

# The Influence of Private Actors on the Education of Teachers in Sweden. A Networked Ethnography Study of Education Policy Mobility

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**Abstract.** *Policy networks constitute a new form of education governance through a mix of joint working arrangements involving both public and private sector actors. This article explores the work of a specific actor in a Swedish educational policy network, active in the digitalization of schools. We examine how this actor fits within global policy networks and activities that are adding to and profiting from problems of the educational sector and not providing solutions for these difficulties by exploiting the existing mediatized problems in order to motivate the reduced expenditure on state-owned public services and to develop a conceptual foundation for launching private alternatives.*

**Keywords:** *Network Ethnography, Education Politics, Commodification, Policy network.*

## Introduction

This article explores a new form of privatization of state education, where education and education policy are addressed by educational (edu)-businesses and sold as “market solutions” (Ball 2009). It addresses this by investigating a specific private actor of edu-business that has been at the forefront of recent digitization developments in education in Sweden. This company is also an example of how a national actor, through connections with global actors, is part of the ongoing globalization of educational

policy in a constellation of cross-national policy network (Figure No. 2).

In this article, we will explore a cross-section of the specific national actor connections and activities through the two non-profit organizations called Teach for Sweden<sup>1</sup> and Rebel Learners.<sup>2</sup> These organizations place the training of teachers as their main objectives. These are organizations that have received high-level political support and can be regarded as a kind

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.teachforsweden.se/> (visited 2015-03)

<sup>2</sup> <http://rebellearners.com/> (visited 2015-03)

of pipeline for international policy ideas and global edu-businesses into the national arena and for actors in policymaking in the Swedish educational sector. As Ball expresses it, they are an example of how new intranational spaces are related to new transnational policy spaces (Ball 2016).

### **Researching Policy-Networks**

Policy networks constitute a new form of governance for national states that, in many ways, changes the steering of the public sector by altering the ways that public services are delivered through a mix of joint working arrangements involving both the public and the private sector (Ball 2012; Menashy 2016). They have roots in policy influences from British “right-wing” think tanks and their support for private actors entering the public welfare sector from the 1980s and 1990s. The educational systems were thoroughly transformed by this. Schools shifted from being intentionally uniform and centrally regulated elements within nationally owned and controlled systems to increasingly privatized institutions showing heightened levels of individualized choice-making and responsibility for pupils and parents, and this shift would occur within decentralized systems and deregulated, local decision-making (Börjesson 2016). The advent of the redistribution of educational policymaking toward informal policy networks has been a part of these developments.

According to Junemann et al. (2017), the redistribution of educational policymaking toward informal policy networks has led to a policy process that has become increasingly diffused and hidden from view, with this perhaps being one of the

reasons why this form of privatization has received very little media attention. This is a democratic problem, we suggest. Many educational businesses are an integral part of educational policy processes. They sell policy to schools and universities and act as advisers, evaluators, service deliverers and researchers or consultants, too, and in under such conditions where educational practices are being increasingly commodified (Ball 2009; Burch 2006; DiMartino & Scott 2013). They are also the key recipients of reimbursements through the commodification processes that they are also involved in the governance of (Junemann, Ball & Santori 2017; Menashy 2016; Player-Koro & Beach 2013). An increasing mutual dependency is developing between the state and markets with respect to the educational policies and reforms because of this (Player-Koro & Beach 2013).

Ball (2009; 2012) and Burch (2006) have identified a particular characteristic within these processes of commodification and private benefit. A specific pathway seems to be consistently identified. It involves, first, a discourse of derision that is aimed at the educational system and its actors, which is then followed by a discourse of necessary improvements in which education policies and reforms are described that can be delivered and monitored by private entrepreneurs and that are aimed, in one way or another, at improving the situation and solving the identified problems or weaknesses. This improvement of schools is offered, of course, at a price.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The background of the present article is based on a previous work on the privati-

zation of public sector education (Player-Koro & Beach 2013), in which the involvement of edu-businesses in public sector education through the digitalization of schools and the development of digital education policies was analyzed and mapped. The present article will take this topic further by exploring how a specific private provider of Ed-Tech consultancy (the company's name is fictitious and called The Ed-Tech consultancy in this paper) markets services and products as solutions to known problems in the public education sector through non-profit organizations that are also connected on a global level. The aim lies in that by unpacking this specific case, we may show how privatization of the educational sector is taking place through the work of edu-businesses and their involvement with different institutions and public organizations.

The Swedish edu-business that is mainly active as an Ed-tech consultancy in focus here is a case in point. The owners of this cooperation were also founders of the company What If (Tänk om), which is an association of educational consultants for schools that describes itself as the leading educational consultant in Sweden. The company was also formerly a part of Apple Inc.<sup>3</sup> The reason for selecting these specific actors is that they have had a booming business in the recent years and have gained an influential position in Swedish policy processes, both for school education and in relation to teacher training, and the article will focus on the mapping of the main actors and related sets of overlapping policy networks that join up with the government, trade un-

ions, key individuals and e-businesses. It will then consider the driving discourses. These generally take a point of departure in claimed problems of schools and teaching and they then offer solutions for professional knowledge needs in terms of digital technology services and consultancy for any school in crisis.

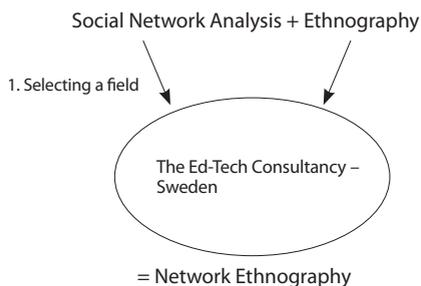
## Network Ethnography

The methodological design that has been used for this research is a synergistic research design between *social network analysis* and *ethnography*, called *network ethnography*. This way of conducting ethnography was first developed by Philip Howard (2002) for studying what he then called "hypermedia organisations." The method has been further adapted to study contemporary policy mobility by Stephen Ball as an adaption of ethnographic methods to the way organizations and associations are working nowadays due to globalization and the digitalization of society. With the use of this method, the network is considered as an analytical and representational device.

The field of study is the actors (people and organizations) and their connections and position to one another. Social network analysis is used to map and represent these connections; thus, instead of what is customary in traditional ethnographic research, the researcher is not selecting a geographical location or a bounded group for investigation. Instead a policy issue or policy actor, and its various links and connections are selected as a central node of analysis (Hogan 2016). In contemporary society, these connections are often made and sustained with digital technology in virtual spaces.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.tankom.nu> (visited 2015-03)

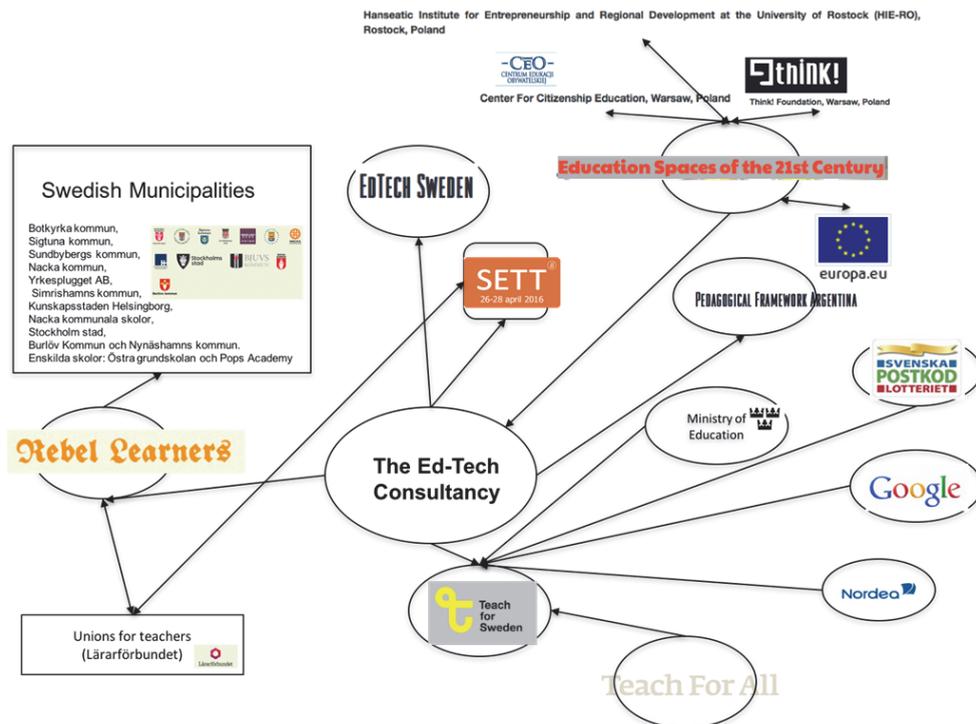


**Figure No. 1.** Networked ethnography.

The identified field is thus a structure of social relationships that are mediated by different forms of Internet channels. They include web pages, online video links, blogs, tweets, Facebook pages, YouTube clips, published interviews etc. They oper-

ate as intermediaries between people and organizations (Ball 2012; Howard 2002) and we have looked at a cross-section of them in relation to The ED-Tech consultancy’s relations and activities by following some of the arrows that connect different actors (these are, for ethical reasons, not illustrated below) and organizations in the network (Figure No. 2).

The data production that have been involved in identifying and joining up the above network were gathered using internet search engines, links or texts in organizational websites that have contained, amongst other things, information about key persons in the organization. These key persons have then been followed also



**Figure No. 2.** A network map of organizations connected through The Ed-Tech consultancy (created in the first part of 2015).

through other websites and social media applications, such as Facebook, Twitter and various blogs. These are sites within which the actors we've followed have created, shared, and exchanged information and ideas. These ideas have then often also been linked to the different organizational web pages. For ethical reasons, the actors' names have been altered.

In the analysis of the materials, we used a form of thematic text analysis (Braun & Clarke 2006) to uncover the argumentative discourse and narratives that flourished through the networks. We found that in line with Ball's (2012) and Howard's (2002) suggestions, these narratives have the function of both holding the networks together and working as marketing arguments in the "selling" of educational improvements to the educational sector.

## Results

The private provider of the Ed-Tech consultancy in the mapped network (Figure No. 2) is a business that sells ideas for improving education. On their main website, you could read that "[a]n important area for us at The Ed-Tech consultancy is starting up new ideas, thoughts and activities. In short, we like ground-breaking new projects," which are then detailed further:

[The Ed-Tech consultancy] aims to be a strategic and engaging partner for leaders who are building the schools and organisations of tomorrow, today. The challenge of 21<sup>st</sup> Century learning and the skills needed in the future demands that we develop the entire learning environment: culture, pedagogy, leadership as well as physical and digital learning environments [...] we do consultancies in municipalities and schools. Identifying development areas, analy-

zing organisations and creating plans for improvement.

This citation illustrates that the Ed-Tech consultancy is an educational business that is active in selling of continuing professional development (CPD) "for improving school organizations." It is a growing and rather new form of outsourcing of the education state that, according to Ball (2009; 2012), can be accordingly examined in terms of three interrelated layers of policy-making and privatization that involve an intricate balance of "retale-ing" (telling new stories about) education and education policy needs; this is done prior to retailing these same needs and policies in the ideological and/or economic interests of the private actors involved in the networks. These are:

- Organizational recalibration, "selling" improvement and mediating policy;
- The colonization of the infrastructures of policy;
- Exporting and "selling" policy: a global market in policy ideas (Ball 2012 p. 94).

The kind of educational privatization that the article focuses on is related to organizational recalibration as a form of "selling" improvement and mediating policy. This kind of privatization is not done by taking services out of state sector control. On the contrary – privatization is conducted through different kinds of collaborations with the public sector and through selling policy solutions or solutions to well-known problems in the education sector (Ball 2016). Indeed, privatization has, in this sense, been far more sinister by creating and mediatizing discourses of salvation that prey on and attempt to profit from

educational problems by offering solutions (often manageable and easy in character) in various kinds of partnerships and flows in the form of people, information and ideas, methods, values and culture.

## **Retailing Policy Solutions**

Figure No. 2 (above) illustrates the Ed-Tech consultancy's activities in 2015. They are engaged in a range of activities with both national and international connections and with both private and public actors. We will look at one cross-section of the Ed-Tech consultancy's relations and activities that are related to the recently discussed problem in Sweden that is concerned with the low interest in teacher education, often attributed in public media debates to the low status of the teaching profession.

The Ed-Tech consultancy has, in the recent years, initiated two organizations that purport to be complementary to formal teacher education in Sweden: Rebel Learners<sup>4</sup> and Teach for Sweden.<sup>5</sup> Teach for Sweden is, according to their website, a politically and religiously independent foundation that is part of the transnational network Teach for All<sup>6</sup> consisting of over 35 different countries. These organizations are connected to The Ed-Tech consultancy through their roles as initiators and economic risk takers. The Ed-Tech consultancy, which has initiated Rebel Learners, formulate this on their website in the following terms:

[the Ed-Tech Consultancy] has long felt frustrated by the debate surrounding tea-

cher students and its education. Frustrated by constantly hearing how it is generally spoken badly about teacher education while municipalities signal difficulties in finding teachers who meet their needs at a time when we can expect a great teacher shortage.<sup>7</sup>

The Rebel Learners initiative is marketed as a non-profit association for newly graduated teacher students, where school principals become members of the association and engage in contact with newly graduated teachers. According to their website, Rebel Learners want to see themselves as a complement to formal teacher education by offering "a free high-quality education in modern learning, leadership and community development in parallel with regular teacher education."

We will start with the analysis of The Ed-Tech consultancy's solution that, according to the company, will help the educational sector to transform and contribute to the raising of national standards. Thereafter, we will analyze how the frequently discussed deficiencies in the teacher profession and in teacher education have been taken up by the company through the initiation of the two projects described above, which are directed at teachers and teacher students.

## **The Ed-Tech Consultancy Under Study**

The mission for The Ed-Tech consultancy, which was created in 2004, is, according to one of the owners (who titles himself as CEO and Director of Fun), "to be a meet-

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<sup>4</sup> <http://rebellernalers.com/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.teachforsweden.se/>

<sup>6</sup> <http://teachforall.org/en>

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.mynewsdesk.com/se/rektorsakademien-utveckling-ab/pressreleases/rebel-learners-ny-satsning-foer-vassa-laerarstuder-925247>

ing place between school managers and colleagues in business”<sup>8</sup>. Or, as the vision is expressed on their website, the idea is: “to help schools and businesses develop in harmony with society and our times.”<sup>9</sup>

The CEO is an important actor in the developing business and as a policy entrepreneur who takes advantage of opportunities to influence policy outcomes so as to increase self-interests. However, through his image as a rock star or rebel, he delivers the company’s message from a standpoint that diverts attention from a business to a commitment and form of engagement with educational and societal problems. In summary, one can say that the CEO builds a myth about himself and his own commitment to school issues. He draws on examples from his experiences of being a military officer, which he compares with the knowledge he has met in the school system. and the university. This type of knowledge was according to his description problematic, outdated and based around a simple logic as being either right or wrong. This is illustrated in a speech where he comes to the conclusion that “if we do not ensure that the school is digitized [...] we will create a society with many individuals in exclusion” (CEO, The Ed-Tech consultancy. From the *Appeal for Digital Inclusion*. People’s Hall, Stockholm, Sweden, 2010-10-25).<sup>10</sup>

The main message given in the speech is that if the school is not digitized, this will have major consequences, including

social exclusion. Digitized, in this sense, is more than just a metaphor. It is both a metaphor (in that the school will not be turned into a series of digits) and a modifier (digitization actually stands metonymically for modernization) through digital technology that the speaker controls. The argument is highly rhetorical. It convinces on the basis of style and is marked by a tendency to use exaggerated language and argumentations that are polarized away from academic expertise. Through the message, system-related issues with education are transformed into a simple message that could be easily understood and accepted. The digitalization of the school sector is also the first solution that the Ed-Tech company offers.

This is also in line with one of the typical traits in the private actors’ rhetoric identified by Ball (2009; 2012) and Burch (2006), i.e., to present themselves in terms of commitments to the public good and helping the public sector become better. In the first citation, this is illustrated from the CEO’s own perspective:

I do not have any teacher or headmaster training [...] However, I have of course been interested in and studied pedagogy at university and also in the military. For example, I have around 3 000 hours (about five years) behind me as “teacher” in the armed forces. I have also worked as a headmaster between 2002–05 and have a lot of experience in leading educators. The disadvantage of not sharing the same historical culture as a teacher is that you are quickly condemned as both unserious, unreliable and not really legitimate. [...] However, I have a passion for modern teacher training with a focus on important details and modern entities instead of what we have and have had over the years. Edu-

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Fredrik Svensson <http://ap-pknapp.se/?p=458> (visited 2015-05) <https://vimeo.com/97301626> (visited 2017-06)

<sup>9</sup> <http://rautveckling.se/press/> (visited 2015-03)

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UwRyN-S77aQ>

cation is always good, but it must be said that it should not be overestimated.<sup>11</sup>

In this citation, there is that common ambivalence toward academia and, once again, that which Ball defines as the savior discourse. This message takes its point of departure from the digitalization of society that has led to teachers, teaching itself and the whole educational system becoming outmoded. It plays upon a view that the schools, leaders and teachers need to be saved – from themselves in this case – and the CEO calls for the school system to develop what he calls *future competences*. Future competences are very much about generic abilities and the second solution offered by the Ed-Tech company. They are also present in a website interview with the CEO, where he is asked about what is most important in the future development of schools:

[B]asic knowledge, of course [...] but the key is to develop skills such as creativity, initiative and courage [...] we [the school] need to do that; otherwise, we will not be a society that moves forward, which is needed in the wake of globalization.<sup>12</sup>

Bernstein (2000) talks about these competences as performances that have a direct link to the instrumentalities of the market and are, in this sense, ideological with respect to the “economizing” or “technologizing” of the educational system. In fact, the primary purpose of education is ideologically shifted to one that is often formulated as providing society with individuals that can easily adapt to the chang-

ing competences needed by the market (Bernstein 2000; Davies, Muller & Morais 2004). Leadership development is said to be another way to develop and improve the educational system. According to the CEO, “the most important thing in making the school better is to develop leadership among all who work in school.”<sup>13</sup>

Here, the Ed-Tech consultancy help with training and inspiration that can enhance leadership. It is also interesting to notice that the modality of the message is that these services are to be viewed as partnerships that will help the clients to identify and reach their goals. Generic ideas are reworked as solutions to local problems.

[The Ed-Tech consultancy] ambition is to provide venues for ideas and development projects with the aim to modernize school, for increased learning. We want to be a boost and stimulate change and innovation, together with our partners.<sup>14</sup>

[The Ed-Tech consultancy] aims to be a strategic and engaging partner for leaders who are building the schools and organisations of tomorrow, today. The challenge of 21<sup>st</sup> century learning and the skills needed in the future demands that we develop the entire learning environment: culture, pedagogy, leadership as well as physical and digital learning environments [...] Consultancies in municipalities and schools. Identifying development areas, analyzing organisations and creating plans for improvement. This is often done in work shop formats with great attention to the development of the management teams, strategies are great but it's people that make change happen.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Lena asks Fredrik Svensson <http://appknapp.se/?p=458> (visited 2015-03)

<sup>12</sup> <http://rautveckling.se/item/foredrag/> (visited 2015-03)

<sup>13</sup> Lena asks Fredrik Svensson <http://appknapp.se/?p=458> (visited 2015-03)

<sup>14</sup> <http://rautveckling.se/#4> (visited 2015-03)

<sup>15</sup> <http://rautveckling.se/startside/rau-in-english/projects-and-contact/>

To develop learning environments is the third solution the Ed-Tech consultancy presents. The digital part of the environment is strongly emphasized as is the psychosocial and physical environment.

Taken together, the company offers three solutions to school problems. They represent a certain language and methods that have been drawn from business models and that aim to change management. They are:

- The school needs to be digitalized;
- The content of education should be focused on basic knowledge and “future competences”;
- Teachers need leadership skills to achieve qualitative education.

The solutions are couched in discourses that are in line with what commercial consultants all over the world talk about and are eager to provide as solutions to all kinds of policy problems. These are solutions that almost always involve changes through leadership, digitalization, partnership and transformation (Ball 2009; Burch 2006) and are framed in enthusiastic, energetic and bold formulations.

### **Teach for Sweden and Rebel Learners**

In this section, we will analyze how the solutions offered above also work as solutions to the problems defined within the projects initiated by The Ed-Tech consultancy. These are directed at teacher education and the teaching profession behind the facades of a foundation called Teach for Sweden and a non-profit association called Rebel Learners. They attach to it what Ball has called the second layer of privatization, the privatization of policy (Ball 2009).

Teach for Sweden is a part of the transnational network – Teach for All. It is an organization that is tied together by the brokering of a solution for inequality and the right to equal access to education. What is happening here is the construction of an ideology through certain discourses of innocence, which disguise technologies for creating opportunities for private actors to prey on and attempt to profit from inequities and problems of educational inclusion. It is, in this sense, doubly exploitative. On the website for the Teach for All, the problem of inequity is formulated as follows<sup>16</sup>:

Educational inequity is a system problem in rich and poor countries alike [...] The world’s most disadvantaged kids have the least access to quality education. When they do attend school, they often don’t receive the extra support and high expectations they need to beat the odds. Millions of children leave school every day without the skills they need to attain financial security and be informed, contributing citizens with real prospects for the future. Why does it matter? Educational inequity is everyone’s problem.

This citation illustrates how Teach for All disguises itself as a global reform movement that is engaged in a humanistic struggle for equal education. In it, the problem of inequality is transformed into a simple message, where, for example, the cultural aspects of education are denied. The transformation then fits excellently to their formulation of a common solution to these problems, which is a generic solution that works on a global basis and can be operated through public-private partnerships.

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<sup>16</sup> <http://teachforall.org/en/global-problem> (visited 2015-03)

Educational inequality is formulated as follows on the organization's website<sup>17</sup>:

All children and young people regardless of social and economic conditions need to have access to an equivalent school. It may seem obvious, while the results of several studies suggest that there are major disparities in children's access to an equal education [...] Children's success in school should not be limited by their parents' level of education, the school they attend or their socioeconomic background [...] We are facing a big challenge, but it is quite possible to achieve a change. We believe that the solution begins with commitment and leadership.

Once again, a complex problem about how the educational system reproduces structural relations, taking globalized production relations, international politics, histories of colonialism, racism and the creation of an incarcerated and criminalized underclass without work in many countries today (aspects of class/race/gender) and transforming them into a generic issue that could be solved with a common solution that is shared by Teach For All and embraced by the new management. The solution is that leadership plays a key role in education and that strong leadership can solve all educational problems no matter where in the world they occur. Below we look at how Teach for Sweden will solve the problem with inequality in education<sup>18</sup> using language and methods associated with new public management (Ball 2009):

Teach for Sweden offers future leaders a chance to influence the Swedish school and

young people's future [...] We recruit new graduates and professionals' leadership talent from other academic profiles than the teaching profession to work as teachers in schools with tough challenges for at least two years. Meanwhile the candidates a unique leadership training, a teaching (in addition to their basic training) and, not least, a valuable experience [...] Teach for Sweden's leadership program offers a unique opportunity to develop leadership, make a difference, and ensure that all children get a chance to be their best self. The program also contributes to the economy (through) increased competence of the candidates and by using business, and ultimately more skilled employees.

Another solution to the problem is addressed by criticizing the higher education of teachers. This education is considered to be counterproductive by being too theoretical and critical as compared to the Teach for Sweden's shorter variant of teacher education that focuses on leadership and practical work in schools. In addition, through a partnership with two universities in Sweden, it is also possible for these candidates to acquire legitimate teacher degrees through a supplemental courses at these universities.<sup>19</sup> In the next extract, the academic education of teachers, which is actually identified in research as already thoroughly undermined by the recent politically determined and ideologically grounded policy changes (Beach and Bagely 2012; 2013), becomes a part of the problem that needs to be solved.

Teach for Sweden offers a two-year leadership program where the candidate works in a school [...] The remaining 20% of the

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<sup>17</sup> <http://www.teachforsweden.se/utmaningen/> (visited 2015-03)

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.teachforsweden.se/programmet/> (visited 2015-03)

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.teachforsweden.se/programmet/> (visited 2015-03)

time are used to load the supplemental educational training (KPU) and other elements included in the Teach for Sweden program. The KPU set comprises 90 credits and is a postgraduate distance learning degree that occurs through Karlstad University and the University of Halmstad.

This kind of basic dishonesty on the part of Teach for Sweden has been described in other circumstances by Ball (2009) and Burch (2006) as ones that aim to (and, when successful, manage to) transform education policy in the direction of a free market in education, where the government's role is reduced to paying the bill set by private organizations and its ability to allow the creation of education markets is regulated. The organizations capture educational problems and formulate solutions that the government and other organizations, such as the teacher unions, then buy. In Sweden, Teach for Sweden is supplemented financially out of the government's education budget. The budget proposition was to allocate 1.5 million SEK in 2013, 5 million in 2014, 6 million in 2015 and 2.5 million in 2016 (PROP. 2014/15:1, 2014).

*Rebel learners* also operates by projecting the scientifically false, ideological but common-simplified (i.e., basically, quintessentially populist) picture of teacher training promoted by Teach for Sweden. The association was founded by The Ed-Tech consultancy and two of the directors are employed by the company.

The reason for founding the association was formulated as follows in an interview with the CEO: "instead of engaging in political discussion on the content of teacher training and writing opinion articles that

do not lead anywhere, we decided to initiate a change on our own."<sup>20</sup>

This interview is published in the *National Union of Teachers (Svenska Lärarförbundet) Journal*. Rebel Learners has a partnership with this teacher union and forms a parallel education program to the dedicated students of teacher education, based on leadership and didactics in practice. The teacher union endorses this concept because, in their view, Rebel Learners engage in supporting their efforts to strengthen the teaching profession and professional teaching.

Members of the association are school principals, such as those from Swedish municipalities and private school actors. Members finance Rebel Learners' activities through their membership fees, which are, in turn, financed by tax assets. This membership is based on another educational problem that the Swedish educational system is said to face, namely the lack of students that want to educate themselves for the teacher profession. The principals are offered help to solve this problem regarding the future lack of teachers by becoming members and sponsors of Rebel Learners.

Rebel Learners is a talent development program for student teachers and a network where principals can assure the future of their schools by linking the future skills for themselves. [...] There will be a shortage of over forty thousand qualified teachers in six years. Many student teachers are dropping out of their studies prematurely. Committed teachers are the teachers we need. The market will be theirs and they will choose their employer with care. As an employ-

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<sup>20</sup> <http://www.lararnasnyheter.se/lararnas-tidning/2013/11/14/lararforbundet-samarbete-rebel-learners>

er, you get the opportunity to make connections with our Rebel Students and given the opportunity to showcase their activities, or even better, their high ambitions. For these are the students who want something from their career and the training we give will provide them with more tools to succeed (by) implementing Summer Camps and seminars through an annual fee. The training carried out is free to the students.<sup>21</sup>

The training program offered by Rebel Learners to talented student teachers has striking similarities with the services that The Ed-Tech consultancy sells in order to improve the educational system, namely:

- Leadership; practical methods and exercises to strengthen one's leadership in the classroom;
- Digital competence and how it affects one in one's role as a teacher;
- Values, norms and a critical attitude that pervades everyday activities.

In this way, although Rebel Learners claims to be a non-profit organization, it is certainly not profit independent and, as with Teach for Sweden, its business concept should be understood as preying on and profiting from the identification of exclusion and inequities; it is an organization, we suggest, that creates opportunities for profit for associated companies by identifying (in fact, possibly even discursively inventing) problems that its associates can solve – at a price. The price is paid by local and national governments through taxation revenue that would otherwise have been available for other public investments.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://rebellernalers.com/vilka-ar-rebel-learners/huvudman/> (visited 2015-03)

## Discussion

The kind of educational privatization that this paper focuses on is, as already mentioned, not done by taking services out of state sector control. Instead, privatization is conducted through different kinds of collaborations within the public sector, through selling policy solutions or solutions to specific problems that have been identified and discussed in the political and public media. Various kinds of partnerships and flows between the private and public sector in the form of people, information and ideas, methods, values and culture are established and companies such as The Ed-Tech consultancy are acting as linkages between state and public-sector organizations in a process where various challenges and policies seem to become more manageable.

For teacher education and the teacher profession, this could be discussed in relation to some of Bernstein's reflections, where he talks about the emerging society under the New Labour UK Government in the late 1990s. This society's social order was shaped and maintained through discursive principles of pedagogy sealed in concepts like new educational technologies, lifelong learning and a highly credentialed workforce. Bernstein named this society a "totally pedagogised society." In it, one can no longer have stable expectations of the future and, in order to survive in which, one must develop new abilities, so individuals and the larger society can cope with the uncertainty of work and life. The discursive principles for the educational system were, in this context, to be built on the concept of trainability with an empha-

sis on the generic skills that actors need in order to be “appropriately formed and reformed according to technological, organisational and market contingencies” (Bernstein 2001). In relation to this, the call for new competences for teachers seems logical but is also stripped of its intellectually challenging concept and reduced to a simple list of measures related to leadership, training and digital competence.

## Conclusion

The study of the Ed-tech consultancy firm is taken as a case in point here in order to make visible the collaborative process between the state and a consultancy company in producing these kinds of policy ideas and discourses about teachers and

their professional knowledge needs. It has helped us to illustrate that policy networks both can and do affect policy outcomes. It has also shown the processes during which the Swedish teacher education policy is rendered into a commodity in a way that affects the role of both teachers and the national education system. Private providers like The Ed-Tech consultancy are a common way to commodify the education system. This means that the identified networks should be understood as preying on and profiting from certain existing problems that were created by other means and had existed in other systems. They have, in this sense, a clearly parasitic rather than charitable relationship with the education they claim to aim to be of benefit to.

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## **PRIVAČIŲ VEIKĖJŲ POVEIKIS MOKYTOJAMS RENGTI ŠVEDIJOJE. ŠVIETIMO POLITIKOS MOBILUMO TINKLO ETNOGRAFIJOS TYRIMAS**

**Catarina Player-Koro, Dennis Beach**

S a n t r a u k a

Švietimo politikos tinklai sudaro tokią švietimo sistemos valdymo formą, į kurią įtraukti ir kartu veikia tiek viešojo, tiek privataus sektoriaus dalyviai. Švietimo politikos kūrimas pasitelkiant švietimo politikos tinklus sudarė sąlygas tokiam švietimo politikos procesui, kuris tampa vis labiau išskirstytas ir aki-vaizdžiai nematomas. Daug švietimo srityje dirbančių verslo įmonių yra integrali šių švietimo politikos procesų dalis. Jos parduoda švietimo politikos idėjas mokykloms ir universitetams bei veikia kaip patarėjai, vertintojai, paslaugų teikėjai ir tyrėjai arba konsultantai tokiomis sąlygomis, kai švietimo praktika vis labiau įgyja prekinį pobūdį (Ball, 2009; Burch, 2006; DiMartino & Scott, 2013).

Šiame straipsnyje nagrinėjamas vienas iš specifinės privačios švietimo ir mokymo konsultantų agentūros veiklos ir santykių pjūvių; ta veikla ir santykiai yra susiję su specifine problema, pastaruoju metu keliančia daug diskusijų Švedijoje. Ši problema – žema motyvacija įgyti mokytojo profesiją, o šios problemos priežastimis dažniausiai laikomi debatai viešojoje žiniasklaidos erdvėje apie žemą mokytojo profesijos statusą.

Tyrimo tikslas – remiantis šio specifinio atveju

analize parodyti, kaip švietimo sektoriaus privatizacija vyksta per švietimo srityje veikiančių verslo įmonių veiklą ir jų įtraukimą į įvairių institucijų ir viešųjų organizacijų veiklą.

Tyrimo metodologinis dizainas – tinklo etnografija. Šis metodas gali būti pritaikomas tiriant, kaip mūsų dienomis organizacijos ir asociacijos dirba paveiktos globalizacijos ir įvairios visuomenės veiklos skaitmeninimo procesų (Ball, 2012; Howard, 2002).

Šiame straipsnyje parodome, kad švietimo politikos tinklai ir gali, ir iš tiesų turi poveikį švietimo politikos rezultatams. Tai vyksta per procesą, kurio metu Švedijos mokytojų rengimo politika virsta preke, ir tai turi padarinių tiek mokytojo vaidmeniui, tiek nacionalinei švietimo sistemai. Privatūs paslaugų teikėjai (tokie kaip antai „Ed-Tech“ konsultacijų įmonė) tapo įprastu būdu supreškinti švietimo sistemą. Tai reiškia, kad identifikuoti tinklai turi būti suprantami kaip plėšrūs ir pelnyjantys iš esamų problemų, kurių radosi dėl kitų priežasčių ir kurios egzistavo kitose sistemose. Todėl šiuo požiūriu jų ryšys su švietimu, kuriam jie teigia duodantys naudos, yra aiškiai parazitinis, bet ne labdaringas.

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