Research paper

WTO/GATS and the global governance of education: A holistic analysis of its impacts on teachers' professionalism

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Contextualisation

This research is immediately relevant to the fields of education and economic governance. In particular, the specialised language utilised will be familiar to practitioners and researchers in the fields of macroeconomics, economics in education, teacher education, sociology of education, and political economy. The study may benefit a wide range of actors, i.e. teachers, students, parents and policymakers as it highlights the changing nature of social reproduction and reveals the changing role of education and knowledge in today's global societies. It may also be useful for researchers and students concerned with human rights, social justice, and sustainable development since marketisation and privatisation of education may not necessarily improve capabilities and social wellbeing of communities caught in poverty traps. As such, the study may serve as a basis for further reflection and enquiry into the socio-economic impacts of market worldviews on education and teacher professionalism.

Abstract: *As a multilateral organisation, the World Trade Organisation (WTO) has had an impact on rules of education governance by extending markets to education. The rescaling of education rules from national to supranational has, in turn, stimulated a shift in the social identities, roles and professionalism of teachers around the world. This study explores the impacts of the WTO General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) on educational spaces and the role it may have had on affecting teachers' professionalism including autonomy, extended professional knowledge, income, social prestige, unions and ethical codes of conduct. It will be revealed that market rules may reconstruct the meanings and aspirations of education and thus may play a significant role in re-professionalising teaching as a profession. Nonetheless, the WTO/GATS rules may not de-professionalise teaching as teachers actively reconstruct their identities and their profession and negotiate their ethical codes and values within both local and global spheres.*

Introduction

During the last two decades globalisation has become the impetus of accelerated change in educational spaces around the world. It has shaped and reconstructed contents, structures, modes of accessibility, and evaluation criteria of educational outcome (Maringe, 2010). Among the intricately related forces of globalisation, i.e. political, cultural, ideological and economic, the latter has gained prominence in the governance of education (Foskett, 2010). This trend is believed to have its roots in the neo-liberal and competitive markets worldviews (Olssen, 2006) following the imprint of Washington Consensus. Consequent educational policies pursued by significant international organisations - including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the World Trade Organisation (WTO), and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) - have had profound implications on teachers, teaching culture & practice, professionalism, and unionism (Vonsalis-Macrow, 2002).

Among these multilateral organisations, WTO has been quite influential in attaching primacy to the economic role of education. This is of course not to undermine the impacts of other organisations and their initiatives which merit further scrutiny in their own right. These include: OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMMS) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/World Bank initiative for quality: Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity (GIQAC). What could be posited is that many of these global attempts towards homogenisation and improving performativity have their origin in the neo-liberal market-oriented worldviews of the WTO. It could also be argued that the binding rules of WTO such as GATS assert a more powerful vertical influence on educational spaces in comparison to other global policies and practices such as the OECD PISA that maintains an apparently persuasive nature.

Several mechanisms appropriate this vertical influence of the WTO on education spaces. These include league tables, quality assurance mechanisms, accountability and transparency systems and global performance indicators. These GATS-based mechanisms may have an effect on educational spaces and teachers' professionalism. That is, global pressures for better students' performance, standardised tests and classroom practice, and quality guidelines for teaching/learning processes change the patterns of educational consumption and aspirations. Consequently, teachers' identities, roles and professionalism are dismantled and reconstructed under the economic forces of globalisation. This study aims to explore and analyze the impacts of the WTO/GATS on the governance of education spaces and teachers' professionalism. More precisely, it seeks to understand how the extension of GATS's market rules into educational spaces has altered teachers' professionalism.

The article is divided into two main parts. In the first, I will review GATS and the rescaling of the education drawing on empirical impact studies. This will be followed by a holistic analysis of the changing conceptions of teachers' professionalism in the face of global market forces, highlighting the processes and trends of change and reconstruction of teacher professionalism in today's global and competitive knowledge economies. It is not within the scope and aims of this study to make definitive claims on the impacts of GATS on teacher professionalism beyond reviewing the literature and detailing empirical examples. Further research is required to delineate teacher professionalism in each of the WTO member states.

Significance of the study

The significance of the current study is twofold. First, the impacts of GATS rules on teacher professionalism have not been a subject of much research. There are, indeed, several studies that delineate GATS impacts on education systems in general (Robertson et al., 2006; Sequiela, 2005); as there are studies that scrutinize teachers' professionalism, their social identities, roles or economic wellbeing from global and national perspective (e.g. Switala, 2012; Larre and Plassard, 2007; Cunningham, 2012). Likewise, global initiatives such as TIMMS and PISA and their impact on education systems have been studied, e.g. Takayama (2010). Second, the number of GATS committed members in education services has increased to 55 including the EU as one entity (Appendix 1), which necessitate understanding the impacts of GATS on local educational governance and teachers' professionalism. Although this study tends to provide a holistic view of these impacts, it may nonetheless provide educational researchers and practitioners with an insight into the changing nature of teacher professionalism in different GATS member countries and spark interest in more context-specific enquiry of these impacts. As such, the study will contribute to accumulation of knowledge in the fields of sociology of education and economic governance.

Definitions of key words

Globalisation: 'the reality shaped by an increasingly integrated world economy, new information and communications technology, the emergence of an international knowledge network, the role of the English language, and other forces beyond the control of academic institutions', (Altbach, Reisberg and Rumbley, 2009, P.7).

Governance: 'the processes, structures and Institutions (formal and informal) through which a group, a community or a society makes decisions, distributes and exercises authority and power, determines strategic goals, organises corporate, group and individual behaviour, develops rules and assigns responsibility' (Dodson & Smith, 2003 ,P.1). According to Robertson (2010) regional/global governance can be considered as a political process that creates a regional space within the state.

Teachers' Professionalism: Drawing on Hargreaves's (1994) 'new/extended professionalism', Whitty's (2012) 'democratic professionalism' and Sachs's (2003) 'activist professionalism', teacher professionalism can be understood as a dynamic socially constructed concept developed and sustained in a democratic society that includes the voices of all stakeholders and is enacted rather than being prescribed by exogenous forces. As part of its traits, professionalism includes autonomous discretion, extended specialised training, social prestige, reasonable income, ethical codes of conduct and active unions.

Professionalisation: is a cultural construct with a regulatory intent to increase professionalism and increase accountability towards the public by putting in place codes of practice, entry gates, and registration/professional bodies (Lester, 2011). What is meant by de-professionalisation is complete dismantlement of teaching as a profession under global political and economic forces while re-professionalisation embodies the social reconstruction of teaching in the process of power negotiations between teachers and local/global forces.

Review of Literature

In the first section, I will provide background information on WTO/GATS and will review some of its empirical impacts on the educational spaces of member countries. In the second, I will more specifically focus on the transforming role that WTO/GATS may have on teachers' professionalism.

WTO/GATS and shifts in educational governance

One key impact of globalisation on education is the shift from regulated national systems to fragmented global governance mechanisms. In the post-World War II period, the 'Keynesian Welfare National System' provided the closed economies of the time with full employment, national economic, social and citizenship rights, and national education. Robertson et al. (2006) describe these regimes as social contracts within a national scale or matrix. According to Jessop (1999), the 1970s world crisis led to the emergence of the 'Schumpeterian Workfare Post-national Regime' that shifted the emphasis from national governance to post-national in all aspects including education. While the closed Keynesian economy considered education as a public good and therefore a non-tradable and a de-commodified service, for the post 1970s perspectives, education has increasingly been a commodity/service: tradable and governed among different stakeholders in competitive knowledge economies (Dale et al., 2012).

Among mechanism leading to such a scale shift from national to global governance are the GATS rules (1995). Following the 1986-1995 Uruguay rounds, WTO was created and became the implementing body of GATS, and some other former rules including Trade related aspects of Intellectual property Rights (TRIPS) and Trade related Investment Measures (TRIMS).

GATS is a binding rule-based system that incorporates several general and specific rules including the main principles of its predecessor General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), i.e. 'the most favoured nations' and 'national treatment', which will be discussed later. The main objectives of GATS rules are to promote and increase liberalisation of all services and trades and to settle disputes among members. The GATS- committed members agree to engage in gradual phases of liberalisation of their trade and service on a 'voluntary' basis. The concept of 'voluntary adhesion' is contested because according to Woods and Narlikar (2001), once committed, members cannot withdraw or decline from their engagement permanently but may only temporarily postpone their liberalisation processes.

Before analyzing the impacts of WTO/GATS on education systems, several points are noteworthy here. First, the global extension of trade and market rules in education cannot be solely ascribed to the WTO. The WTO is among the few influential international organizations whose neo-liberal market-oriented policies appropriated the Washington Consensus (Stiglitz, 2002) and have played an important role in promoting privatization, marketisation and liberalization. Second, GATS does not dismantle the State but influences its economic and political governance. As Maroy (2012) explains, States exert their agency over the rules of GATS while constantly bargaining and negotiating the demands of the local with the global markets and as they reinvent themselves by adopting a quasi-market model. In fact, the 'path dependency' that exists in the national educational policies limits the impact of GATS rules as externalities. Thus, educational institutions and policies across the WTO member states do not converge into 'purely isomorphic institutions' as was claimed by Meyer et al (1997). Rather, GATS rules create a 'global in local' as Dale et al. (2012) explain, where mechanisms of social and cultural reproduction are rescaled and negotiated vertically and horizontally among a larger spectrum of global and local stakeholders involved in educational governance.

GATS: an analysis of its impacts on educational spaces and governance

Does GATS actually have an impact on education? The answer lies primarily in addressing the ambiguity of Article 1, item 3 of GATS that excludes 'all services provided by governments and for non-commercial purposes' from its rule. It is evident that education sectors are usually mixed systems of private-public provision where either of the two plays a more significant role in a given society. In the European Union, for instance, the average public and private spending on education is 69% and 13.8%, respectively (Key data on education in Europe, 2012). In other WTO members the same trend is prevalent at primary and secondary school levels, for example private expenditure on education in Vietnam was 25.1% in 2006. In contrast, higher education receives more attention from private investors in many WTO and non-WTO countries including the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Korea, Malaysia, India and China. Besides, even when governments charge taxes and fees, finance research and academic cooperation, or provide distance learning courses, their activities could inevitably be classified as having a commercial nature and thus be subject to free market rules. Indeed as Robertson *et al*. (2006, P.235) argue 'there are few public education systems in the world that could argue that GATS did not apply to them.'

In addition to their potential application to almost all education spaces, GATS rules are quite detailed when it comes to classifying services and defining the nature of trade activities. Of relevance here is the 1998 WTO Annex 1 on education where 'services' is divided into: *primary, secondary, higher education, adult education and others (anything not mentioned in the list other than recreational services).* Service activities, including education, may be enacted in the forms of: 1) *cross-border supply:* of any service from one member to other, e.g. distance education and examinations; 2) *consumption abroad*: the services consumed by individual members of a country in another, such as language courses or academic degrees ; 3) *commercial presence:* of a member country's education service in another one in forms of individual or joint campuses ; 4) *presence of natural persons:* individuals of a country in another who provide education services as teachers, consultants or administrators. This implies that

education systems and sectors, as a whole, are subject to GATS rules as committed countries gradually liberate levels and engage in more market-oriented educational activities (Siqueira, 2005).

A second question is then how do GATS rules exert an impact on the above mentioned educational categories? It is first necessary to understand the *'general rules'* and *'specific commitments'* of GATS mentioned in the same article 1, item 3. There are several influential rules in both general rules and specific commitments of GATS. In the former they include: the 'Most-Favoured Nation', Transparency, Domestic Regulation, Recognition; and in the latter they consist of market access and national treatment. In any one category of educational activity, more than one rule or a combination of general rules and specific commitments may be employed to eliminate the barriers in the trade in education.

Having reviewed the GATS rules, we shall now proceed with a discussion of their influence on educational activities and categories:

1. Cross-border supply: Several GATS rules apply to cross-border educational activities. For instance, *National treatment* rule indicates that no local educational provider shall receive a more favourable treatment against other providers. Also, the *market access* rule may be utilised to facilitate cross-border activities of education. This rule prohibits member countries from imposing limitations (quotas and tariffs) on foreign and private education service providers.
2. Consumption abroad: Several rules serve the purposes of this activity. For instance the *Most favoured nation* rule which suggests that the benefits of a bilateral agreement shall be extended to all other members. Likewise, the *recognition rule* where degrees obtained in member countries are recognised by others through mutually agreed criteria and adherence to '*national treatment'* rule.
3. Commercial presence: The activities in this category may be facilitated by drawing on *domestic regulations* rule that states 'qualification and requirements procedures, technical standards and licensing shall not constitute unnecessary barriers to the trade in services' (GATS, article VI). Similarly, *market access* and *transparency rules* apply to this activity; where transparency (article II) means immediate communication of any changes brought to the local laws that may affect the service providers- thus permitting the WTO or member countries to express their concern/opposition against local decisions.
4. Presence of natural persons: where a combination of national treatment, transparency rules and market access may expedite market access and liberalisation.

Activities and rules of the WTO/GATS account for several potential shifts in the political, economic and social governance of education. Market proponents, e.g. Coulson (2008) and Chubb & Moe (1997), have shown that application of market rules to education would enhance quality of educational outcome as they promote competition among providers. They also believe that markets in education facilitate freedom of choice and equity through diversification of service provision. On the contrary, critics of the market, e.g. Brown (1997) and Levin et al. (2006), have affirmed that such anticipated impacts of markets have been, at best, minimal and highly context specific. Several studies have revealed the adverse impacts of marketisation and privatization on education, e.g. Maringe (2010), Naidoo et al. (2011), Lauder et al. (2006). However, none of these impacts are absolute and they differ in their degree and extent across different education levels and sectors. Some of the GATS impacts are discussed below.

GATS rules have potentially contributed to the commodification of knowledge: The shift from the Keynesian model to Schumpeterian, i.e. the shift from the national role of education to global service, has changed the social meaning and role of knowledge. For Durkheim, education was a means of national construction and for Bourdieu a 'cultural capital' that

resulted in the merited worth of the 'cultivated man'. In today's global economies, education is not considered as an end in itself; it is rather 'a means in the process of capital accumulation' (Robertson, 2006, P.241). According to market rules, education is to produce a 'specialist man' equipped with what Bernstein (1996) calls 'the official knowledge' which subverts perceptions of merit into employability. Thus, as Maringe (2010:23) asserts, "knowledge that does not create money is increasingly shunned". As such, education becomes a lucrative service central to the reproduction of labour power and highly skilled innovative human capital where individuals' purchasing power becomes the legitimate means of access to 'quality' education. Lauder et al. (2006, P.25) summarise the impact of such neo-liberal market rules on education by stating: "education is reduced to employability; self-worth to market worth; citizens to consumers; and social solidarity to self-interest".

GATS rules have promoted a global rescaling of the governance of education that benefits some countries and individuals and leaves others behind. The concerns that arise from this rescaling have been discussed by different scholars, including Robertson (2003) and Roberston et al. (2006). First, GATS reinforces the existing capacities and strengths of some member states and may be disadvantageous for those with lower capacities. For instance the commercial presence or cross-border supply rules may benefit developed members of GATS with prior educational experiences, infrastructural capacities and colonial presence. While the developed members 'colonise knowledge' (Smith, 2006), the developing members such as Kyrgyz Republic, Lesotho, Moldova, Nepal, Rwanda, and Sierra Leone become importers of service: if not for the sake of education, at least for receiving global private investment, as stated by Robertson et al. (2006). Furthermore, as the private sector expands, it may undermine public provision of education and reduce the chances of the lower income families to access quality education. For instance, by 2011 private providers have catered for almost 33% of early childhood education provision globally and 71% or provision in Arab states; yet many young children, specifically those from the most vulnerable households, have been out of pre-school centres (EFA GMR, 2013). In addition, GATS rules of 'national treatment' and 'recognition' may facilitate the eligibility of foreign private providers to receive governmental grants which could then result in scarcity of public delivery and funding of education.

GATS rules undermine the social dimensions of education as a public good. According to Levin et al. (2006), in a Keynesian economy, a common national schooling ensures social cohesion and integration. The neo-liberal rules of GATS on the contrary, corrode the structural role of the common education system and replace it by economic capital accumulation aspirations. In fact, the kind of socialisation skill training provided byprivate providers' curriculum could be questioned as their usual market-oriented activities are to maximise economic profit and competition (mostly in an individualistic approach) rather than social cohesion and virtues. By introducing private provision of education, it is mostly the competing middle classes that may be better off as they appropriate the new rules of privatisation and marketisation games to their own privilege. Among neo-Marxists however, e.g. Sassen (2005), the dual role of education in socialization and meritocratic selection is rejected and the education system is seen as a reproduction of already existing economic and social spheres. Likewise, the post-structural governmentality perspective refuses to consider that public education could afford to create a mono-cultural form of citizenship, e.g. Willis (1977) and thus the shifts from a humanistic approach to education have been present for a long time before the WTO/GATS came into reality.

The extension of GATS market rules to education changes the nature and aims of the learning/teaching processes. The marketplace is based on competition, productivity, and efficiency, i.e. maximising profit. When applied to education, these entail aggrandising educational outcomes, assessing competitors through standardised tests and ranking educational institutions in league tables. Consequently 'the test' becomes the focus of education and the aim of teaching/learning processes diverts from 'emancipation and liberal progressive' processes towards 'performance and exam techniques'. As Ball (2006) observes

the global tests and rules of games create a 'new managerialism' where further pressure is put on teachers whose performances are measured by both the local and global societies.

However, these general trends are usually subject to local interpretations and regulations. For instance, Norway has specified primary and secondary education as public services in order to limit the scope of GATS impact. In a similar vein, Panama and Costa Rica have recognised education as a public good with national and social objectives. Kyrgyz and Nepalese governments have excluded education funded by the State from GATS rules. Other countries have committed to GATS rules in specific education sub-sectors. For instance: Gambia has commitments in primary, adult and other education; Armenia for higher and adult education; Congo Republic for higher education only and Rwanda for adult education only; Trinidad and Tobago for specialist teachers training and Ghana for secondary and specialist education, as Pereira (2009) explains. Therefore, the idea that GATS rules facilitate asymmetric liberalisation and extensive coverage of domestic services and regulations can be argued against (Sauve, 2001).

Researchers' perceptions of GATS rules and their attitude towards countries entering the global education markets have been divided too. Some are welcoming towards GATS rules, e.g. Opara et al. (2013) study on cross-border higher education provision in Nigeria and Kafle (2010) on prospects of GATS for Nepalese higher education where entering into the global market for education is acknowledged as a means towards better quality and global recognition of local educational services. Others like Ghanda (2004) reflect the local resentments in India due to disparities among local regulatory frameworks and an increase in high fee charging second or third tiered higher education providers. Indeed, there remain concerns over the imbalanced presence of foreign providers in developing countries and the tension between education as a human right and as a trade.

In the next section, I will discuss some of the possible holistic impacts of GATS on teachers' professionalism. It is important to bear in mind that teacher professionalism is a socio-cultural construct and requires further context-specific and comparative research in each of the WTO member countries.

Why Teachers' Professionalism?

Teachers are the most significant population in education spaces for several reasons. One primary reason is that a good proportion of education spending is allocated to salaries of teachers. For instance, the current expenditure on education in the European Union represents 84% of total spending in all countries and within this an average of 70% is the spending on staff. Additionally, as indicated on UNESCO's website (2013), "teachers are the single most influential and powerful force for equity, access and quality in education". Understanding the changing identities, roles and professionalism of teachers in our global era is therefore a worthwhile research endeavour.

As mentioned earlier, teachers' professionalism is a social construct and thus may be perceived differently across contexts. There is of course a 'commonsense' idea of teacher professionalism across different contexts that translates into "a relatively high prestige extended specialised training, and being paid for one's work" (Freidson, 1994:170). In a more elaborated understanding, Broadbent et al. (1997, P.63) believe that teacher professionalism is mainly about, "individual autonomy [that is] effectively granted as a 'license to practice' by their professional institutions; their expertise, and their intrinsic motivation for *self actualisation* through worthwhile work". In any given society, each of these attributes may occupy a greater or a smaller position in the overall social perceptions of teacher professionalism. This explains why teacher professionalism should be examined in relation to the changing political, social and economic contexts (Hilferty, 2008:54). In general, however, teacher professionalism is

mainly about, "the status of teaching, the ways in which that status alters, and the ways in which different groups are affected by the struggle for status and control" Schon (2000:5).

In a globalised world, teacher professionalism can be influenced by political and economic policies and practices of both local and global actors. For Freidson (2001: 128) "the prime contingency of [teacher] professionalism is the State and its policies". The State is the "key force required for the creation, maintenance, and enforcement of ideal typical professionalism" (ibid). With the altered role of the States in our today globalised world, it can be stated that an ensemble of national, regional and global actors can potentially affect one or several components of teachers' professionalism.

This entails that local and global policies are potentially capable of 'de/re professionalising' the teaching occupation. For instance, as Freidson (2001) explains, if the stakeholders are categorised as activist-Hierarchical (totalitarian regimes of governance) they can fundamentally *subvert* the foundations of professionalism. Market rules, on the other hand, may not dismantle teacher professionalism completely, but may assert adverse impacts on some certain components of it and alter the social perceptions of teacher professionalism. In this sense, market rules may re-professionalise teaching rather than de-preofessionalising it.

Teachers' Professionalism and market demands

Teaching as a profession is changing in the midst of global market demands. Teachers are burdened with pressures from global systems and local demands. Lower public budgets and increased performance controls put more social and economic pressure on teachers. Le Grand (1997) argues that policies change the aspirations and thinking of general public. The policies that promote the economic role of education become the 'discourse of power' and thus create new social identities, dictating "what it means to be educated and what it means to be a teacher or a researcher" (Ball, 2006, P.693). Then indeed, teachers have to assume different mentoring, pastoral and social roles as they accommodate the demands of the evolving local societies for better performance and new skills. In other words, according to Ball (2012), the demands for performance, privatisation and shifts in the roles and modalities of the States change teacher professionalism.

Next, I will discuss the effect of WTO/GATS rules on teachers' professionalism by discussing their *autonomy, extended professional knowledge, social status, decent income, and effectiveness of teachers' unions and the changing nature of their code of ethics.*

Autonomy

The most significant part of teachers' professionalism is their autonomy. As Whitty (2008,P.28) rightly emphasises, "an important issue for the professionalism of teachers is the nature of, and the limits to, teacher autonomy". The autonomous discretion of teachers depends on "increasing teachers' opportunities to participate in determining school goals and policies and/or exercise judgments about curriculum content" (Gamoran et al., 1994, P.3).

Teachers' autonomy has changed over time. The degree of autonomy experienced by today's teachers is somehow reminiscent of what is known as the pre-professional era in many Western countries; a similar pattern could be traced in developing countries with a time gap of few years or decades. Until the 1970s, the period that corresponds with Keynesian views, the fundamental concerns were those of order and control, i.e. authority of the teachers rather than their autonomy (Hargreaves, 2006). In contrast, in the 80s and in the face of a changing atmosphere of schooling from traditional to child-centred methods, a period of 'collegial professionalism' began where increased collective, collaborative and autonomous professionalism was experienced in the teaching profession. In today's post-modern era, teachers' autonomy is once again challenged as they function under centralised curricula,

standard testing regimes, performance indicators and other productivity efficiency criteria of the market.

Several of the GATS rules can potentially subvert teachers' autonomy. For instance, when the transparency rule is applied to the education sector it mainly focuses on teachers' performance. Following a managerial and an entrepreneurial approach, the social and cultural values of education are sidelined and measures are appropriated to ensure the high performance of teachers according to the demands of the market. Such target settings may undermine the autonomy of teachers as they are primarily engineered to ensure accountability towards consumer satisfaction and market efficiency schemes. Likewise, domestic regulation rule may challenge teachers' autonomy. The rule implies that regulations should ensure supply of service and avoid being "more burdensome than necessary to assure the quality of the service" (WTO, 1995, P. 290). Interpretations drawn from this rule can affect educational practice. It may reduce or eliminate the 'burdensome' social and cultural aspects of education and replace them with the market-relevant learning and teaching processes. Consequently, teachers' autonomy may be limited as they have to follow certain prescribed 'best practices' to prepare their students for tests and employment. The recognition rule of GATS may have similar effects on teachers' autonomy. Of course, this is not to disregard that the degree recognition rule has reinforced student mobility and facilitated multicultural exchanges and understandings, e.g. through the Bologna process, for instance. Yet since the recognition rule is negotiated as a top-down policy, it may not necessarily promote teachers' autonomy but may only facilitate their mobility and access

Consequently, the above mentioned GATS rules can potentially lead to a limitation of teachers' autonomy. As teachers are constantly judged against performance criteria, guided with prescribed best practice models, and managed by entrepreneurial approaches of the global market, it is inevitable that their professionalism suffers. In an ideal world, autonomy counts as the one criterion that shall help "distinguish professional from proletarian work' (Hargreaves, 2006) and GATS rules seem to undermine this very fundamental component of professionalism Of course, the extent to which GATS rules play a negative role in teachers' autonomy remains a highly contextual matter.

Extended specialised training

Another significant attribute of teachers' professionalism is their specialised knowledge. In fact, with the increased migration of technologies, people and ideas, there is a need for teachers' professional knowledge to be extended so as to meet the needs and requirements of the global and local societies (Whitty, 2012).

Several of GATS rules, however, may have an impact on teachers' professional development. For instance, based on domestic regulation, longer university-based programmes of teacher education have been seen as restricting the supply of teachers in the market. Thus, shorter accrediting courses have been developed and provided by international organisations or by local post-secondary institutes and outside the higher education system. Discussing post-secondary teacher training and its impact on the status and nature of teacher professionalism in Hong Kong, Morris (2008, P.3) emphasises that a weak or outside the higher education training undermines the status of teaching and "reinforce[s] its relatively low social status". Ironically, in today's educational systems managers in education businesses receive more professional development than do teachers (Helsby, 1995).

In addition, private delivery of teacher training and professional courses provided by international organisations may lower the quality of teacher training programmes. One example of these is the collaborative workshop trainings offered by UNESCO. That such training is provided over short periods and by non-local and abruptly imported professionals, from the headquarters or regional offices who may lack contextual knowledge, puts their quality

and reliability under question (Little, 1993). As a consequence, much of this top-down training on 'best practices' for collaboration is sidelined by teachers due to a lack of contextual relevance and the already busy schedule of local teachers. Collaborative methods may benefit teachers if they have their say in the topic and methods of delivery and if they are not imposed "as a device to overload teachers, or to steer unpalatable policies through them" (Hargreaves, 2006, P.684).

Another adverse impact of marketisation of education and GATS rules on teachers' professionalism is inviting untrained (in teaching) field professionals into university classrooms. As Darling-Hammond et al. (2002, P.286) explain, "subject knowledge alone cannot 'professionalise' teaching; knowledge of pedagogy 'professionalises' the teaching of subject knowledge". Although sharing real world experiences with students may be an added value to learning processes, lack of professional development in teaching methods could challenge quality of learning/teaching processes and play a negative role in teachers' professionalism and prestige. It is only commonsense and inevitable that extended professional education and training form a necessary part of teachers' professionalism and must be provided to ensure quality of education at all levels.

Income

As the providers of education diversify, they will want to reduce their costs and maximise their profits. That is why teachers' local salary scales may be seen as 'burdensome' to the rules of market access, domestic regulation as well as national treatment and most favoured national rules of GATS. Based on such market rules, education businesses may attempt to lower and homogenise pay and salaries of teachers.

Such an approach has several impacts. It may reinforce the existing (low or high) pay scales. In developing WTO countries where teachers are paid poorly and inflation is high, homogenisation may result in chronic lower purchase power among teachers especially those who are newly recruited and those moonlighting, i.e. working one or more additional jobs. The results could be similar in developing countries perhaps only with a lower intensity. The destructive impact of low income on teachers' professionalism has been discussed in several studies; unfortunately, it is evident that the richer the countries are, the lower the relative pay of the teachers and thus a lower level of satisfaction and wellbeing (OECD, 2013). As Freidson (1994, P.205) explains, "if their very living is threatened, it is unlikely that most professionals, that is to say the profession as a whole, will put the good of their client and the public before their own". In a qualitative study in Alberta, Oplatka (2006) showed that teachers perceived marketing negatively and reported experiencing high levels of stress and uncertainty in their work. Lowering teachers' income based on competitive rules of the market and pushing them to engage in educational marketing could lead to lower quality of teaching/learning processes and attenuate society's and teachers' perception of professionalism.

Social Prestige

Any one of the elements discussed above, i.e., lack of autonomy and specialised knowledge and low income, may imperil the social prestige of teachers. The explanation is quite straightforward. Feldman (2008, P.591) believes that we hold certain schema for people in the society. Our schema for teachers for example includes characteristics such as: knowledge of the subject matter, sympathy towards student's needs and being autonomous and a source of power. The dissonance between our 'teacher schema' and their inevitable compliance with the rules of the market can be settled at the expense of teachers' social position and prestige. Likewise, Ball (1990) believes when teachers are blamed for the failure of policies and systems and are subjected to 'discourses of derision' they may suffer a loss of public faith in their professional identity and endeavour. In fact, the policies not only change how teachers work, in Ball's (2008, P.50) words, "they also change who they are, how we judge them and how we define a good teacher".

Unions and ethical codes of conduct

Active teachers' unions are indispensible to the realisation and maintenance of teacher professionalism (Freidson, 1994). The Oxford Dictionary of Education (2008, P.297) describes teachers' unions as "organised national bodies being formed to promote and protect teachers' interests and to negotiate the pay and working conditions of members". In fact, unions resemble epistemic communities in that they negotiate the collective sovereignty and ethical considerations of the local stakeholders (teachers) with the other local, national and the global communities. The activities of local teachers' unions may not necessarily serve the purposes of the market and GATS rules and may thus be considered as burdensome which then means that they are better limited or dismantled. Freidson (2001, P.140) explains the interest clashes between activist-hierarchical States (non-democratic and totalitarian) and unions, which I would extend to global economic regimes and local teacher unions:

> *... projects and perspectives that arise spontaneously among citizens are suspect, for they may clash with those favoured by the [economic regime]... Accordingly, voluntary associations should either be dismantled or placed under supervision…*

Similarly, local ethical codes of conduct could be altered by GATS rules. While teachers' ethical codes usually demand teachers to be fully engaged in teaching and caring for students' learning and psycho-social needs, marketisation require teachers to prepare students for the market and to work more for less salaries - just like all other professionals in global economies. The evidence for this claim could be sought in IMF and WTO privatisation policies persuading many developing African and Latin American governments to cut public spending and privatise education. Defined within the framework of market rules, teacher professionalism then is a form of professional control of teachers to ensure services to those in power rather than a way to stress the inherent qualities of teaching (Ozga, 1995). Even if international codes of conduct and 'best practices' are apolitical and philanthropic at heart, which I doubt as the very connotation of 'best practices' resonates with top-down prescriptions of western epistemologies, there are few local/international mechanisms to enforce these practices and codes. To further complicate the matter, local codes of conduct are developed by different bodies in different countries and may manoeuvre around market rules to accommodate the economic aspiration of the privileged classes. For instance, in Nepal, India, and Bangladesh the codes are developed by the Ministry of Education with no enforcement mechanism, while in Hong Kong teachers' associations are directly in charge and the Hong Kong Council of Professional Conduct in Education is responsible for ensuring the codes' enforcement.

Conclusion

Do GATS rules completely diminish teacher professionalism? The response is a firm 'no', at least not completely. If teachers assumed complete compliance with market rules, then their situation could resemble that of the participants of Milgram's (1974) obedience experiment. In 1974 Stanley Milgram conducted an experiment in which participants were tested as to the degree of their obedience. The participants were instructed by an experimenter to give increasingly stronger shocks to another person as part of a study on learning. Milgram found 65% of participants used the highest electric shock (450 Volts) on the learner. This experiment was motivated by Milgram's desire to explain the behaviour of Germans during World War II, (Feldman 2008, P.603).

Do teachers resemble Milgram's participants and abide by GATS rules? We can hope not. Teachers negotiate their roles and identities with systems and societies as they resist imposed changes. While negotiating their agency with the global and local governance, teachers may adopt *strategic compliance* (Shain & Gleeson, 1999), but not *total obedience*. An example of teachers' attempts to negotiate their rights and ethical codes of conduct at global level is the creation of *Education International.* This is a global union for teachers that holds annual conferences and endeavours towards safeguarding teachers' professionalism and renewal of their codes of ethical conduct in the face of economic and political forces of globalisation.

Similarly, the national stakeholders bargain and negotiate in WTO roundtables. Although GATS is a binding framework, regional and global policies are recontextualised, translated and hybridised at local policy and practice levels, (Steiner-Kahmsi et al., 2012; Marginson et al., 2007). This may be explained by drawing on Ball's (1993) distinction between 'policy as text' and 'policy as discourse'. GATS texts are policy texts that are produced under structural constraints of their producers, but may allow plurality of readings. Building on Foucault's idea of discourse, Ball (1993) considers policy discourses as processes where policies are socially reconstructed and lead to social realities. Similarly, GATS rules shape and are shaped by local discourses, as is teachers' professionalism.

In summary, GATS rules may facilitate professionalisation of teaching but not teacher professionalism. Hargreaves (2006, P.673) defines professionalisation as a way of "improving status and standing" while professionalism is to "improve quality and standards of practice". That is, the global tests, quality standards, and league tables "reduce barriers to market entry, (GATS Market access and national treatment rule)" or "ensure specific market-relevant outcome (GATS recognition and transparency rules)". Consequently, they may increase market accountability and transparency of the teaching profession but may not necessarily count for improving the quality of teaching and socio-economic wellbeing of teachers. This 'new professionalism' as Hargreaves calls it, asks for a change in the qualities of teachers which may lead to an over-emphasis on the role of the managers and de-professionalisation of teachers. However, as Whitty (2012) argues, global forces such as GATS may not de-professionalise but may only afford to re-professionalise teaching as teachers resist and reconstruct their identities and roles.

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Appendix 1. *Table of the WTO/GATS committed countries to education services:* A. Primary Education Services; B. Secondary Education Services; C. Higher Education Services; D. Adult Education; E. Other Education Services. From WTO website: http://tsdb.wto.org/matrixlist.aspx. [last accessed: 15 Oct 2013]

Members	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	
Albania	X	X	X	X		4
Armenia			X	X		2
Australia		X	X		X	3
Austria	X	X		X		3
Bulgaria	X	X		X		3
Cambodia			X	X	X	3
Cape Verde		X	X	X	X	4
China	X	X	X	X	X	5
Congo RP			X			1
Costa Rica	X	X	X			3
Croatia		X	X	X	X	4
Czech Republic	X	X	X	X	X	5
Estonia	X	X	X	X	X	5
European Community	X	X	X	X		4
FYR Macedonia	X	X	X	X	X	5
Gambia	X			X	X	3
Georgia	X	X	X	X		4
Ghana		X			X	2
Haiti				X		1
Hungary	X	X	X	X		4
Jamaica	X	X	X			3
Japan	X	X	X	X		4
Jordan	X	X	X	X	X	5
Kyrgyz Republic	X	X	X	X		4
Latvia	X	X	X	X		4
Lesotho	X	X	X	X	X	5
Liechtenstein	X	X	X	X		4
Lithuania	X	X	X	X		4
Mali				X		1
Mexico	X	X	X		X	4
Moldova	X	X	X	X	X	5
Montenegro	X	X	X	X	X	5
Nepal			X	X	X	3
New Zealand	X	X	X			3
Norway	X	X	X	X	X	5
Oman	X	X	X	X		4
Panama	X	X	X			3
Poland	X	X	X	X		4
Russian Federation	X	X	X	X		4
Rwanda				X		1
Samoa	X	X	X	X	X	5
Saudi Arabia	X	X	X	X	X	5
Sierra Leone	X	X	X	X	X	5
Slovak Republic	X	X	X	X	X	5
Slovenia		X	X	X		3
Switzerland	X	X	X	X		4
Chinese Taipei		X	X	X	X	4
Thailand	X	X		X		3
Tonga	X	X	X	X	X	5
Trinidad and Tobago			X		X	2
Turkey	X	X	X		X	4
Ukraine	X	X	X	X	X	5
USA				X	X	2
Vanuatu	X	X	X	X	X	5
Viet Nam		X	X	X	X	4
Total	39	45	46	45	29	