

# Constructing teachers' professional identities: an international perspective on the role of professional formation and development

Paige Johns

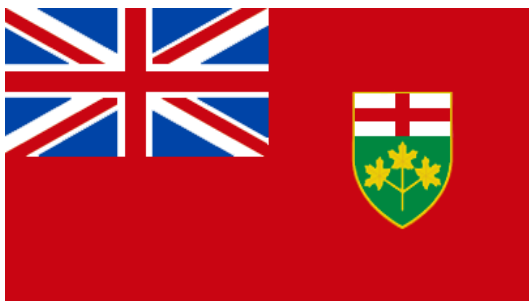
The Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE)

# This presentation will...

- Start with providing an overview of the method
- Look into the intriguing relationship present between levels of CPD and overall system performance
- Highlight the importance of understanding the risks associated with creating regulations for reducing teachers' working times and roles
- Explore teachers deep commitment to their students which was seen within countries explored

# Introduction to our research

- Research into the key building blocks of teachers' professional identities in seven education systems worldwide



# Introduction to our research

- We explored how different countries construct teachers' professional identities through the lens of:
  - Classroom practices
  - Professional learning and development
  - Collaboration and networks
  - Government structures e.g. accountability systems
  - Teacher voice and leadership
  - Wider social and cultural contexts
- In order to cast light on how teachers create, access, share and shape professional knowledge

# Stage 1

## Research posters for each of the 7 systems, summarising education policies & context

### Teacher Identities and Professionalism Research

#### Berlin

**National Structures, Support and Direction**

- Four professional bodies for Germany
- In 2010, 2000 teachers for the nation of education
- Establishing new strategic planning in the federal level
- There is a strong push from teachers to support teaching and 2020 goals

**Headline Findings**

- Teachers report a positive work culture, relationship with colleagues and support are good
- Teacher autonomy, particularly with regard to curriculum
- There is a strong push from teachers to support teaching and 2020 goals

**Collaboration**

- The majority of teachers cooperate with their colleagues in various ways
- There is a strong push from teachers to support teaching and 2020 goals

### Teacher Identities and Professionalism Research

#### Kenya

**Increasing student enrollment, leading to teacher shortage**

**Headline Findings**

- The increase in student enrollment has led to a teacher shortage, although the number of registered teachers has increased
- This has been influenced by salary issues and a lack of policy to attract teachers to teach-teacher subjects
- The curriculum reform and teacher pay rise are expected to impact this

### Teacher Identities and Professionalism Research

#### Singapore

**Strongly committed to teachers' and leaders' needs**

**Headline Findings**

- Teachers are highly respected and valued
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development

### Teacher Identities and Professionalism Research

#### Scotland

**Strong National Structures, Support and Direction**

**Headline Findings**

- Teachers' status is high and well-respected
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development

#### Berlin Education System Overview

Priorities and Organisation	Teacher Roles, Recruitment and Retention	Professional Development, Teaching and Learning	Leadership, Accountability and Assessment
<b>System Overview</b> The Berlin education system is organized in four levels: 1. Federal level (Germany) 2. State level (Berlin) 3. District level (16 districts) 4. School level (primary, secondary, vocational)	<b>Teacher Status and Autonomy</b> Teachers are highly respected and valued. They have a strong professional identity and are seen as the core of the education system.	<b>Professional Development and Learning</b> Teachers receive ongoing professional development through in-service training, workshops, and conferences.	<b>Leadership, Accountability and Assessment</b> School principals are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. They are supported by district-level leadership.

#### Kenya Education System Overview

Priorities and Organisation	Teacher Roles, Recruitment and Retention	Professional Development, Teaching and Learning	Leadership, Accountability and Assessment
<b>System Overview</b> Kenya's education system is organized into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. There is a focus on increasing enrollment and improving the quality of education.	<b>Teacher Status and Autonomy</b> Teachers are seen as the backbone of the education system. However, there are challenges related to teacher shortages and salary issues.	<b>Professional Development and Learning</b> Teachers receive professional development through in-service training and workshops.	<b>Leadership, Accountability and Assessment</b> School principals are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. They are supported by district-level leadership.

#### Singapore Education System Overview

Priorities and Organisation	Teacher Roles, Recruitment and Retention	Professional Development, Teaching and Learning	Leadership, Accountability and Assessment
<b>System Overview</b> Singapore's education system is highly organized and focused on achieving high academic standards. There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development.	<b>Teacher Status and Autonomy</b> Teachers are highly respected and valued. They are seen as the core of the education system.	<b>Professional Development and Learning</b> Teachers receive ongoing professional development through in-service training and workshops.	<b>Leadership, Accountability and Assessment</b> School principals are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. They are supported by district-level leadership.

#### Scotland Education System Overview

Priorities and Organisation	Teacher Roles, Recruitment and Retention	Professional Development, Teaching and Learning	Leadership, Accountability and Assessment
<b>System Overview</b> Scotland's education system is organized into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. There is a focus on increasing enrollment and improving the quality of education.	<b>Teacher Status and Autonomy</b> Teachers are highly respected and valued. They have a strong professional identity and are seen as the core of the education system.	<b>Professional Development and Learning</b> Teachers receive ongoing professional development through in-service training and workshops.	<b>Leadership, Accountability and Assessment</b> School principals are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. They are supported by district-level leadership.

### Teacher Identities and Professionalism Research

#### Chile

**National Priorities and Contexts**

- Teachers are highly respected and valued
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development

### Teacher Identities and Professionalism Research

#### Ontario

**System governed through**

- Teachers are highly respected and valued
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development

### Teacher Identities and Professionalism Research

#### Sweden

**Teacher Status and Autonomy**

- Teachers are highly respected and valued
- There is a strong emphasis on teacher education and professional development
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### Teacher Identities and Professionalism Research

#### Swedish Education System

**Teacher Status and Autonomy**

- Teachers are highly respected and valued
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#### Chile Education System Overview

Priorities and Organisation	Teacher Roles, Recruitment and Retention	Professional Development, Teaching and Learning	Leadership, Accountability and Assessment
<b>System Overview</b> Chile's education system is organized into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. There is a focus on increasing enrollment and improving the quality of education.	<b>Teacher Status and Autonomy</b> Teachers are highly respected and valued. They have a strong professional identity and are seen as the core of the education system.	<b>Professional Development and Learning</b> Teachers receive ongoing professional development through in-service training and workshops.	<b>Leadership, Accountability and Assessment</b> School principals are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. They are supported by district-level leadership.

#### Ontario Education System Overview

Priorities and Organisation	Teacher Roles, Recruitment and Retention	Professional Development, Teaching and Learning	Leadership, Accountability and Assessment
<b>System Overview</b> Ontario's education system is organized into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. There is a focus on increasing enrollment and improving the quality of education.	<b>Teacher Status and Autonomy</b> Teachers are highly respected and valued. They have a strong professional identity and are seen as the core of the education system.	<b>Professional Development and Learning</b> Teachers receive ongoing professional development through in-service training and workshops.	<b>Leadership, Accountability and Assessment</b> School principals are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. They are supported by district-level leadership.

#### Swedish Education System Overview

Priorities and Organisation	Teacher Roles, Recruitment and Retention	Professional Development, Teaching and Learning	Leadership, Accountability and Assessment
<b>System Overview</b> Sweden's education system is organized into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. There is a focus on increasing enrollment and improving the quality of education.	<b>Teacher Status and Autonomy</b> Teachers are highly respected and valued. They have a strong professional identity and are seen as the core of the education system.	<b>Professional Development and Learning</b> Teachers receive ongoing professional development through in-service training and workshops.	<b>Leadership, Accountability and Assessment</b> School principals are responsible for the quality of teaching and learning. They are supported by district-level leadership.

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# Stage 2 – what makes a difference within country

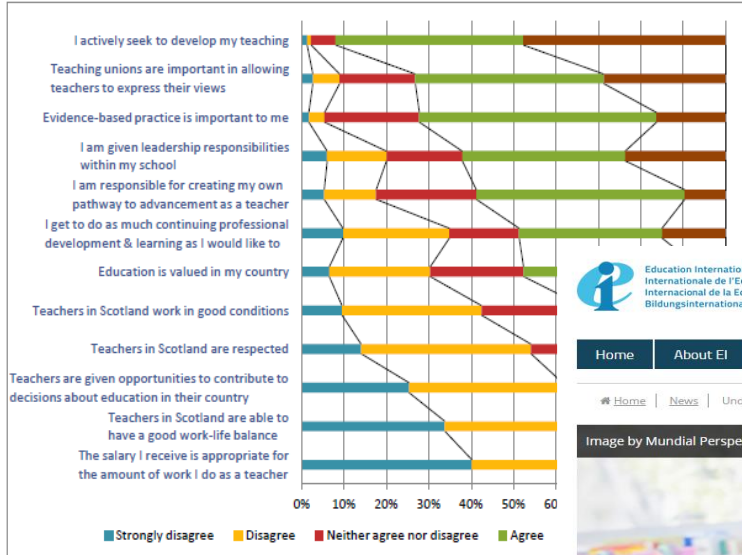
- We used the wider research to structure a survey
- We used the country analyses/posters to contextualise survey questions
- We worked with teacher professional bodies and associations to recruit teachers to surveys
- We compared surveys and posters and created country highlight reports



# The survey highlights from Scotland were published on the EI website, and made national news in Scotland



77% of teachers in Scotland do not feel they are able to have a good work-life balance



Scottish teachers feel they have higher levels of autonomy over their individual teaching &

- Teachers in Scotland feel they have little of
- Their pay (97%)
  - How they and other teachers are
  - National schemes of learning (64%)



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## Understanding teacher identity in the 21st century

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How national policies and cultural factors influence the development of teachers' professional identities is the subject of a new set of studies commissioned by Education International – an eye-opener for educators and policy makers alike.

How national policies and cultural factors influence the development of teachers' professional identities is the subject of a new set of studies commissioned by Education International – an eye-opener for educators and policy makers alike.

The Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) and Education International are developing a new set of studies that focus on teacher support measures. Teachers will be

## Education undervalued in Scotland, teachers say



Almost four in five teachers surveyed did not feel that a work-life balance was achievable PA

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Teachers feel disrespected and overworked and most do not believe that education is valued in Scotland, according to a study.

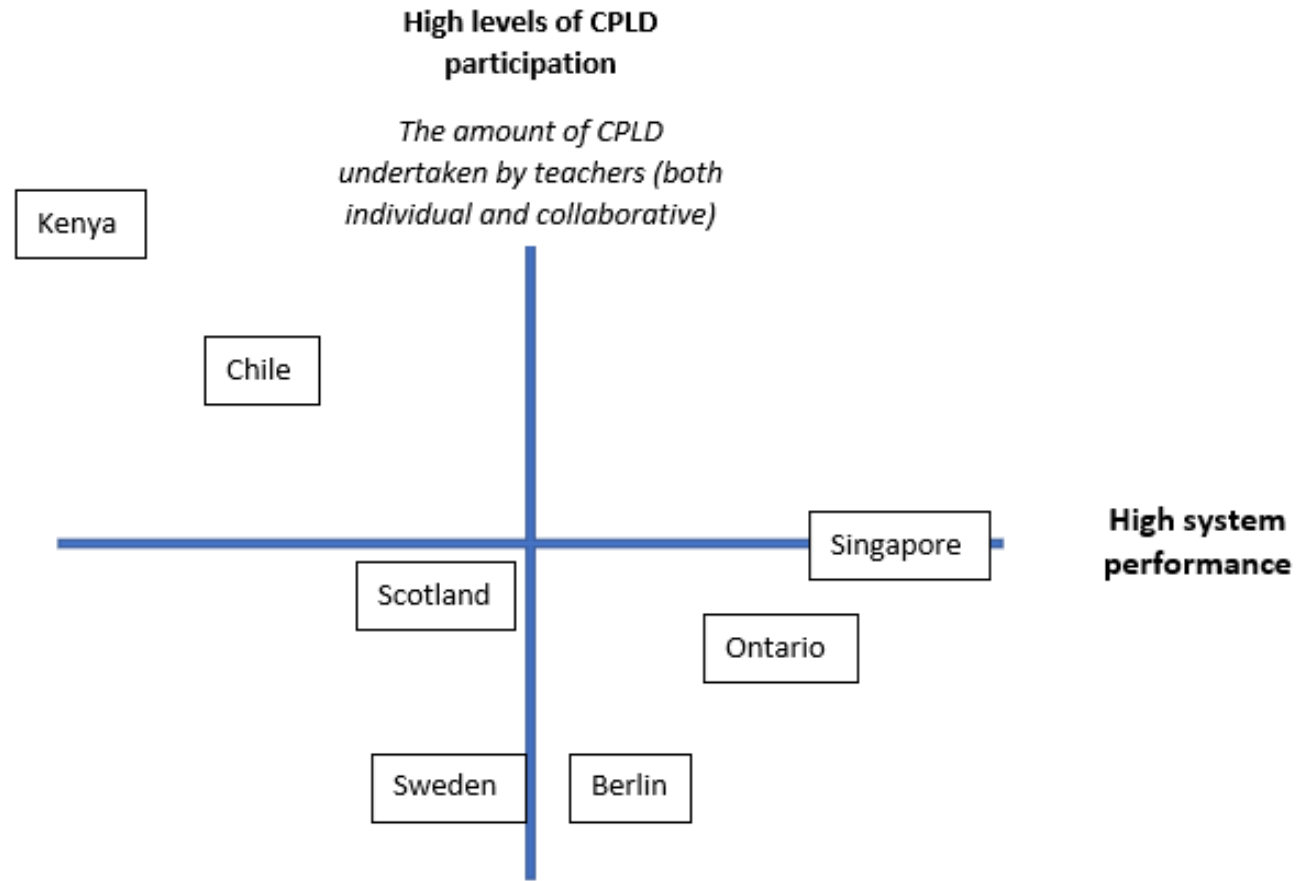
The findings of a survey of more than 1,300 teachers also revealed that almost four in five did not feel they could achieve a work-life balance while only 15 per cent felt they were given the chance to influence national education policy.

# Enhancing teacher quality via CPD

- Local ecologies matter hugely
- But Teaching is a profession so for CPD there are some coherent themes e.g. pedagogy & a desire for more CPD
- More CPD not necessarily better. Good diagnostic analysis of system capacity and focus on quality CPD matters more
- Needs to be matched to complexity of task
- Intense reforms can generate significant increases in short term, remedial, undifferentiated CPD which undermines professional identities
- Teacher leadership can be complementary e.g. in Ontario teacher CPDL has, if anything, reduced to make way for teacher co-learning and leadership
- Links between CPD, accountability and performance review are critical and can enhance or undermine



# CPDL and system performance

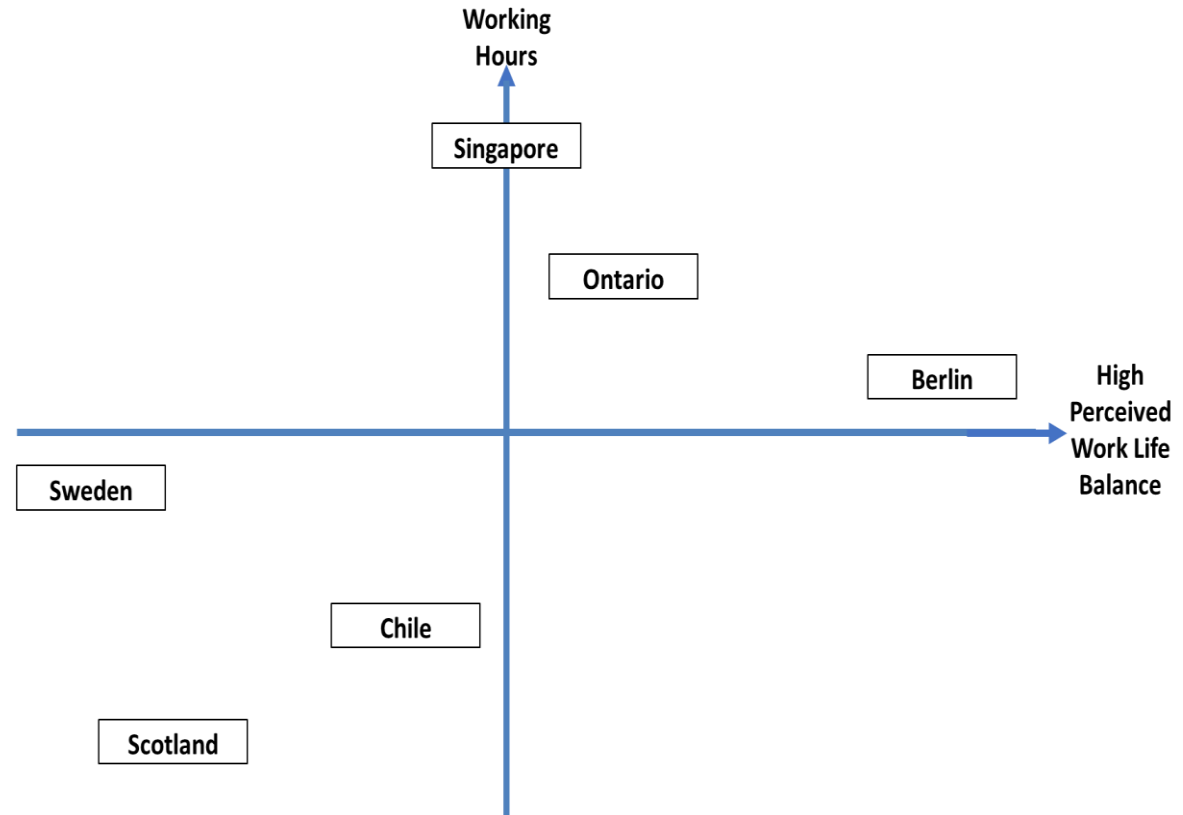


# CPDL and teacher supply

- This evidence suggests that key building blocks for developing teachers' professional identities and healthy teacher supply include:
  - Good opportunities/ pathways for progression that value teachers and teaching not just schooling & are competitive
  - Positioning teachers as professionals who want and need to learn on a continuous basis, not as practitioners whose work needs to be correct; and
  - Investment in high quality CPDL
- But CPDL becomes a problem not a solution if high levels of CPDL are set as an entitlement – without the resource, ring fencing or capacity to do it well

# Workload and work life balance

- The patterns around workload and work life balance are diverse
- Lower working hours don't guarantee a positive work life balance
- Positive status and predictability/stability look to be more important



# Work life balance

- Perceived positive work life balance linked less with amount of mandated working time than:
  - The status of the profession, of teachers and teaching
  - Aligning the system's and the teachers' professional values
- Changes that had little or no impact arose from:
  - Formal reductions in time without reducing workloads;
  - Or carving reductions out of what teachers see as fundamental

# Teacher values

Teachers ranked this aims in interesting ways:

- Across all seven systems, ensuring student success in formal examinations was ranked as least important
- Promoting student interest and enjoyment in life-long learning was top, in Ontario, Scotland and Chile; and
- Educating students to be best citizens they can be was top in Berlin, Singapore and Kenya (also linked to enjoyment)
- In Sweden communicating subject knowledge to students was the top priority which flowed directly from new reforms which focus on communicating knowledge
- What teachers in the other six countries were saying was that the route to progress was *through* engaging with students in the round

# Next steps

- Full report can be found:
  - <https://eie.org/en/detail/16177/teachers%E2%80%99-professional-development-and-conditions-vital-signs-for-student-well-being-and-progress>





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