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Constructing Education as Human Capital in a Transitional Society: a case study of Somaliland's education reconstruction

HASSAN AHMED & SIMON BRADFORD
School of Sport and Education and School of Health Sciences and Social Care,
Brunel University, Uxbridge, United Kingdom

ABSTRACT The purpose of this article is to critically examine Somaliland's post-conflict education reconstruction. The work includes documentary analysis of the Somaliland Education Policy. The authors also draw on the National Teacher Education Policy and the Somaliland National Education Development Plan. The analysis of these documents is primarily informed by discourse analysis theory developed by Fairclough. It is argued that the policy text analyses indicate and favour an enterprise-oriented education ideology. This emphasises competitiveness in market environments both nationally and individually. Educational ideologies are closely related to political ideologies. The authors argue that since the collapse of the socialist government of Somalia in 1990, Somaliland has developed a new political ideology strongly informed by neo-liberal views. This research attributes the development of new education and political ideologies to the significant local-national and global interactions between the local education stakeholders, the Somaliland diaspora community and international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) that support the education sector.

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to critically examine Somaliland's recent education reforms. To analyse processes of education reconstruction, we examine and draw from the Somaliland Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2005). We also reference the National Teacher Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2006) and the Somaliland National Education Development Plan 2007-2011 (Ministry of Education, 2007). These policy documents reflect the historical perspectives that have shaped education in Somaliland as well as the current goals of the Somaliland government. This article examines the latter and discusses them in the context of Somaliland's contemporary education policy texts.

In order to investigate both explicit and implicit policy assumptions in the policy documents, we have utilised Fairclough's critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough, 1995, 2003). CDA examines the linguistic features of policy texts, such as the choice of vocabulary, metaphors, tone, expression and layout. The methodological significance of this strategy in this case is that it draws on and secures an understanding of political and educational ideologies that shape current education reforms. Fagerlind & Saha (1983) define reform as the attempt to change things for the better in a country. Somaliland's educational reforms aim to improve the quality of education and are informed by economic, social and personal development perspectives (Ministry of Education, 2005). However, our analysis of these policy texts suggests that the economic function of education dominates the alternative possible roles of state education. For example, the education reforms' planning, management, organisation, delivery and training strategies are all articulated with the prioritisation of an economic and enterprise function for education. The implications of

Somaliland's legitimisation of *enterprise-oriented education* entail the likelihood that education is constructed on the basis of economic rationality. This enterprise ideology has real implications for the type of graduates produced and the processes of teaching and learning that these graduates undergo. Furlong (1992) states that enterprise-oriented education usually emphasises the development of students into good and efficient workers, and it pays considerable attention to aspects of learning such as communication skills, information and communication technology (ICT) competence, and literacy. Within this utilitarian framework, the labour market assumes a particular hegemony, and the quality of education is defined in terms of its use in the labour market. Therefore, education primarily aims to prepare students for the world of work. In this context, the underlying assumption is that by constructing education through discourses of human capital, Somaliland will eventually acquire the necessary knowledge and skills required in the global knowledge economy and thus will become more competitive in the global market.

The deductive theoretical explanation of Somaliland's adoption of the enterprise-oriented education policy can be described as competitive adjustment, which seems to be a form of self-coercive policy transfer. In this account, the state is seen as primarily attempting to boost its international competitiveness within an open and competitive global economy. This trend is observed by Cerny (1997), who argues that transnational forces such as international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) compel states to imitate successful competitors. This process of Somaliland's *policy learning* in order to inform the national policy-making can also be attributed to what Lendvai & Stubbs (2007) call *trans-nationalisation* and *translation* of social policies. According to them, social policies have become internationalised, with important-policy-making arenas existing at levels beyond the nation state. These trans-nationalised policy models have the tendency to travel across time and place and become globalised through formal conditionality of international financial institutions and through the soft power of global public policy networks. Lendvai & Stubbs further argue that a complex conceptual architecture has emerged under the umbrella of 'reform' constructed in the encounter with supranational bodies (including the European Union, the World Bank and the United Nations and its agencies), as well as in and through encounters with a range of international non-state actors, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and private consultancy companies (Lendvai & Stubbs, 2007, p. 173).

However, viewing education reforms as always concerned with improving education effectiveness is problematic. Reforms characterised as improving system effectiveness, efficiency and relevance or as increasing equality only focus on certain possible outcomes. For example, reforms that might articulate education with the world of work viewed from other perspectives may actually reinforce inequalities in education and society. Similarly, the problem of adopting education reforms that are based on economic rationality as improvement measures assumes a consensual model of societal or global relations (Ginsburg, 1991). In reality there are contested views of what the goals of education should be and of the ways in which ways education should prepare future generations for their participation in society. For example, education may have an economic function (i.e. to economically empower the individual and the national state), a social function (i.e. to promote society's social cohesion), or a personal and individual function (i.e. for individuals to realise their potential and become fulfilled). Hargreaves (1994) observes an increased tension between these multiple aims of education resulting from growing global competition. This is evident from the critical debates and issues surrounding many compulsory public education and teacher education reforms globally, as shown by Hogan (1992), Gideonse (1993), Popkewitz (1994), Ball (1998) and Robertson (2005). These debates reflect the management of contestations between the multiple roles of education (i.e. economic, social and personal) at policy level.

It is difficult to understand current directions and developments in Somaliland's education policy without reflecting briefly on the past. Historically, Somaliland education can be understood in three broad epochs:

1. *Colonial rule (between 1937and 1960): the Somaliland context.* By 1937 Somaliland was a Muslim British colony. The colonial government attempted to introduce formal education system based on literacy and arithmetic. However, local resistance to the new education system arose because it was associated with (i) colonialism, (ii) the introduction of Christianity, and (iii) distortion of the traditional ruling system.

2. *Post-colonial education provision (between 1960 and 1990): the Republic of Somalia context.* In 1960 both Somaliland (the British protectorate) and Somalia (the Italian protectorate) gained independence. After independence these two regions united, creating the Republic of Somalia. The dominant political and educational ideologies during this post-colonial era (1960-1990) can be understood as based on communism; the new Republic of Somalia encouraged collectivity, and education policy was centralised. Education and schooling was a political tool discouraging (implicitly capitalist) ideas such as individual innovation, invention and imagination that were essential for successful entrepreneurship. Education policy development and delivery mechanisms were completely state controlled. These restrictions are seen as leading to social stagnation, widespread poverty and under-development. Current education provision aims to correct this post-colonial ideological stance. We must acknowledge, of course, that the past is always contested and its influence in shaping present events depends on both what is remembered and what is forgotten.

3. *Education in a post-conflict transformation (from 1990 to the present): the Somaliland context.*

The remainder of this article is based on this third epoch of Somaliland's education reconstruction, that followed the 1990 civil war.

Before we go on to discuss Somaliland's contemporary education policy texts, we draw on literature relating to policy and policy-making processes to provide a theoretical perspective that informs the subsequent discussion of Somaliland education policy.

Policy and Policy-Making Processes

Policy has been conceptualised in different ways. Berkhout & Wielemans (1999, p. 403), for example, see education policy 'as a complex, dynamic and diverse socio-political system relating to sets of executive, administrative, deliberative and adjudicative institutions and or official texts that direct education at various hierarchical levels of the government'. Similarly, Ball (1994, p. 15) defines policy as both text *and* discourse, and suggests that policy is neither one nor the other, but both. For Ball, policies also highlight processes and outcomes and should be understood as representations that are *encoded* in complex ways (via struggles, compromises, authoritative public interpretations and reinterpretations) and *decoded* in complex ways (via actors' interpretations and meanings in relation to their own history, experiences, skills resources and contexts). Rist (2003, p. 621) describes the complex processes of policy-making:

> Policy-making is a process that evolves through cycles, with each cycle more or less constrained by time, funds, political support and other events. It is also a process that circles back on itself, iterates the same decisions issued time and again, and often does not come to closure. Choosing not to decide is a frequent outcome.

However, why should it be necessary to have national social policies? And what influences the adoption of particular social policies? Perhaps the answers to these questions can shed further light on the nature of policy. According to Mitchell (1984), the need to control two fundamental concepts of *scarcity* and *conflict* marks the basis for developing social policies. These two phenomena arise, first, from the finite nature of national resources; second, in the field of education, conflict perspectives on policy suggest that education policy is an element of those broad processes which impose values and principles and decide preferences in national resource allocation. Inevitably, they are implicated in power relations.

The public policy-making domain involves critical decision-making (i.e. decisions about what to problematise, what information to choose, choices about options to consider or select, choices about ends and means, choices about policy implementation and methods of evaluation). Ochs & Phillips (2002) suggest that in any given context the selection of policy decisions in policy-making processes is influenced by the total set of local ecological and environmental contexts and conditions. According to them, the administrative factors and fields that might affect the development of any new educational policies could include:

- political considerations;
- ideological considerations;
- economic considerations;

- technological considerations;
- social, cultural and religious considerations.

Different actors may enact aspects of these different fields and they may express different positions, interests and discourses. They might also try to deploy different power resources to wield influence and to locate themselves in positions of advantage in the policy negotiation process. However, for the last two decades the pressure from external global forces such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank has been one dominant factor in education policy considerations. In particular, this factor has been significant in the education policy-making processes of poor and developing nations that rely heavily on financial support from these institutions.

Education Policy Formation

Phillips & Ochs (2004) provide a substantive account of the process of education policy development. This, they argue, includes development of education ideology, the goals of education, strategies for policy implementation, the creation and development of enabling structures, educational processes and techniques (i.e. curriculum, pedagogy and regulatory activities). These constitutive elements of education policy development can be further categorised into three elements. These are: (a) the policy process or the substance (the intelligence needs) of the policy; (b) the informational base upon which policy is constructed (analysis for policy); and (c) the critical examination of an existing policy (analysis of policy) (Codd 1988, p. 235).

In this article we concentrate on the analysis of an existing policy - in Codd's terms, 'analysis of policy'. However, we have also attempted to provide an understanding of how the two other elements of policy development referred to above have been articulated in Somaliland's education policy reconstruction. The advantage of this approach is that, rather than separating the process of policy formulation and policy implementation into two linear models, the two perspectives are conceptualised together as 'policy in practice'. In this way, the discursive aspects of policy are illuminated, and we can demonstrate the main themes of Somaliland's recent education reforms.

Education policy development falls within the contextual framework of public social policy and is, therefore, located within the bureaucratic structures of nation states. However, because policy formation and implementation create policy effects that impinge on wider socio-economic spheres, education policy development transcends the boundaries of governmental decision-making apparatus. Therefore, the initial policy-formation process might involve considerable public debate and national consultation before the introduction of any new national initiatives. Nakamura & Smallwood (1980), referenced by Rist (2003, p. 625), suggest that although the main actors in policy formulation are those in the governmental arena representing electoral, administrative and bureaucratic constituencies, the policy-making process offers many points of access through which interest groups and others from arenas outside government can exercise influence. Thus, policy-making usually involves a diverse set of authoritative and formal policy makers who operate within the governmental arena, as well as equally diverse special-interest and other constituency groups from outside the arena, who press their demands on these formal leaders. Policy-making, therefore, becomes a complex process shaped by conflict, contestation and competition.

In the remainder of this article we go on to discuss the emerging themes of the new Somaliland's educational policies. However, we first identify our methodology and data-collection framework.

Data Collection, Methodology and Analysis

This article is based on a five-month period of field research in Somaliland undertaken during 2007. Approved by Brunel University's Research Ethics Committee, the work entailed documentary analysis of key policy documents relating to Somaliland's education reconstruction as well as a series of interviews with key actors in the policy-making process. This article draws principally on documentary sources. Our method of analysis is informed by Fairclough's (1995, 2003) critical discourse analysis (CDA). His conceptualisation of this combined methodology and method is that CDA is shaped by the disciplines of semiotics, linguistics and pragmatics, each of which brings

theoretical influences to bear on the process of analysis. Education policy formation and implementation are processes where ideology, human relations, power practices and language interact. Fairclough outlines the methodological capacity of critical discourse analysis to construct and deconstruct such processes of interaction and interrelationship (1993, 1995, 2001 and 2003). For example, Fairclough argues that power in modern society is increasingly achieved through ideology and, more particularly, through the ideological working of language, particularly apposite in the context of policy analysis. Taylor (2004) similarly acknowledges the increasing importance of language in 'new times', suggesting that CDA has particular value in documenting multiple and competing discourses in policy texts, in highlighting marginalised and hybrid discourses, and in documenting discursive shifts in the policy-implementation process. From such a perspective, policy-making becomes an arena of struggle over meaning: 'the politics of discourse' (Taylor, 2004, p. 435). Policies are seen as the outcome of struggle between competing objectives, where language – more specifically, *discourse* – is used tactically in power practices (Taylor, 2004, p. 435). Thomas (2005, p. 2) argues that education policy can be understood in terms of discursive practices and can be examined as a discourse-related problem.

This kind of approach is a potentially powerful strategy for investigating and illuminating the politics of discourse in policy arenas and in exploring the relationship between policy texts in their historical, political, social and cultural contexts. This is crucial in understanding Somaliland's education reconstruction. The documents analysed here as part of this work are primarily written texts:

- Somaliland National Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2005);
- Somaliland National Teacher Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2006);
- Somaliland National Education Development Plan 2007-2011 (Ministry of Education, 2007).

What is distinctive and important in the selection of these three documents is that (a) they represent recent initiatives by the government and INGOs concerning the reform of Somaliland's education system and teacher education in the country; (b) they have constitutional status, and thus have statutory authority; and (c) they represent the main vehicles for increasing government and non-state education providers' control of education. However, we have considered these documents as cultural and ideological artefacts to be analysed and interpreted in terms of their implicit patterns of signification, underlying symbolic structures and contextual determinants of meaning. Effective deconstruction of policy texts depends on the recognition of the political, economic, historical, social and cultural contexts under which policy texts are produced (Codd, 1988). Our approach focuses on both the content and the representational capacities of the texts and is consistent with Ball's (1994) view of policy texts as discourses.

Somaliland's Contemporary Education Policy Texts

The three policy documents provide the basis for our analysis and discussion. They are, apparently, directed at the wider public as well as at teachers and international non-governmental organisations that support education. Current education provisions and guidelines in Somaliland are based on these three documents. However, of the three policy papers examined, the Somaliland National Education Policy (Ministry of Education, 2005) contains most of the projected changes that are planned in current education reforms. Our data analysis draws mainly from this document.

The Ministry of Education (2005) document consists of three main sections and sub-sections. The first section highlights the purpose of developing the new Somaliland education policy. The second details the levels of the education system, from pre-primary and primary through to secondary, tertiary, non-formal and teacher education, their current status, their objectives, the new policy directives that the government is committed to, and what the government will do to achieve the new strategic policies. The third and final part of the policy paper covers the implementation framework of the national education policy, explaining the systematic and structural policy reforms that will support and enable reform. The implementation measures identified include the strengthening of the government's planning capacity, the introduction of school mapping exercises, the development of institutional and regulatory frameworks, partnership

and collaboration practices, decentralisation initiatives, new managerial practices of supervision and quality assurance, and funding procedures.

The second education reform policy paper, entitled 'The National Teacher Education Policy Paper' (Ministry of Education, 2006), was specifically drawn up to align teacher education and teacher professionalism with economic discourses of education. The contents of this document and its representation of policy have similar features, and are closely related, to the Ministry of Education (2005) document. The Ministry of Education (2006) document discusses the modernisation and professionalisation of teacher education, its management, financial arrangements, and frameworks for implementation and regulation of Somaliland's national teacher education policy.

The third policy paper, Ministry of Education (2007), entitled 'The Education Sector Strategic Development Plan 2007-2011', covers implementation strategies for the policies contained in the other two policy documents. It includes time scales for achieving the specified policy outcomes, a budget analysis of the costs involved and identification of the financial resources that will be used in implementation of strategic policies. Overall, these three documents offer an account of education policy reform in Somaliland.

Somaliland's Education Policy Reform

Overview analysis and deconstruction of the three Somaliland policy documents reviewed suggest that the current educational reforms are focused on changes in the following aspects of education and teacher education:

1. Changes in the philosophy and ideology of education (both the political and educational ideologies of education). These reform measures aim to 'correct' the previous national, political, economic, societal and individual functions of the education system. The resulting new discourse of education is thus presented in policy as *corrective reform*;
2. System and structural changes aimed at improving quality, efficiency, accountability, relevance, access and equity in education. These measures include decentralisation initiatives, new managerial practices, partnership and collaboration, and gender mainstreaming in education. They also identify changes in the enabling structures that support education and teacher education;
3. Changes in curriculum – that is, in the content and organisation of what is taught at all compulsory levels of education;
4. Re-conceptualisation of teacher education and teacher professionalism. Aspects of teacher education in which changes are sought include governance, funding, quality assurance systems, selection criteria, curriculum, training and teachers' professional development programmes.

In the remaining part of the article we concentrate on those aspects of Somaliland's education reforms that we refer to above as *corrective reform*, drawing principally on the Ministry of Education (2005) document. These, we suggest, map the broad terrain in which the other changes are located.

Corrective Reforms: new political and educational ideologies in Somaliland

In this section we consider how recent education policy making in Somaliland has attempted to realign ideological rationales for education reconstruction and, simultaneously, to make education a vehicle for broader social and economic reconstruction. We discuss this under four sub-headings.

1. Education and National Development

The Somaliland National Education Policy Paper (Ministry of Education, 2005) starts with a statement of recognition that education is the most important tool of national development. This is followed by an appeal:

> the government believes that it needs the support of parents, teachers, communities, religious leaders, private sector, and development partners [a term frequently used by the government to refer to the INGOs participating in education reforms]. (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 3)

The National Education Sector Strategic Plan 2007-2011 (Ministry of Education, 2007) makes a similar plea:

> Students, teachers, parents, the Diaspora and development partners should join forces in supporting the government's efforts to spur the country's economic growth through education. (Ministry of Education, 2007, p. 3)

These two quotations from key policy texts offer persuasive appeals for education's role in creating national solidarity through partnership. The audiences targeted are diverse and inclusive (from students to the overseas diaspora community), and attempts are made to persuade citizens to participate in the development and progress of the nation through education. The third paragraph of the Ministry of Education (2005) document further emphasises the purpose of the recent education reforms:

> The development of Somaliland national education policy is designed to contribute to the country's development efforts for a variety of reasons. First, the pivotal role of education in the socio-economic development process of every country is universally acknowledged. Second, education and adequate training provide the conditions for the emergence of expertise and technology that underlie sustainable national development. Third, nations develop and advance to the extent to which their educational programmes are relevant. (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 3)

This quotation can be broken down into three components. The first part states the aim of the education reforms, which is to spur socio-economic development. The second deploys the key words *expertise*, *technology* and *sustainable development* and clears the ground for the motive of the third component. The implicit assumption made in the third statement is that advancement and development mirror the relevance of nation-states' education provisions. It also suggests that Somaliland remains underdeveloped because education provision lacks relevance. In order to overcome this situation, the development of expertise, knowledge and new technologies in the education system is necessary. The role of education in socio-economic development, explicit in the policy text above, is not a new phenomenon. For a long time education has been associated with development at both individual and national levels. So, what could be the intended purpose of the statement, and what are its possible implications? First, the statement attempts to drum up support for the educational reforms amongst key stakeholders. Second, it promotes the view that quality education is primarily defined by its economic viability. The view of education as a discourse of human capital can have implications for education's other roles, such as social cohesion and personal development, both of which are noticeably absent here. These policy assumptions can also have implications for how such a preferred discourse of education is delivered at practice level. For example, stressing the efficiency and effectiveness aspects of education could shift the focus shift to the production of efficient workers. This preoccupation with developing an efficient labour force is likely to sideline other more social aspects of teaching and learning.

The Ministry of Education (2005) document goes on to define relevant education as 'that in which the content and methods are related and respond to the needs and aspiration of the society'. The text further clarifies its aspirations and vision for Somaliland:

> The government recognises the need for an education system that will provide the human resources required to match the economic growth of Somaliland in the next two decades and enable the country to realise its national vision. (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 3)

The Ministry of Education thus marks out an aspirational vision of education in Somaliland primarily functioning as a tool for national and economic development. In the context of a changing world, this, as the texts make clear, entails the deployment of new forms of knowledge.

2. Deploying New Forms of Knowledge in a Changing World

> The vision of Somaliland is one of expanding the economy characterised by growth ... the vision is also one of an economy in alignment with developments in an age dominated by advanced scientific knowledge and information technology. (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 3)

In these latter two quotations, two important motifs are constructed in the policy texts: 'the nation' and 'the national vision'. These are highly ideological and relate to notions of identity, progress and self-reliance to be developed through the deployment of science and technology. The following paragraph from the Ministry of Education (2005) document further stresses the importance of science and technology in relation to progress by stating: 'In the 21st century appropriate technology is the key to increased socio-economic progress, sustainable development and self reliance.' The paragraph concludes with an authoritative statement declaring that 'education in Somaliland should enable all Somalilanders to acquire scientific knowledge to enable them to function in an era of rapid scientific development' (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 3).

The text then highlights a future vision of education for Somaliland and the national goals that this vision constructs. Knowledge of particular kinds is seen as crucial. A bold statement indicates that this vision of education derives from the broad national goals of the 'Republic' that aim 'to build a strong and self reliant economy through the acquisition of and application of scientific, technical and managerial knowledge and skills' (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 5). This statement is followed and supported by analysis emphasising a new vision of education in which the state is required to provide guidelines in respect of manpower planning and skills development. The focus of the vision is dominated by links that articulate state education provision with national productivity and economic competitiveness, employment and learners' appreciation, respect and the dignity of labour. The following statement gives a sense of this:

> The national goal of education in Somaliland will be to promote within society the acquisition and application of relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to fulfil its potential for development in a continuously changing world. (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 6)

In this, a 'continuously changing' phrase form is invoked to warn that there are risks associated if government fails to act. Potential inaction signifies that Somaliland would be unable to face the challenges of the new times. The ideational meaning of the text embodied in 'a continuously changing world' also creates the imperative for improvement and modernisation of educational practices through the deployment of powerful forms of knowledge, appropriate skills and dispositions. This puts pressure on those who are directly involved in teaching and learning processes - teachers and those involved in other enabling structures that support the education system, for example. This could involve a wide range of specialised departments and institutions (e.g. teacher training institutions, the inspectorate, examination and personnel departments, and so on). The drive for change in these processes could present conflicts both in terms of power struggle among the individuals responding to changes, and also in redistributing resources related to reforms.

3. Reforming Education: collaboration with the private sector

As well as marking out the role of new educational knowledge and discourse, the theme of educational reform is powerfully present in these policy documents. The Ministry of Education (2005) document considers reform at all levels of education, from early childhood to higher education, and the current status, objectives, future government policy directives and implementation strategies for achieving such reform. Part of the function of policy texts is to create a public discourse to ensure wide identification with the desired reform processes and outcomes. Exploring how these policy texts construct the preferred public discourse at these different levels suggests that they seek to encourage learners to focus on education that leads to engagement with the labour market. Thus, the dominant public discourse created seeks to equate education with routes to employment. For example, in the primary education level, the policy texts first provide a descriptive structure of primary education (years 1-8) in two or three lines, proceeding to define basic education as providing 'knowledge and skills needed by every citizen of the country to be able to live "righteously" and work productively' (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 13). In other sub-sectors of education (i.e. secondary education, tertiary education and higher education), the basic assumption of the economic discourse is reiterated through declarative statements claiming that education can equip learners with appropriate knowledge and skills to enable them to achieve their potential. This potentiality is constantly linked to knowledge acquisition, skills development, employment and productivity, thus contributing to national economic development. The focus

seems to be on the practical training and work experience of the learners in the context of frequent references to the future needs of employers in the Somaliland business and industrial sectors. This is a clear indication that educational reform is intended to respond largely to economic rather than social objectives. Here, productivity and growth are largely determined by the rate of accumulation of relevant technical knowledge.

The reader of these policy texts is likely to be challenged by the following questions: Is this recognition and belief in the economic role of education new to Somaliland? What were the previous justifications and discourses of education? Did education stakeholders previously support the government's provision of education? Critical analysis of the policy statements (and in particular, the extent to which they draw on the experiences of other countries in deploying education for economic ends) provides insight into these questions.

We make two points here. First, the policy texts implicitly identify national economic failure that is largely attributed to failures in an education system defined as irrelevant in both curriculum content and methods of provision and delivery. Therefore, the assumptions made about other countries' economic development signal a change of education orientation as inevitable if Somaliland is to achieve similar economic development. Second, the policy texts provide a representation of a particular desired view of the world in which policies and ideologies are linked. Educational policies can be read off the ideologies of the politicians and others involved in the policy-making process. Education is a key aspect of social policy that politicians and political parties use in trying to convince electorates about desired political developments that they claim are in the national interest. Therefore, we suggest that there is a strong link and relationship between political and educational ideologies.

The Ministry of Education (2005) document can be understood as attempting to highlight the purpose, mission and vision of developing the new Somaliland education policy, and it works ideologically to present economic competitiveness as the most desirable value position underpinning education (Fairclough, 2003). The recurrence and dominance of this discourse are further supported and exemplified by the educational strategies implemented in Somaliland aimed at producing a more skilled workforce, thus attempting to realise the explicit links created in the policy texts between schooling and economic productivity.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, systematic and structural policy reforms are proposed to instantiate the new economic discourse of education. These include collaboration with the private sector. Contemporary education policy reforms in Somaliland advance a special status for the private sector's participation in education. The Ministry of Education (2005) document, for example, suggests that the 'contribution of the private sector to the development of education in Somaliland is not in doubt' (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 39), a declaration followed by an important symbolic point of recognition:

> The government recognises education as a joint enterprise between itself, communities, civil
> society, the private sector and parents. The government will therefore put in place measures and
> incentives designed to encourage the relevant and active involvement of these stakeholders in
> the provision of education services. (Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 6)

In the subsequent paragraph the private sector is enjoined to invest in Somaliland's public education. 'The government will take steps to recognise and facilitate the private sector investments and provide the necessary regulatory frameworks' (Ministry of Education, 2005). Here the government is seen to encourage the private sector to share the cost of the provision of education, thus establishing an industry-education partnership. The Education Sector Strategic Plan for 2007-11 estimates that $70 million US dollars will be required in the next five years to implement the first phase of the national education policy (Ministry of Education, 2005). For Somaliland, a country with minimal economic growth, this figure presents unprecedented challenges. Currently, teachers' salaries absorb over 90% of Ministry of Education expenditure. This leaves little funding for the implementation of other reform projects. The policy texts recognise this limitation and argue for collaboration and partnership practices between the government, private sector and development partners (INGOs).

4. Policy-Making as Power Practice

Linguistic analysis of the Ministry of Education (2005) document shows that the new economic discourse of education is achieved through a particular and stylised use of language that, we suggest, can be understood as a form of power practice. The linguistic features utilised to create and promote the texts' ideological and desired social effects include carefully chosen vocabularies that embody discourses (ways of representing), genres (ways of acting) and styles (ways of being) (Fairclough, 2003, p. 26). Similarly, the policy texts extensively utilise active verb expressions, such as *make*, *support*, *ensure*, *continue*, *develop*, *ask*, *encourage*, *legislate*, *consider*, *provide*, *introduce* and *enable*. The texts use these verbs to demonstrate the government's commitment to action and engagement in the education sphere. These verb expressions also attempt to identify the government's role and position in the reforms. Verb expressions in the policy texts such as *want*, *propose*, *intend*, *believe*, *recognise* and *expect* contribute to readers' cognition processes in identifying the very active role of the policy texts' authors. Thus, the use of these verbs attempts to present government as the dominant actor in the policy-development process and thus forms representations of a providing government, dynamic and committed to the economic needs and aspirations of its people. The following extracts from the wider policy texts demonstrate this subtle form of power practice.

> The government will encourage the establishment of technical and professional institutions as a way of meeting the mid level human resource needs. (Somaliland National Education Policy [SNEP], Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 24)

> The government will actively expand the learning opportunities … the government will put in place measures designed to improve the relevant Technical Vocational Education and Training. (SNEP, Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 25)

> … the government will continuously seek to put in place strategies for improving teaching and learning process. (SNEP, Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 26)

> … the government will also take steps to enhance the quality and relevance of teacher education … the government will set up a national education resource centre … the government will set up the necessary legislation to guide the participation of the private sector… (SNEP, Ministry of Education, 2005, p. 39)

> … the government will increase the budget dedicated to teacher education and will secure additional funding from the development partners … (Somaliland National Teacher Education Policy, Ministry of Education, 2006)

Our analysis suggests the attempt to position government as actively engaged in its mission of modernising education. This is sought by setting targets and creating strategies, facilitating collaboration and partnership between different participants, involving stakeholders in consultation and planning, monitoring standards and intervening in failures, and creating the enabling structures and organisational networks necessary for the support and improvement of learning and teaching practices at various levels of education. Our data extracts show the third linguistic feature that policy texts invoke to create both ideological and social effects. This is the use of personal pronouns, such as *we* and *us*. These are used with modal-auxiliary verbs like *will* or *should*, which add specific meaning invariably connected with certainty or obligation. In turn, these are textually articulated with the word *government*. As such, they express the government's intended strategies and actions, and through their use, the need for reform is expressed with urgency and commitment.

The pronoun 'we' in the policy texts is used to signify the strong active role of the government. For example: '…we in the Ministry of Education now intend to use the plan [Education Sector Strategic Plan 2007-2011] to guide our work'. In other cases, the pronoun 'we' is used to achieve and signify the inclusiveness and the imputed *consensus* of stakeholders in agreeing to the suggested reform policies. This is intended to construct a representation of collaboration and partnership between the stakeholders in education in order to promote the implementation of new policies. In this instance, the acceptance of a broadly neo-liberal-enterprise education ideology that

views the purpose of education as increasing human capital is central to the representation itself. In this way these policy texts attempt to legitimate and provide representation of the desirability of education to equip Somaliland's children with skills and dispositions necessary for economic development and global competition.

The Influence of External Actors

Our analysis of policy texts shows their significance in mapping a terrain of education reform in Somaliland. We have suggested the importance of external globalising forces in this. However, it would be a mistake to ignore non-state policy actors in the process of reform. In particular, the role of diaspora professionals as agents of globalisation and development cannot be overlooked. Although their influence has not attracted much research interest, there is evidence that migrant communities living in developed western nations have influenced the ideologies and development agendas of their home countries. According to a World Bank report (cited in AFFORD, 2000), between 2 and 3 million people emigrate each year from developing nations, the majority going to just four countries: the USA, Germany, Canada and Australia. The overall number has recently been rising by 2% each year, and this has created trans-national communities within the developed nations. Green (cited in AFFORD, 2000) notes that trans-nationalism is a process whereby trans-migrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that connect their societies of origin to the societies of settlement. Similarly, Pires-Hester uses the concept of 'bilateral diaspora ethnicity', defined as 'the strategic use of ethnic identification with an original overseas homeland to benefit that homeland through relations with systems and institutions of the current actual homeland' (cited in AFFORD, 2000, p. 4). We argue that this process of trans-nationalism is an important aspect of the development of education policy in Somaliland.

A recent report by Sheikh & Healy (2009) for the United Nations Development Programme estimates that 14% of Somalia's population is now living outside of the country as diaspora communities, a proportion so large as to justify describing Somalia as a truly 'globalised nation' (Menkhaus, referenced by Sheikh & Healy, 2009). There are two categories constituting this diaspora community: (1) those Somalis living in neighbouring countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, Djibouti and Yemen; and (2) those living mainly in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries such as the UK, the USA, Canada, the Netherlands, Sweden, Italy, Denmark and Germany. Lindley, referenced by Sheikh & Healy (2009, p. 18), estimates the Somali diaspora remittance flows as being up to US$1.6 billion to Somalia and $700 million to Somaliland in 2004, and diaspora remittances were estimated to represent 71% of Somali gross national product (GNP) in 2006 (www.somali-jna.org). In addition to household support and the contribution to GNP, the Somali and Somaliland diaspora contributes knowledge, skills and technical support to government and institutions in their homeland, both formally and informally.

For example, in 2004 the UNDP initiated the QUEST project to encourage Somali expatriate nationals in OECD countries to volunteer their expertise in the service of their homeland. The Somali diaspora is also the major investor in the country and provides up to 80% of start-up capital in Somalia. A World Bank report (2006) acknowledges this positive diaspora contribution and states that despite the absence of a functioning central government and the perpetual conflicts, social and economic costs in Somalia have been mitigated by remittances from the diaspora community in OECD countries.

In the case of Somaliland, nothing exemplifies the diaspora contribution more than the role this community has played in education reconstruction. For example, there are four main higher education institutions in Somaliland (Amoud, Hargiesa, Burao and Golis universities). The Somaliland diaspora community in the West has played a crucial role in terms of the initial establishment and the current maintenance of these institutions, financially and academically. This diaspora community-country of origin relationship is part of what Appadurai (2001) describes as cultural globalisation, and comprises flows of people, finance, technology, media and knowledge.

Diaspora individuals who have returned to their domicile country after spending a considerable time in Europe and North America dominate political and education bureaucracies in Somaliland. Although it is difficult to obtain specific data on this, our experience indicates that a significant percentage of these Somalilanders subsequently returning to Somaliland have

experienced education in the UK, and are now actively involved in the education reconstruction process. Through the contribution of both human and capital resources, the Somaliland diaspora community has influenced both the structural and ideological transformation of the education system. It is through this humane, low-level, global-national mobility that ideas and policies aligning education more closely with an economic function have been diffused to Somaliland. This discursive shift in the education debate towards an economic function was also promoted by the INGOs participating in the education reforms. Since 1990 the INGOs actively participating in education and teacher-education reconstruction in Somaliland have included UNESCO, UNICEF, CFBT, AET, Save the Children UK, Save the Children Denmark and other UN agencies, such as UNDP.

These two combined forces of diaspora and INGO influences have placed economic competitiveness at the centre of the political and education agenda. In essence, the new discourse of education has, for the first time, opened up education in Somaliland to business values and interests, principles, methods of management and funding. Private schools and institutions of higher education have mushroomed as a consequence of policies attracting the private sector to invest in education. For example, Somaliland's Education Sector Strategic Plan 2007-2011(Ministry of Education, 2007) states that private individuals own 20% of primary schools. Although the sector plan does not give specific percentages, it also cites increasing numbers of privately owned local Community Association schools. In the secondary schools category, the percentage of privately owned schools rose to 31.7%. Similarly, for the first time in the history of Somaliland, there are three privately owned universities offering competitive courses such as engineering, geology, marketing, information technology and other science-oriented degrees. This economic policy dimension in education can be understood not only as an aspect of the current government's relationship to global and economic forces but also as evidence of the ability of these education stakeholders to bring about change.

Conclusion

We conclude by suggesting that Somaliland's education reforms can be seen as a social tool through which the earlier communist ideology's influence has been 'corrected' as part of the initiation of a national development strategy. Policy making, we argue, is central to this. Somalilanders' dissatisfaction with the previous education system may have made them receptive to new ideas. As well as the active role of the government, the influence, resources and powers of both the INGOs and the diaspora community who propagated neo-liberal views of education further facilitated the reform process. These organisations have the capacity to influence the type of political ideology in which educational reforms are to be prioritised.

Thus, the main conclusion to this article is that the prioritisation of the economic function of education in Somaliland's education policy is consistent with discourses of education reform developed in western countries. These common education agendas include the active involvement of the private sector in education, privileges accorded to the development of science and technology skills, and the development of efficiency measures in education provision and delivery. These findings in turn support the view that national policy making is a complex process that involves incorporating lessons from other settings. Similarly, we argue that the interactions of Somaliland's local policy actors and external globalising factors have triggered processes of policy learning in national education policy-making processes. This is evidenced by the introduction of significant neo-liberal education policies that have become inserted into Somaliland's national education policy-making via global networks, such as INGOs, that help to promote an international policy culture in education.

Finally, however, it would be inaccurate to argue that education reforms in Somaliland are based purely on economic discourse. Although this discourse constitutes the dominant ideological position, as we have demonstrated in this article, we should also point out that Somaliland education reforms are concerned with the social and individual functions of state education. While undertaking our analysis of the policy texts, we have identified specific policy statements that address the social and individual functions of state education, not least because Somaliland has recently emerged from a civil war, and these are important as strategies of reconstruction.

However, there has not been space in this article to consider these functions, and they will be explored in a further planned article.

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HASSAN AHMED is an independent education consultant currently contracted by CFBT Education Trust as a technical adviser in the field of education policy planning in Somaliland. Previously, he worked as the Director of Education and Skills Development Group, a Public Limited Company by Guarantee and UK registered charity. His main research interests include education transformation in fragile states through the processes of lesson drawing, policy transfer and policy learning. In particular, his research themes include aid to education, teacher development and teacher utilisation in East Africa.

SIMON BRADFORD is Reader, School of Health Sciences and Social Care, Brunel University, London and is Director of the Centre for Youth Work Studies at the University. His main research interests lie in social policy initiatives that affect young people and communities, aspects of youth culture, and the history and organisation of professional work with young people in public and voluntary sector services. *Correspondence*: simon.bradford@brunel.ac.uk