values of different social groups in national policymaking to the present time (Macedo, 2019). In the Norwegian curriculum policy, the three aspects of the global accountability logic are coherently aligned, which brings cohesiveness to the Norwegian policy documents.

7 Conclusion

This paper sought to answer the question - In what ways does the national curriculum policy of Norway and Brazil adopt the accountability logic? In doing so, it revealed that even though Brazil and Norway adopted the global accountability logic as promoted and disseminated by the OECD, they did so in different ways.

Norwegian curriculum policy presented a construction of complementary aspects of the accountability logic that reinforced each other. Accordingly, these complementary aspects of the accountability logic might strengthen its source of legitimacy and stability. Ultimately, the Norwegian case presented a cohesive adoption of the three aspects of the global logic of accountability. There was no direct contestation in the documents that were analyzed. As a consequence of this cohesiveness within the policy, the authors wonder whether this homogeneity can also be found in the way that this policy is implemented in schools.

Brazilian policy, on the other hand, revealed tensions and a questioning of the global accountability logic, arguing that it creates exclusions and it is not sufficient to respond to socio-economic and cultural issues of the country. However, at the same time, Brazilian policy has adopted the value of education for all and the use of accountability tools to achieve this. Whilst the OECD presented accountability as a way to promote education for all, the Brazilian policy documents revealed a tension in that they question whether accountability measures can ensure education for all at the national level.

The different translations of the accountability logic reflected the context-specific features of each country and illustrated both homogeneity and heterogeneity that still exists in different educational contexts.

It is a limitation of this paper that the authors did not explore how the policies are implemented in schools in the two contexts. Further research is needed to explore teachers' perspectives on their work and autonomy under the accountability logic. Another limitation of this paper is that it did not focus on the agency of policy-makers as rational actors when engaging with global institutional logics, nor on policymaking processes as the policy was written. This would be an interesting area to research. The authors welcome the Comparative and International Education field to enlarge the comparison to include other nation-states and in addition to examining if and how the accountability logic at the national level influences the global level.

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Comparing teacher autonomy in different models of educational governance

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ABSTRACT

This article addresses teacher autonomy in different models of educational governance using quantitative data from the OECD TALIS 2018 and qualitative data from a study on teacher autonomy conducted in Norway and Brazil. In this article, teacher autonomy is seen as a multidimensional concept referring to decision-making and control in relation to state governance. Further, the different degrees of implementation of accountability measures across countries determine the models of educational governance. The quantitative data reveals no clear pattern between teacher autonomy and models of educational governance. In general, teachers perceive that they have good control over teaching and planning at the classroom level. However, teachers report that they participate to a lesser degree in professional collaboration in schools, which could allow for collegial teacher autonomy. Teachers also report low perceived social value and policy influence, which may provide insight into professional teacher autonomy at the policy level. This article also shows the relevance of a detailed description of the country cases to gain a better understanding of the multiple dimensions of teacher autonomy.

Introduction

The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and its Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have triggered lively public debates, often facilitated by the media, on the quality and effectiveness of education systems. Several countries have implemented significant changes in their education systems in connection with PISA (Grek, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2003). In addition to PISA, the OECD produces other publications and surveys, such as the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS).

Since its first cycle in 2008, TALIS has collected information on teachers and teaching at the teacher, school, and education-system levels every five years (Ainley & Carstens, 2018; OECD, 2019, 2020). The most recent cycle of TALIS in 2018 covered about 260,000 teachers in 15,000 schools across 48 countries. According to the OECD, TALIS provides data on teacher characteristics, pedagogical practices, and working environments with the aim of facilitating the comparison of practices and policies between countries and, consequently, the improvement of educational quality and effectiveness (Ainley & Carstens, 2018; OECD, 2019, 2020).

In fact, the OECD provides countries not only with comparable data, but also with a global discourse concerning the role of teachers in raising performance standards (Pettersson & Mølstad, 2016; Sørensen, 2017). Research literature on educational governance has addressed the influence of the OECD and PISA, finding

that national governments have implemented large-scale accountability instruments *'to monitor teachers' performance and promote competitive pressures among schools'* (Verger et al., 2019, p. 249). In this educational governance environment, teacher autonomy is challenged by accountability instruments, such as national standards, high-stakes testing, league tables, indicators, inspections, incentives, and sanctions resulting from performance data (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019).

In addition to the OECD's discourse on teachers and teaching, national and local actors and contexts also frame the teaching profession, which brings national, regional, and local variations that often characterize the field of comparative education (Steiner-Khamsi, 2014). For example, teachers may perceive constrained autonomy in countries with extensive production of standardized performance data, several forms of evaluation, and high incentives and sanctions resulting from this evaluation (Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019). In contrast, teachers may perceive extended autonomy in countries featuring low or absent production of standardized performance data, few or uneven forms of evaluation, and no incentives and sanctions resulting from this evaluation (Mausethagen, 2013; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

In this vein, this article aims to compare teachers' perceptions of their autonomy in different models of educational governance using quantitative data from TALIS 2018 and qualitative data from a study on teacher

autonomy conducted in lower secondary education in Norway and Brazil in 2018. This study asks whether a high degree of educational accountability correlates with a low degree of teacher perceived autonomy, and vice versa.

The 2018 survey marked the first time TALIS measured teacher autonomy (Ainley & Carstens, 2018; OECD, 2019). Moreover, the larger amount of collected data, which is publicly available, allows researchers to compare teachers' perceptions of their autonomy across several countries.

Alongside the TALIS data, this study includes qualitative data from Norway and Brazil. The countries are interesting to compare more deeply because of recent education reforms. Both countries have adopted test-based accountability systems in the 2000s in response to PISA, as indicated by research literature on Norway (Camphuijsen et al., 2020; Imsen & Volckmar, 2014; Karseth & Sivesind, 2011; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015) and Brazil (Barreto, 2012; Therrien & Loiola, 2001; Villani & Oliveira, 2018). However, these countries show differences in their test-based accountability systems. Brazil can be classified as a high-stakes accountability system (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019) based on its strict accountability measures, such as target setting with bonus payments for schools and teachers that achieve performance targets. Norway can be classified as a low-stakes accountability system (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019), mainly because testing results are not connected to monetary incentives and sanction mechanisms in relation to teachers' work (Mausethagen, 2013). These countries also represent different cultural and economic positions. Accordingly, while Norway can be placed within the scope of European and rich countries, Brazil can be placed within Latin-American and developing countries.

This article is structured in the following way. The next section presents the theoretical background for this study and examines (a) teacher autonomy as a complex and multidimensional phenomenon referring to decision-making and control in relation to state governance and (b) different models of educational governance reflecting different spaces for teacher autonomy. Building on the theoretical background, the next section describes the quantitative and qualitative data approaches and sources. Then, the results of the quantitative and qualitative data are presented, followed by a discussion of the study's results, and concluding remarks.

Theoretical background

The multidimensionality of teacher autonomy

This article approaches teacher autonomy regarding decision-making and control in relation to educational governance, without ignoring the wide variety of definitions of teacher autonomy (cf. Wilches, 2007) and perspectives from which to examine this concept (e.g. Aoki & Hamakawa, 2003; Cohen, 2016). Teacher autonomy within a governance perspective refers to the capacity of teachers to make informed judgements and decisions that affect their work and roles within a frame of regulations and resources provided by the state (Frostenson, 2015; Mausethagen & Mølstad, 2015; Wermke & Forsberg, 2017; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014; Wermke et al., 2019).

From a governance perspective, studies investigate decision-making at different levels, such as individual, collegial, and professional levels. According to Frostenson (2015), general professional autonomy of the teaching profession consists of teachers acting as a professional group or organization to decide on the framing of their work, for example, through influencing the general organization of the school system, legislation, entry requirements, teacher education, curricula, procedures, and ideologies of control (p. 22). In contrast, Frostenson (2015) defines collegial professional autonomy in the teaching profession as teachers' collective freedom to influence and decide on practice at the school level, while individual autonomy is the individual's opportunity to influence the contents, frames, and controls of the teaching practice (pp. 23–24).

Bergh (2015) and Frostenson (2015) note that teacher autonomy at the collegial level can influence teacher autonomy at the individual level. For example, school administration may require teachers to collaborate, or teachers may choose to collaborate based on circumstances, which can result in increased collegial autonomy in shaping the contents and forms of the teaching practice (Frostenson, 2015, p. 23). Moreover, collegial autonomy may coexist with individual autonomy, particularly when collegial work is a result of the preferences and pedagogical ideals of individual teachers (Frostenson, 2015, p. 24). Vangrieken and Kyndt (2019) observe that younger teachers perceive professional collaboration as meaningful and contributing to their individual autonomy in classrooms, which indicates a collaborative autonomy in which teacher autonomy is combined with a collaborative attitude (p. 196).

Therefore, the relation between collegial and individual teacher autonomy is an interesting avenue of research, as the exercise of collegial teacher autonomy can either extend or work against individual teacher autonomy (Elo & Nygren-Landgärds, 2020; Frostenson, 2015; Kelchtermans, 2006). The exercise of collegial teacher autonomy can also be teacher-driven or mandated by the school leadership, which relates to the concept of contrived collegiality. This concept refers to administratively contrived interactions among teachers where they meet and work to implement the curricula and strategies developed by

others, enhancing administrative control while constraining individual teacher autonomy (Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990).

In a comparative study between Norwegian and Swedish teachers, Helgøy and Homme (2007) show that Norwegian teachers adopt a more collaborative attitude than their Swedish counterparts. According to Helgøy and Homme (2007), the Swedish teachers persist with traditional classroom teaching. Recent studies on teacher autonomy in Sweden also describe school leadership as being the ones to set goals, allocate resources, and create timetables, while teachers choose individually how to reach these goals (Wermke & Forsberg, 2017; Wermke et al., 2019).

This finding also applies to other countries where teacher autonomy often denotes the autonomy of an actor to determine how to reach specified goals or standards that the actor is held accountable for, which is a very narrow and instrumental understanding of teacher autonomy (see Ball, 2003). For example, Dias (2018) observes that Brazilian teachers perceive collegial work not as a form of collective reflection and collaboration but as a form of mutual vigilance and control that pushes them to comply with performance demands.

In a comparative study of interviews in Estonia, Finland, and Germany (Bavaria), Erss et al. (2016) argue that curriculum policy has promised increased autonomy to teachers. However, as the cases of Bavarian and Estonian curricula show, the autonomy-stressing rhetoric of the curriculum is accompanied by teachers' perceived lack of autonomy. Bavarian and Estonian teachers perceive low social status and lack of involvement in educational decision-making as negatively affecting their sense of autonomy. By contrast, the Finnish teachers refer to their high sense of professionalism to take control over decision-making regarding instruction and curriculum content.

The different levels of teacher autonomy – individual, collegial, and professional – will assist in the presentation of the study's quantitative and qualitative results.

Models of educational governance

This section presents countries with different models of educational governance related to the implementation of test-based accountability systems. Studies have addressed educational governance from different perspectives.

For example, Wermke and Prøitz (2019) present a framework based on approaches to education in terms of emphasis on input or output and/or variations in long-standing traditions in curriculum development. These traditions are characterized by a dichotomous division between an Anglo-American

curriculum tradition and a German/European continental tradition of Didaktik. The former approach focuses on the governing of education by results or outcomes, as seen in countries like the USA and England (UK). The latter focuses on the governing of education by its processes or inputs, such as the implementation of a centralized standardized curriculum and state-regulated entrance into the teaching profession, as represented by countries such as Germany, Norway, and Finland.

Hopmann (2015) highlights the points of contact between the continental European tradition of Didaktik and the Anglo-American tradition of curriculum. He argues that continental European education systems have adopted the test culture of Anglo-American countries and that, in turn, Anglo-American countries have adopted quality control strategies such as state-based curricular formats of European countries. According to Hopmann (2015), these encounters have increased accountability and pressure on schools, teachers, and students in European and Anglo-American countries.

In a literature review, Verger et al. (2019) confirm the adoption of test-based accountability systems in European countries. Verger et al. (2019) examine the rationales and trajectories of the adoption of national large-scale assessments and test-based accountability systems in countries with different governance traditions. In their division, Liberal states have a liberal organization of the state and high-stakes accountability instruments; Neo-Weberian states have a welfare state model of organization and low-stakes accountability instruments; and Napoleonic states have centralized, hierarchical, and uniform bureaucracies alongside uneven and highly contested accountability instruments.

Similarly, Högberg and Lindgren (2020) explore the diffusion of accountability across OECD countries by using PISA data. They categorize the countries as those with 'thick horizontal', 'thick vertical', and 'thin accountability'. Countries with 'thick accountability' have high production of standardized performance data, several forms of evaluation by external parties, and high incentives and sanctions resulting from this evaluation. Countries with 'thick horizontal accountability' feature decentralized decision-making, with the involvement of multiple stakeholders (e.g. parents and the public). By 'thick vertical accountability', they refer to educational authorities as the main actors controlling teachers' work. In contrast, countries with 'thin accountability' have low production of standardized performance data, few forms of evaluation by external parties, and no incentives and sanctions resulting from this evaluation.

This article uses the terms high-stakes, low-stakes, and uneven accountability to adequately capture the study's data. High-stakes accountability countries have high production of standardized performance data, several forms of evaluation by external parties,

and high incentives and sanctions resulting from this evaluation (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019). Low-stakes accountability countries have almost the same features as high-stakes countries, but they do not have incentives and sanctions resulting from evaluation by external parties (Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019). Countries with uneven accountability have irregularly implemented accountability due to political contestation and economic junctures (Verger et al., 2019). The following paragraphs present the categories and countries described by Verger et al. (2019) and, when possible, include empirical studies connected to other countries.

According to Verger et al. (2019), the first model of educational governance includes countries with a liberal organization of the state, such as the one prevailing in most Anglo-Saxon countries (e.g. USA, UK, New Zealand), in which there is a great participation of the private sector in public services and intense forms of competition between providers. These countries generally adopt accountability measures to expand market competition and choice. Wermke and Prøitz (2019) explain that, in this group of countries, the state governs education by focusing on results or outcomes.

Verger et al. (2019) observe that these liberal countries can be divided into early and late adopters. The former category introduced governance reforms with accountability measures in the context of the global economic crisis of the 1970s (e.g. UK and Chile), while the latter (e.g. USA) strategically combined discourses on competitiveness and choice with discourses about ethnic and socioeconomic equity and the reduction of achievement gaps to pass educational reforms based on accountability in the 2000s. According to Verger et al. (2019), the states in this group have justified educational reforms based on mistrust in teachers and teachers' unions and a discourse on public schooling failures and low-quality education in the public sector. Accordingly, national large-scale assessments and test-based accountability instruments appear as policy instruments with the aim of increasing state control over schools and teachers, thus constraining teacher autonomy.

Brazil is included in this category because this country has adopted open-market and privatization measures in education to reduce costs and increase the efficiency of education (Dias, 2018; Lennert da Silva & Mølstad, 2020). These changes have resulted from discourse on reducing inequalities and ensuring quality education for all (Lennert da Silva & Parish, 2020). The Slovak Republic (Tesar et al., 2017) and Estonia (Keskula et al., 2012) are also in this group since these countries show high production of standardized performance data, several forms of

evaluation by external parties, and high incentives and sanctions resulting from this evaluation. Sweden, despite being a Northern European country with a welfare state governance model, is also included in this group. This country has embraced more openly the marketization of education, with the introduction of private schools, school choice, and school autonomy, while implementing strong externally regulated standards and measurements (Frostenson, 2015; Wermke et al., 2019).

According to Verger et al. (2019), the second model of educational governance is most prevalent in continental and Northern Europe (e.g. Denmark, Norway, Germany, Austria, and the Netherlands). Wermke and Prøitz (2019) observe this group of countries control education through processes or inputs centrally defined by the state. In this model, the state acts as *a facilitator of solutions to social problems and is eager to preserve the ideas of civil service and professionalism in public services'* (Verger et al., 2019, p. 251). Some countries initially chose national large-scale assessments as a way for the central state to guarantee quality standards in the context of highly decentralized education systems and make services more responsive to citizens' demands. However, unexpectedly low PISA results reinforced the need for increasing accountability measures as a way to improve students' learning outcomes in a scenario of international competition, as in the case of Norway (Karseth & Sivesind, 2011) and Germany (Erss, 2018; Grek, 2009; Steiner-Khamsi, 2003). Despite the emphasis on accountability as a consequence of the PISA, the accountability systems adopted in these countries were predominantly low stakes (Mausethagen, 2013; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

This article adds some more countries to the review by Verger et al. (2019). Despite its outstanding PISA results, Finland is included in this second group. Finnish teachers are held accountable for final examinations at the upper secondary level and have a great sense of responsibility related to their professional belonging (Elo & Nygren-Landgärds, 2020; Erss, 2018; Wermke & Höstfält, 2014). This article also includes Japan (Bjork, 2009) and Turkey (Hammersley-Fletcher et al., 2020) in this group since these countries have fewer forms of evaluation by external parties in comparison with high-stakes accountability countries; in addition, these countries offer no incentives or sanctions resulting from this evaluation.

Finally, the third model presented by Verger et al. (2019) includes mostly Southern European countries, characterized by centralized, hierarchical, and uniform bureaucracies (e.g. Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain). In these countries, the implementation of accountability measures has been uneven and highly

conditioned by political contestation and economic junctures (Day et al., 2007; Verger et al., 2019). Verger et al. (2019) explain that these countries have a long legacy of democratic and horizontal educational governance as a reaction to decades of authoritarian regimes. Teachers' unions are combative and participative in educational debates. Therefore, most teachers have civil servant status and enjoy high levels of autonomy. South Africa is included in this group since teachers contest accountability policies due to a troubled history of the apartheid inspection system that provoked deep-rooted suspicions of state surveillance even under the terms of a new democracy (Jansen, 2004; Shalem et al., 2018). In this case, teachers are still fighting for their autonomy (Jansen, 2004).

In summary, this article borrows the categories for educational governance models from Verger et al. (2019). Accordingly, high-stakes accountability countries have high production of standardized performance data, several forms of evaluation by external parties, and high incentives and sanctions resulting from this evaluation (Högberg & Lindgren, 2020; Verger et al., 2019). Low-stakes accountability countries have almost the same features as high-stakes countries, but they do not have incentives and sanctions resulting from evaluation by external parties (Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019). Countries with uneven accountability have irregularly implemented accountability because of political contestation and economic junctures (Verger et al., 2019). These three categories related to the models of educational governance (i.e. high-stakes, low-stakes, and uneven accountability) assisted in the selection of the sample of countries for the quantitative analysis.

Methods

As advocated by comparative education researchers, quantitative studies can benefit from qualitative studies that investigate the rich diversity at the lower levels of the state, district/county, school, classroom, and individual, thereby giving balance, depth, and completeness to these studies. Similarly, micro-level qualitative work can be informed by the quantitative contributions from large-scale cross-national comparative studies (Manzon, 2014). In this article, the quantitative data sources enable an examination of teachers' perceptions of their autonomy from a bird's-eye view encompassing many countries. Moreover, the qualitative data sources privilege the detailed description of teachers' contexts and perceptions of their autonomy. The next sections describe in more detail the quantitative and qualitative approaches used in this article.

Quantitative approach

This article works with the sampling, sources of data, operationalization, and measurement of variables of the OECD's TALIS 2018. The secondary data sources are as follows:

- TALIS 2018 Database. http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/talis-2018-data.htm. This database contains files in SAS, SPSS, and STATA formats.
- OECD (2019). TALIS 2018 Technical Report. OECD Publishing. http://www.oecd.org/education/talis/TALIS_2018_Technical_Report.pdf. This technical report details the steps, procedures, methodologies, standards, and rules that TALIS 2018 used to collect data. The primary purpose of the report is to support its readers and users of the public international database when interpreting results, contextualizing information, and utilizing the data.

According to Cohen et al. (2018), some advantages of using secondary data are that the scale, scope, and amount of data are usually much larger and more representative than a single researcher could gather. The researcher does not face the challenges of collecting a larger amount of data, such as financing the data collection, spending time to collect data, gaining access to people, and obtaining permission from gatekeepers. Secondary data is often low-cost or even free to access and immediately accessible, typically without following many rigid procedures (pp. 587–588). This is the case for this article since TALIS data is publicly available and free of charge.

However, Cohen et al. (2018) point out some challenges in using secondary data. For instance, the data may not be a perfect fit to the conceptual framework of a specific study (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 588), as is the case for this article. TALIS 2018 works mainly with the concept of individual teacher autonomy measured by the scale 'satisfaction with classroom autonomy'. With the aim of including the other levels of teacher autonomy, this article has borrowed from TALIS 2018 the scale 'professional collaboration in lessons among teachers' to measure collegial teacher autonomy and the scale 'perceptions of value and policy influence' to measure professional teacher autonomy. Although these scales measure central elements of each level of teacher autonomy, they do present limitations. Before describing these limitations, this article presents the questions and items that comprise the scales representing the three levels of teacher autonomy:

- Scale satisfaction with classroom autonomy: TALIS asked teachers to use a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree) to rate the extent to which they agree they have autonomy in addressing the following items: 'determining course content,' 'selecting teaching methods,' 'assessing students' learning,'

'disciplining students,' and 'determining the amount of homework to be assigned.'

- Scale professional collaboration in lessons among teachers: TALIS asked teachers about their perceptions of the frequency of professional collaboration in lessons among teachers. Each item required teachers to respond using a six-point Likert scale (1 = never, 6 = once a week or more). The items were 'teach jointly as a team in the same class,' 'provide feedback to other teachers about their practice,' 'engage in joint activities across different classes and age groups (e.g. projects),' and 'participate in collaborative professional learning.'
- Scale perceptions of value and policy influence: This scale from TALIS measured to what extent teachers agreed with the following items according to a four-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree). These were 'teachers' views are valued by policymakers in this country/region,' 'teachers can influence educational policy in this country/region,' and 'teachers are valued by the media in this country/region.'

Regarding the scale 'satisfaction with classroom autonomy', this scale assessed mainly teachers' decision-making and control over the educational and social domains. It did not include questions related to the professional development of school staff or administrative questions about how the school is run (Salokangas & Wermke, 2020; Wermke et al., 2019; Wermke & Salokangas, 2021).

The scale 'professional collaboration in lessons among teachers' measured forms of collaboration that reflect a deeper level of interdependence in comparison with superficial types of collaboration, such as exchanging ideas and instructional materials (see Vangrieken & Kyndt, 2019). These forms of collaboration may allow for collective decision-making at the school level, but they do not automatically translate into collegial teacher autonomy. In this regard, the items of this scale did not measure teachers having control over plans of action and decisions related to the professional development of school staff or teachers having the autonomy to collegially decide on administrative issues (Salokangas & Wermke, 2020; Wermke et al., 2019; Wermke & Salokangas, 2021). Therefore, the results regarding collegial

autonomy may be interpreted with caution since professional collaboration does not automatically imply collegial teacher autonomy.

The scale 'perceptions of value and policy influence' comprised only three items that captured fractions of professional teacher autonomy. These items can give an indication of the status of teachers and their influence on decision-making at the policy level regarding the framings of their work, but teachers' perceptions of value and policy influence cannot be seen as equivalent to professional teacher autonomy; rather, they are only indications of such autonomy.

This study used the statistical software IBM SPSS Statistics 26 to analyse the data. Descriptive analysis of the scales was conducted. In addition, information provided by the OECD is expanded by calculating the frequencies of the answers 'agree' and 'strongly agree' for each item of the scales 'satisfaction with classroom autonomy' and 'perceptions of value and policy influence' in the selected countries. Frequencies for each item of the scale 'professional collaboration in lessons among teachers' regarding the answers '1–3 times a month' and 'once a week or more' have also been calculated. The countries are divided into different categories of educational governance related to the implementation of large-scale accountability instruments to examine the relationship between models of educational governance and teacher autonomy, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.

The hypothesis is that teachers in countries with strong accountability instruments (i.e. independent variable) report low perceived teacher autonomy (i.e. dependent variable). This article works with a sample size of 59790 lower secondary teachers in 19 countries from TALIS 2018 data (Table 1).

The selected countries represent the different accountability divisions. The selected high-stakes accountability countries are the Anglo-American countries of England (UK), New Zealand, and the USA; the Latin-American countries of Brazil and Chile; and the European countries of Estonia, the Slovak Republic, and Sweden. The selected low-stakes accountability countries include the European countries of Austria, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, and Norway; one Middle Eastern country, Turkey; and one Asian country, Japan. The selected uneven and contested accountability

Figure 1. Teacher autonomy and models of education governance.

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Table 1. Sample sizes in the selected countries.

High-stakes accountability		Low-stakes accountability		Uneven accountability	
Country	Sample size	Country	Sample size	Country	Sample size
Brazil	2447	Austria	4255	Italy	3612
Chile	1963	Denmark	2001	Portugal	3676
England (UK)	2376	Finland	2851	South Africa	2046
Estonia	3004	Japan	3555	Spain	7407
New Zealand	2256	Netherlands	1884		
Slovak Republic	3015	Norway	4154		
Sweden	2782	Turkey	3952		
USA	2554				
Total	20397	Total	22652	Total	16741

countries are the Southern European countries of Italy, Portugal, and Spain, as well as one African country, South Africa.

Qualitative approach

The qualitative material is from the low-stakes accountability country of Norway and the high-stakes accountability country of Brazil. The two country cases provide in-depth qualitative information about national particularities related to the implementation of policy instruments to monitor teachers' work and students' performance. Teachers' perceptions on these issues are expressed through semi-structured interviews with lower secondary teachers working in public schools in Norway and Brazil in 2018.

The sample for the interviews included 20 participants, 11 Brazilian and 9 Norwegian. The participants worked in three public schools in one municipality of São Paulo Federal State (Brazil), one school in one municipality of Oppland County (Norway), and one school in one municipality of Hedmark County (Norway). The teachers had different backgrounds (e.g. gender, age, years of work experience, and subjects taught), enabling the capture of different perspectives of teacher autonomy.

According to Bryman (2012), the advantage of using semi-structured interviews is that the researcher can keep the focus of the study while allowing space for the emerging views of the participants and, thereby, new ideas on the issues under investigation. Moreover, in the case of comparative studies, semi-structured interviews have *'some structure in order to ensure cross-case comparability'* (Bryman, 2012, p. 472).

The interview questions approached the concept of teacher autonomy by asking teachers about their perceptions of control and decision-making regarding different aspects of teaching practices (e.g. definition of educational goals, content of lessons, learning material, teaching methods, and students' assessment) as well as how they perceived the influence of external actors (e.g. people, institutions, and policies) in the definition of their work. The interview guide also asked teachers about their opinion of the meanings of teacher autonomy, the positive and negative sides of it, and how they perceived the degree of autonomy they had in their work. Other questions included teachers' relationships with colleagues, including their perceptions and experiences with collegial work, and teachers' relationships with the school leadership, including their perceptions and experiences with decision-making within school. Teachers were also asked about their satisfaction with their working conditions and the level of decision-making and engagement in relation to professional development activities. Another topic explored was their participation in teachers' unions and their opinions about the work of teachers' unions at the policy level.

This study addressed ethical issues by asking for the consent of all participants and explained the background and purpose of the study as well as what participation in the research implied. The informants were also notified that they could withdraw from the study at any time without the need to provide a reason. This study has also addressed privacy and protection from harm by keeping the anonymity of the participants (Cohen et al., 2018). In this article, the participants are presented as Norwegian and Brazilian teachers, without reference to any personal attributes or school. Finally, this study received ethical clearance from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data, which is a national centre and archive for research data that aims to ensure that data about people and society can be collected, stored, and shared safely and legally.

In this article, the analysis consisted of finding examples in the interviews of the three levels of teacher autonomy (i.e. individual, collegial, and professional) and classifying them from restricted to extended. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), in this type of analysis, known as direct content analysis, the themes emerge from existing theory and research in a deductive process. The findings offer supporting and non-supporting evidence for a theory, presented by showing themes with examples and by offering descriptions. The author transcribed the interviews in their original languages (i.e. Norwegian and Portuguese) and translated the quotations used in this article into English.

Results

The presentation of the study's quantitative and qualitative results is organized according to the different levels of teacher autonomy (i.e. individual, collegial, and professional), as described by Frostenson (2015).

Individual teacher autonomy

This section presents the TALIS 2018 data and the interview data from Norway and Brazil related to the dimension of individual teacher autonomy.

TALIS 2018

Figure 2 below examines each item of the scale satisfaction with classroom autonomy in the selected countries. As previously described, the selected countries are divided into three categories according to models of educational governance related to the implementation of accountability measures: countries with high-stakes, low-stakes, and uneven accountability measures. At the bottom of the figure, a frequency table is presented so that the reader can verify the corresponding scores for each country. The scores refer to the percentage of lower secondary education teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about teachers' satisfaction with classroom autonomy: having control over determining course content, selecting teaching methods, assessing students' learning, disciplining students, and determining the amount of homework to be assigned.

The results show no clear pattern between teachers' satisfaction with their classroom autonomy and countries with different models of educational governance. Moreover, the cross-national variation in the items of the scale satisfaction with classroom autonomy was quite limited. For example, regarding selecting teaching methods, the average was 96.7% in high-stakes accountability countries, 94.3% in low-stakes accountability countries, and 95.9% in countries with uneven accountability. When asked about assessing students' learning, an average of 93.2% (high-stakes), 94% (low-stakes), and 93.3% (uneven) of teachers agreed, respectively. Regarding disciplining students, the averages were 88.7% (high-stakes), 92.7% (low-stakes), and 92.3% (uneven). Regarding the amount of homework, the averages were 87.7% (high-stakes), 91.4% (low-stakes), and 93.9% (uneven).

The item determining course content displays the widest range of scores. For example, more than 95% of teachers reported that they had control in this area in Norway and Sweden, while only 47% of teachers in Portugal made the same claim. The averages for determining course content were 85.9% for high-stakes accountability countries, 85.4% for low-stakes accountability countries, and 74.8% for countries with uneven accountability.

Therefore, the results indicate that teachers' perceptions of their autonomy at the classroom level are quite similar in the selected countries. However, even though teachers may perceive extended individual autonomy through the freedom to choose the contents, methods, assessments, and procedures for students' behaviour, this perception does not necessarily imply that they can decide on which professional development activities to undertake or how the school is run.

Norway

Focusing on the country cases, Norwegian teachers reported being satisfied with their individual autonomy at the classroom level, as seen here:

> I experience that I have a lot of autonomy. I experience that they trust that I am a professional. I experience that the competence goals are open and very much is left to the teacher. It is a starting point. The curriculum does not control my method. I choose it completely myself, more or less research-based, I think. Sometimes experience-based, on what has gone well before, but I experience that my freedom is big. I have a lot.

This teacher talked about autonomy in terms of being able to choose the methods of her teaching based on the competence goals of the curriculum. As shown in Figure 2, Norwegian teachers expressed satisfaction

	BRA	CHL	ENG	EST	NZL	SVK	SWE	USA	AUT	DNK	FIN	JPN	NLD	NOR	TUR	ITA	PRT	ESP	ZAF
						High-stakes							Low-stakes					Uneven	
■ Determining course content	94,3	90,7	62,2	92,9	83,1	86,9	97,3	79,8	81,3	93,6	82,6	74,5	95	96,3	74,4	94,7	47,1	71,1	86,5
■ Selecting teaching methods	96,3	95,1	94,3	98,7	97	97,8	98,5	95,6	95,7	96,8	98	90,8	87,1	98	93,5	95,4	97,1	94,6	96,5
■ Assessing students' learning	96,7	95,4	83,1	98,1	83,6	97,4	97,8	93,3	93,3	91,8	95,2	93,5	92,8	96,6	94,6	95,3	91,2	94,5	92,4
■ Disciplining students	88,5	90,3	91,9	94,1	96,1	74,1	86,3	87,9	88	96,6	92,9	90,9	98	94,3	88,4	94	96,2	89,6	89,4
■ Determining the amount of homework	91,5	69,2	73,9	94,3	92,1	95,3	94,2	91	86,6	91,2	96,7	83,3	96,7	93,8	91,5	91,9	94,3	95,4	94

Figure 2. Teachers' satisfaction with classroom autonomy by country – TALIS 2018. Percentage of lower secondary education teachers who agree or strongly agree with the following statements about teachers' satisfaction with classroom autonomy.

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with determining course content (96.3%) and selecting teaching methods (98%). Further, the Norwegian informants reported that they used national tests as a tool to map students' learning needs and adapt their teaching, as in the following:

> It works for me as a way to map how they are, so that I can use the results in the teaching or in a dialog with the students. And, if the results are very bad, this can put pressure on the leadership in relation to additional resources to raise those who need in the classroom.

The statement above indicates that the teaching work is shaped by national tests. At the same time, teachers can shape the conditions of their work (such as getting additional resources) by resorting to the national tests' results. This finding points to the exercise of individual teacher autonomy regarding planning, instruction, and use of resources. Conversely, individual teacher autonomy may also be contrived by education authorities. For example, informants reported that they did not have the autonomy to decide on the use of digital tools in the classroom, as seen below:

> There was no one who talked to teachers about the use of iPads; it was just "now it's coming in, done." Many teachers like the iPad and they use it a lot, and there are many who see the downsides of it, but no matter what, nobody asked me and talked to me first, so we do not like this so well.

Another informant explained that he was not allowed to choose which professional development activities to undertake. The decisions regarding these activities came from the municipal education authority and were passed on to teachers by the school leadership, as described in the following:

> There are directives at the county level, among other things, the digitalization pressure. It pushes me a bit since the county wants to have control over this (…) and the developmental work in the school will always be influencing me as well. Now we spend a lot of time talking about coaching, which will be influencing my teaching.

In summary, the results indicate that Norwegian teachers are satisfied with their classroom autonomy, which is in line with TALIS 2018 data. However, they do perceive control over their work as a result of the implementation of accountability measures.

Brazil

Like their Norwegian counterparts, Brazilian teachers reported being satisfied with their individual autonomy at the classroom level, as this informant explained:

> I have limited autonomy within what the government structures. So, I have the content that is planned and that I have to pass, and I have to account for that content to be applied at school. Now inside my classroom, I have extended autonomy to use what I want, prepare my lessons as I want, and use the resources I want. That is fine. So, this is interesting, I like it, this autonomy of methods, that I can diversify a lot of what I have to pass. I do not need to just stay on the blackboard and chalk.

Brazilian teachers discussed autonomy within limits; in other words, they expressed that they can choose the topics to teach that are within the scope of the curriculum. They also perceived having freedom to select teaching methods. Figure 2 indicates that Brazilian teachers expressed satisfaction with their control over determining course content (94.3%) and selecting teaching methods (96.3%). Further, some informants explained how they were expected to use the digital platform implemented by the Department of Education:

> So, there are the results, and then, for example, they ask me to make a timeline with the skills and competences according to this here. So, here on top of the results, I plan the activities that I want to develop with them, focusing on the skills that I need to deepen with them, right?

The informants explained that the Department of Education expects them to use the digital platform with test results to plan and develop teaching strategies, thus indicating the influence of policy instruments on their teaching practices. Moreover, teachers talked about the need to constantly report on teaching plans and strategies to the school leadership, as one informant explained:

> The school leadership is very concerned with administrative work. If the supervisor comes and looks at our diary, and the date of the lecture is missing (laughing). Having or not the date does not improve the teaching work. I have to make lesson plans with the skills and competencies to develop with the students and deliver them to the leadership. But this plan is not meant for the leadership to provide me with some help (…) She has to hand this paper over to the supervisor …. .

The statement above points to strong control over teachers' work, constraining their individual autonomy. In summary, the results indicate that Brazilian teachers are also satisfied with their classroom autonomy, which is aligned with TALIS 2018 data. However, they do perceive strong forms of external control over their work, which can be related to a high-stakes accountability system.

Collegial teacher autonomy

This section presents the quantitative and qualitative results related to the dimension of collegial teacher autonomy.

TALIS 2018

Figure 3 below shows teachers' perceptions of their professional collaboration in lessons among teachers in the selected countries. The scores refer to the percentage of lower secondary education teachers who reported engaging at least once a month in the following items: teaching jointly as a team in the same class, providing feedback to other teachers about their practice, engaging in joint activities across different classes and age groups (e.g. projects), and participating in collaborative professional learning.

The results show that countries with low-stakes accountability had higher scores in the item teach jointly as a team in comparison with countries with other models of educational governance. For this item, the averages were 25.5% (high-stakes), 38.2% (low-stakes), and 29.3% (uneven). Austria (63%) and Japan (58.3%) had the highest scores on this item, together with Italy (62.3%), which is classified as a country with uneven accountability measures.

Regarding providing feedback, 8.24% (high-stakes) , 10.5% (low-stakes), and 11.3% (uneven) of teachers reported engaging at least once a month in this type of activity. The question of engaging in joint activities had quite low scores of 12.3% (high-stakes), 10.8% (low-stakes), and 15.8% (uneven), respectively.

Comparatively, collaborative professional learning was higher in countries with high-stakes accountability than in countries with other educational governance models. The scores in this item were 27.5% (high-stakes), 18.1% (low-stakes), and 14% (uneven). New Zealand (44.2%) and Sweden (43.7%) showed the highest scores in this item in comparison with other countries.

One important observation to make is that professional collaboration may facilitate collegial autonomy, but they are not synonymous. The fact that teachers collaborate does n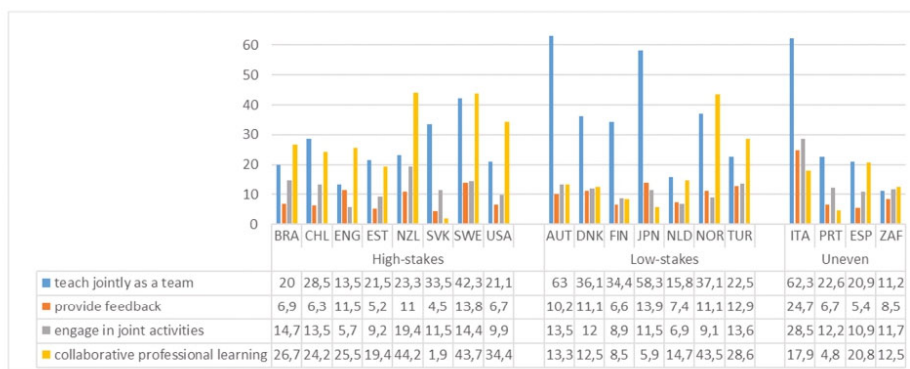ot necessarily mean that they are doing so by their own choice or that this collaboration concerns topics related to decision-making at the school level. Professional collaboration can very well be a form of contrived collegiality, focusing on instrumental implementation of school leadership dictates (Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990), as can be the case in high-stakes accountability countries. The next sections focus on the country cases to explore the relationship between professional collaboration and collegial teacher autonomy.

Norway

Regarding the possibility for the exercise of collegial teacher autonomy, the Norwegian informants reported that the school leadership organized teachers' work and facilitated meetings by school grade and subject, so teachers could take part in weekly meetings to discuss and plan pedagogical activities together. Collegial work can both constrain and enable teachers' individual autonomy, as one informant explained:

> In this school, students have five weeks to work with a theme. This applies to all subjects. This thematic work puts some guidelines for what you should do that I am not completely used to (laughs). And, then, I have another teacher colleague to relate to, but this is very good because we have opportunities to work together and share teaching plans and ideas. So, next year I am considering taking up more elaboration of these themes because they should be as relevant as possible.

Teachers, especially younger teachers, described their experience of collegial work as positive because it allows them to plan and share practices, as described above. According to the TALIS 2018 data, 43.5% of Norwegian teachers reported engaging often in collaborative activities in schools, which is a comparatively high score in relation to other

	BRA	CHL	ENG	EST	NZL	SVK	SWE	USA	AUT	DNK	FIN	JPN	NLD	NOR	TUR	ITA	PRT	ESP	ZAF
	High-stakes								Low-stakes							Uneven			
teach jointly as a team	20	28,5	13,5	21,5	23,3	33,5	42,3	21,1	63	36,1	34,4	58,3	15,8	37,1	22,5	62,3	22,6	20,9	11,2
provide feedback	6,9	6,3	11,5	5,2	11	4,5	13,8	6,7	10,2	11,1	6,6	13,9	7,4	11,1	12,9	24,7	6,7	5,4	8,5
engage in joint activities	14,7	13,5	5,7	9,2	19,4	11,5	14,4	9,9	13,5	12	8,9	11,5	6,9	9,1	13,6	28,5	12,2	10,9	11,7
collaborative professional learning	26,7	24,2	25,5	19,4	44,2	1,9	43,7	34,4	13,3	12,5	8,5	5,9	14,7	43,5	28,6	17,9	4,8	20,8	12,5

Figure 3. Teachers' perceptions of their professional collaboration by country – TALIS 2018. Percentage of lower secondary education teachers who report engaging at least once a month with the following statements about teachers' perceptions of their professional collaboration.

countries (Figure 3). However, this number still represents less than 50% of the Norwegian lower secondary teachers.

In summary, the data about Norway shows that collegial work does not necessarily mean collegial autonomy since teachers do not report that this increases their decision-making at the school level. However, the Norwegian informants perceive that professional collaboration can both constrain and promote their individual teacher autonomy. The positive sides of professional collaboration are perceived mainly by the younger informants.

Brazil

Regarding the possibility for the exercise of collegial autonomy, the Brazilian informants reported that school meetings are mainly used to pass on orders from the educational authority, as seen here:

> These meetings are not used for pedagogical work. They are used to complaining about students, to passing on messages, and then the teacher is already tired of going there. (…) So, it is often a place of complaining about students, of grievances, and it is not used pedagogically. For example, for pedagogical purposes, you could study a text, have a dialogue with your colleagues, exchange experiences, make partnerships, and engage in interdisciplinary work. I often use the school corridor, the time I arrive, the break time, to talk to my colleagues.

Complementarily, TALIS 2018 data (Figure 3) shows that only 26.7% of the Brazilian teachers reported that they engage often in collaborative activities in schools. The Brazilian informants perceived collective meetings as not meant for professional collaboration. Instead, they reported that these meetings are initiated by the school leadership to implement external mandates, which can indicate a contrived

collegiality (Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990). As a result, not all collaborative activities benefit teachers' work (cf. Dias, 2018).

Professional teacher autonomy

The following section presents the study's results related to the dimension of professional teacher autonomy.

TALIS 2018

In the following, this article presents teachers' perceptions of their social value and policy influence in the selected countries, which can give some indications of their perceived professional teacher autonomy.

Figure 4 shows the percentage of lower secondary education teachers who agreed or strongly agreed with the following statements about teachers' perceptions of their social value and policy influence: teachers' views are valued by policymakers in this country, teachers can influence educational policy in this country, and teachers are valued by the media in this country.

Regarding teachers' views being valued by policymakers, the averages were 12.4% (high-stakes), 17% (low-stakes), and 12.7% (uneven). Low-stakes accountability countries showed a small comparative advantage in this item in comparison with countries with other educational governance models.

Low-stakes accountability countries also showed comparatively higher scores to the statement assessing whether teachers are valued by the media. The averages in this item were 19.3% (high-stakes), 21% (low-stakes), and 15.3% (uneven). Finland (49.6%) and the Netherlands (32.8%) showed the highest scores in this item, together with the USA (35.1%),
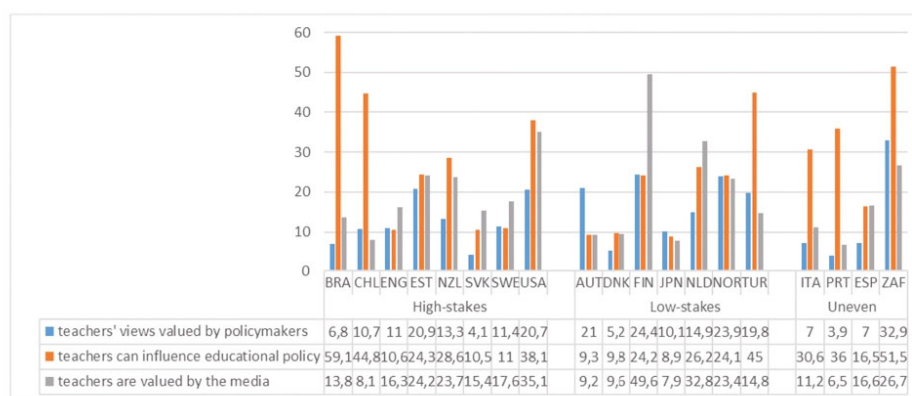

	BRA	CHL	ENG	EST	NZL	SVK	SWE	USA		AUT	DNK	FIN	JPN	NLD	NOR	TUR		ITA	PRT	ESP	ZAF
					High-stakes							Low-stakes							Uneven		
teachers' views valued by policymakers	6,8	10,7	11	20,9	13,3	4,1	11,4	20,7		21	5,2	24,4	10,1	14,9	23,9	19,8		7	3,9	7	32,9
teachers can influence educational policy	59,1	44,8	10,6	24,3	28,6	10,5	11	38,1		9,3	9,8	24,2	8,9	26,2	24,1	45		30,6	36	16,5	51,5
teachers are valued by the media	13,8	8,1	16,3	24,2	23,7	15,4	17,6	35,1		9,2	9,6	49,6	7,9	32,8	23,4	14,8		11,2	6,5	16,6	26,7

Figure 4. Teachers' perceptions of their social value and policy influence by country – TALIS 2018. Percentage of lower secondary education teachers who agree or strongly agree with the following statements about teachers' perceptions of their social value and policy influence.

which is classified as a high-stakes accountability country.

Regarding teachers' perceptions that they can influence educational policy, 28.4% (high-stakes), 21% (low-stakes), and 33.7% (uneven) reported that they agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. The comparatively higher scores of countries with uneven accountability may relate to the role of teachers' unions as combative and participative in educational debates in these countries (cf. Verger et al., 2019). The next sections address these different items of the scale in the country cases.

Norway

In addition to the opportunities for professional collaboration, Norway is known for an active teachers' unionism that has resisted accountability measures by promoting discourses related to teacher autonomy, research-based practice, and professional development as core features of teacher professionalism (Mausethagen & Granlund, 2012; Nerland & Karseth, 2015). One informant stated:

> I am a member of the teacher union. We have two representatives here, and they do a fantastic job, very good job. When there are important issues to bring up, we have meetings where we talk. They organize the meeting, and we talk and discuss things. These meetings are very informative and good. I really think they do a good job and fight for us so that we have good working relations. So, I am quite happy with them.

The Norwegian informants knew who their union representatives at school were, and some of them described situations where they asked their intermediation to solve workload and salary issues. This finding could indicate that the Norwegian teachers perceive being able to decide on the framing of their work at the policy level through their engagement with teachers' unions. However, the interview guide did not include applicable questions to discuss teachers' perceptions of their value by policymakers and the media. These two aspects can affect teachers' perceptions of their professional autonomy (e.g. Erss et al., 2016).

However, TALIS 2018 data (Figure 4) showed relatively low scores for Norwegian teachers' perceptions of being valued by policymakers (23.9%) and influencing educational policy (24.1%). One possible explanation is that the central state in Norway is responsible for curriculum design and implementation, national tests, and examinations, assuming a powerful position in the definition of policy instruments that frame the teaching profession, which may affect teachers' views of their capacity to influence policy. Further studies are needed to explore these findings regarding professional teacher autonomy.

Brazil

Regarding the role of teachers' unions in influencing the framings of the teaching work through policy, the Brazilian informants expressed distrust in their professional organizations. They also reported that they do not actively engage in teachers' unions. One informant stated:

> I do not participate in union meetings. I cannot do it because my workload is very intense. I am affiliated, but I do not participate. (…) So, I do not see big changes. The union is not strong (…) the union goes on a salary strike, but it is not able to bring the class together. Its claims are hardly met. Sometimes there are some gains, such as salary increases, but these are not great achievements in the improvement of education. The union's participation in the school is very small. I do not even know who the school's union representative is.

This statement may indicate that teachers perceive a restricted professional autonomy in which they are not able to act as a professional group to decide on the framings of their work at the policy level. As explained in the section on Norway, the qualitative data does not give elements to discuss teachers' perceptions of their value by policymakers and the media.

Despite the lack of qualitative data, TALIS 2018 data showed that only 6.8% of the Brazilian teachers reported that policymakers value them. However, 59.1% reported that they can influence educational policy (Figure 4). This finding may indicate that teachers perceive that they can act individually at the classroom level to influence policy. Alternatively, they may perceive that this is the only space for resistance left to them. These hypotheses could be explored in further studies.

Discussion

This article asked whether a high degree of educational accountability correlates with a low degree of teacher perceived autonomy and, conversely, whether a low degree of educational accountability correlates with a high degree of teacher perceived autonomy. It explored the hypothesis that teachers in countries with strong large-scale accountability instruments report low perceived autonomy, and vice versa.

The quantitative results based on the TALIS 2018 data challenged this hypothesis. Teachers are generally satisfied with their classroom autonomy (Figure 2). However, as presented earlier, far fewer teachers report engaging in professional collaboration (Figure 3), which could give them possibilities for exercising collegial teacher autonomy. The percentage of teachers who report influencing educational policy and being valued by policymakers and the media is even lower (Figure 4). Teachers' perceptions of their value and policy influence can affect teachers'

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perceptions of their professional autonomy (cf. Erss et al., 2016). Having presented the quantitative results, it might be productive to gain a deeper insight into how teacher autonomy unfolds in the two country contexts.

While Brazil can be placed within a high-stakes accountability system because of the use of economic incentives related to student performance data (Lennert da Silva & Mølstad, 2020), Norway is characterized by a low-stakes accountability system due to a lack of such incentives (Mausethagen, 2013; Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019). However, despite differences in models of educational governance, Brazilian and Norwegian teachers are satisfied with their classroom autonomy. The Brazilian informants perceive having autonomy in terms of being able to choose the teaching methods based on the competences and skills of the prescribed curriculum. The Norwegian teachers also perceive having autonomy in the same domains as their Brazilian counterparts.

However, these responses do not mean that neither group of teachers perceives a lack of control being exercised over their work in the classrooms. For example, Norwegian teachers talk about the imposition of digital tools in the development of their teaching practices and the inability to choose which professional development activities to undertake in the professional developmental domain. The Brazilian informants describe the pressure to use test results and to write teaching plans and strategies to improve students' performance data, which can be linked to economic incentives for schools and teachers that achieve performance targets. This article argues that Brazilian teachers are held more individually accountable for improving students' outcomes than their Norwegian counterparts because of the system of economic incentives related to students' performance, which is characteristic of high-stakes accountability countries (Verger et al., 2019; Wermke & Prøitz, 2019).

Moreover, the qualitative data describes particularities regarding the other levels of teacher autonomy. In Norway, teachers describe school leadership as playing a key role in promoting collegial work, which could allow for collegial teacher autonomy. However, the Norwegian informants do not talk about professional collaboration enabling collective decision-making at the school level. In comparison, the Brazilian informants describe the school leadership using staff meetings to implement external dictates.

Regarding the connections between teacher collaboration and collegial autonomy, contrived collegiality means an instrumental form of collaboration mandated by the school leadership with the aim of implementing agendas determined by others (Hargreaves, 1994; Hargreaves & Dawe, 1990), while extended collegial autonomy can be professional collaboration emanating from the subjective needs of the teachers who themselves set the agenda and participate in decision-making (Elo & Nygren-Landgärds, 2020; Frostenson, 2015; Kelchtermans, 2006).

However, the qualitative data about professional collaboration in the country cases does not indicate that teachers perceive having collegial teacher autonomy. In the Brazilian case, contrived collegiality is hardly a sign of collegial teacher autonomy, whereas in the Norwegian case, professional collaboration facilitated by the school leadership does not imply that teachers perceive being able to collectively decide on different topics of their work within the school setting.

Regarding professional teacher autonomy, the Norwegian informants describe the role of teachers' unions as supportive of their rights, which can indicate that they perceive being able to influence decision-making at the policy level through their participation in teachers' unions. However, TALIS 2018 data shows relatively low scores for Norwegian teachers' perceptions of being valued by policymakers (23.9%) and influencing educational policy (24.1%). Further studies are needed to explore these findings. Comparatively, Brazilian teachers perceive teachers' unions as not defending their rights and beliefs, which can give some indication of teachers' perceptions of restricted professional autonomy. TALIS 2018 data shows that only 6.8% of the Brazilian teachers report that policymakers value them. However, 59.1% report that they can influence educational policy. These contradictory findings could be explored in further studies.

In summary, even though teachers are satisfied with their autonomy at the classroom level, reporting a relative freedom to choose the contents and methods of their teaching, these findings do not necessarily imply that they perceive having extended collegial and professional teacher autonomy (Frostenson, 2015). Accordingly, the TALIS 2018 data shows quite low scores in items that can indicate possibilities for collegial and professional teacher autonomy.

This study shows that no clear pattern exists between teacher perceived autonomy and models of educational governance. Hence, the study's hypothesis that teachers in countries with strong accountability instruments report low perceived autonomy and vice versa cannot be verified.

Concluding remarks

By employing quantitative and qualitative data, this article has contributed to the understanding of teacher autonomy through the eyes of the teachers across different models of educational governance. As such, the quantitative data enables an examination of teachers' perceptions of their autonomy from a high-level perspective encompassing several countries. Complementarily, the qualitative data privileges

the detailed description of teachers' contexts and perceptions of their autonomy in two countries, highlighting country differences. In this regard, this paper hopes to have contributed to the teacher autonomy debate by using theoretical and methodological tools that allow for comparisons of the multiple levels of teacher autonomy in different country contexts.

However, it is important to mention that teacher autonomy is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon. Therefore, TALIS 2018 scales and teachers' interviews have captured only a few aspects of it, specifically in the cases of collegial and professional teacher autonomy, where the research instruments were not able to capture the multiple aspects of each level (Frostenson, 2015). This is a significant validity-related question that shows the limitations of the data and points to possibilities for further research.

In addition, this paper has not addressed the domains of teachers' work (e.g. educational, social) since it was not possible to fit such a level of detail in the scope of this paper. Recent studies on teacher autonomy have combined the levels and domains of teacher autonomy, and some of them also use TALIS data (e.g. Salokangas & Wermke, 2020; Wermke et al., 2019; Wermke & Salokangas, 2021).

This article also calls attention to the fact that teacher autonomy was measured for the first time in TALIS 2018. In this regard, it would be useful to follow the development of teacher autonomy in future editions of the TALIS. Moreover, by pairing TALIS 2018 data with interview data, this paper goes into granular detail that either dataset on its own could not do. As such, this study sets an example for future studies on teacher autonomy as a potential methodological approach for comparing different country contexts.

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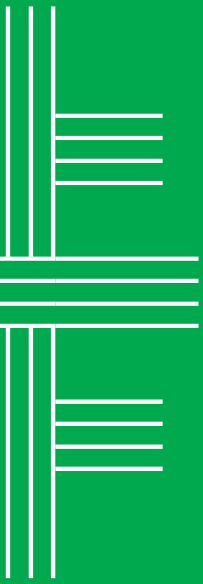
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This study aims to investigate teacher autonomy and teacher agency in public schools in one Latin American country (Brazil) and one European country (Norway) that have different models of educational governance based on the implementation of test-based accountability systems.

The research questions are: How do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers perceive their autonomy in an accountability context? How do Norwegian and Brazilian teachers respond to accountability policy?

This thesis is a mixed-methods study and builds on qualitative interviews with teachers in Norway and Brazil, policy documents, and Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) data.

Theoretically, this thesis is informed by perspectives on teacher agency and teacher autonomy, as well the concepts of accountability and institutional logics.

The findings suggest that the relationship between teacher autonomy and teacher agency in educational contexts marked by accountability is not necessarily linear. First, teachers perceive that they have autonomy to decide on their teaching and planning at the classroom level irrespective of models of educational governance. However, teachers report that they do not participate often in professional collaboration in schools. Professional collaboration can allow for collegial teacher autonomy or decision-making at the school level. Teachers also report low perceived social value and policy influence. These factors can provide insight into professional teacher autonomy in which teachers are able to influence the framings of the profession at the policy level.

Second, despite educational systems of strong state control that restrict teacher autonomy, teachers are able to achieve agency by using reflexivity and creativity to define their own practices in the interest of students and learning. As such, teachers may be policy adopters, but they also can adapt and translate accountability policy to their local situations, although bounded by their contexts.

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