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## 全球化、新自由主義績效責任體系與教育

Anthony Gary Dworkin、Pamela F. Tobe

### 摘 要

全球化對於已開發及開發中國家之教育系統，皆已發生深遠的影響，而且其中有不少的影響結果，不在原先預期的範圍之內。本文探討全球化的一個重要面向，即新自由主義在教育系統所推動的績效責任與管控機制，特別是那些跟學校及其成員利害攸關的績效責任措施。基本上，績效責任的想法，多少帶有不信任其評核對象的性質。績效責任的措施，改變了學校、教職人員以及大社會之間的信賴關係，使之變成公事公辦的工作合同及科層管理，這也打破了學校人員與社會之間原訂的社會契約，因為學校人員（尤其是教師）通常要的是穩定的工作，而非較高的報酬。這樣的轉變，造成一些意料之外的結果，包括「玩弄制度」及教師士氣下降。

關鍵詞：績效責任、教師信賴、教師倦怠、玩弄制度

• 本文作者：Anthony Gary Dworkin Professor, Department of Sociology,  
University of Houston。

Pamela F. Tobe Senior Research Associate, Department of  
Curriculum and Instruction, University of Houston。

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## *Globalization and Education within a System of Neoliberal Accountability*

Anthony Gary Dworkin

Professor

Department of Sociology

University of Houston

Pamela F. Tobe

Senior Research Associate

Department of Curriculum and

Instruction

University of Houston

### Abstract

Globalization has had a profound effect on educational systems in developed and developing nations, with many of its consequences being unanticipated. This essay addresses one salient component of globalization, the neoliberal push for increased accountability and conformity (a mechanism for social control) within educational systems. Especially relevant are those accountability mandates that have high-stakes consequences for schools and school employees. By its very nature accountability expectations imply a degree of distrust of those being assessed. The nature of the trust relationships between schools, school personnel and the larger society have been altered by accountability mandates. Relational trust has become more bureaucratic and may be seen as violating the original social contract between school personnel and the society, where less competitive salaries were accepted in exchange for job security. The unanticipated consequences include “gaming the system” and diminished employee morale.

Keywords: Accountability, Teacher Trust, Teacher Burnout, System Gaming

## Introduction

The impact of globalization on education has been profound and overwhelming (Dale & Robertson, 2003; Spring, 2008, 2009). Globalization joins such earlier concepts as industrialization, urbanization, and modernization. Like its predecessors, globalization has created tensions among opposing interest groups (Antikainen et al. 2011; Burbules & Torres 2000; Dworkin et al., 2013; Spring, 2008, 2009; Torres & Teodoro, 2007). The term was originally attributed to Theodore Levitt (1983) in his Harvard Business Review article, “The Globalization of Markets”. In Leavitt’s usage globalization referred to the consequences of new communication technologies that have had the effect of homogenizing the world and creating global corporations to replace multi-national corporations. Such global corporations are not concerned with local issues or local demands, but find it preferable and more cost-efficient to create global demands for identical products. George Ritzer, in *The McDonalidization of Society* (1993 through the fifth edition in 2008), sees globalization as the homogenization of culture and identities around the metaphor of the fast-food chain, whereby efficiency, speed of production and delivery, predictability of product, the deskilling of workers through technology, and the dehumanizing of the society are all central components. For Robertson and Habib (1998), globalization depicts the process of an accelerating compression of “reality” into a singularity of consciousness and identity such that our own biographies and even such demographic characteristics as race and gender become less relevant. Instead, we all belong to a common, globalized culture. Globalization often results in multi-national corporations, as well as the richest and most powerful nations, seeking to dominate markets, customers, clients, workers, and

other nations in order to maximize their own profits and enhance predictability, thereby reducing risks associated with investments. Privileged nations, as well as intergovernmental organizations, including the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) impose homogeneous and Western models of development and educational standards on developing and dependent nations. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and multinational proprietary organizations (many of whom develop tests, textbooks, and curricular materials to be sold worldwide) further promote educational products that homogenize education, almost always along a Western model (Ball, 2003). Inherent in a globalized education system is the mandate to demonstrate the effectiveness of teaching and learning practices. Globalization arose out of a business model which is based upon efficiency and effectiveness, which is driven by reliable and equivalent data. When globalization is applied to education it too demands accessible measures of successful outcomes. Optimally, these measures should be interpretable and comparable across all educational settings and across societies.

## Neoliberalism and The Standards-Based School Accountability Movement

While globalization encompasses many elements, we want to focus on an element that is often troubling and fraught with unanticipated consequences in education. In a globalized economy, the desired labor force is not restricted to regions or even nations/states. Corporations can select employees from any part of the globe, and select on the basis of easily identifiable evidence of labor

force competence. Standardized tests from PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS and others provide an easily accessible and readily interpretable indicator of countries or areas that may provide the desired labor force. Within nations there is likewise a competition among communities/regions to be the source of the desired labor force. Again, measures that can provide quick and easy indicators of educational accountability are desired. The standards-based school accountability movement in the United States is fixated with producing a competitive labor force through the use of a 'common core' curricula and standardized assessments in order to maximize the skills and competitive advantage of the labor force. Optimally, those standardized assessments should be easily understood by corporate and governmental actors (as well as the public) so that decisions regarding the selection and utilization of a labor force can be based on required need in an efficient and effective manner. Neoliberalism is a term often used to describe the accountability movement; Neoliberal policies that taut efficiency and effectiveness and ascribes blame when expectations are unable to be met.

The standards-based school accountability movement is often depicted as a key element in Neoliberal policies for school reform. "Neoliberalism," emphasizes the expansion of human capital through coordinated systems of education intended to enhance the competitiveness of nations. Neoliberals trust that market forces and the private sector can better determine value than the public sector, including the public schools. Although Neoliberalism has impacted many nations of the world, we shall focus on the U.S. example of educational reform which is dramatic and well-documented. Additionally, under the concept of Federalism, the United States can be viewed not as a single nation, but as a collection of states that have implemented Neoliberal policies of accountability in differing ways.

Neoliberalism in the U.S. challenges the multiculturalism of modern

education and demand that schools prove that they are effective (in raising achievement measured on test scores) and efficient (in reducing costs) through the use of externally-administered standardized tests. Neoliberalism assumes that teachers and their students are lazy and must be goaded into performing well through the use of threats. They insist on the use of external, standardized tests to evaluate schools and teachers, with draconian consequences for low student performances (consequences such as teacher terminations and school closures). Dworkin (2008) and Dworkin and Tobe (2012a, b) among many others have discussed how Neoliberalism has created the Standards-based School Accountability Movement in the United States and how many other nations are beginning to emulate the system of high-stakes, standardized testing to assess schools, teachers, and students.

Standardized achievement tests meet the Neoliberal requirements for an appearance of objectivity, rationality, and the need to portray those with economic and political advantages as the most competent. In the United States, reliance on high-stakes, standardized tests came into vogue with the release of *A Nation at Risk* (1983) by the National Commission on Excellence in Education during the Reagan years. The emergence of concerns about the equality of educational opportunity and increased attention to the needs of and the culture of minority groups in the 1960s and 1970s led to corporations and social conservatives to contend that too much attention was being placed on human and multicultural issues with the result that the competitiveness of the country was being undermined (Berliner & Biddle, 1995). The response was the creation of the Standards-based School Accountability Movement (Dworkin, 2008). Over the balance of the century and into the 21st century, the nation refocused on holding schools accountable for the learning outcomes of their students based on externally-imposed standardized tests. *The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001*

(*NCLB*) and *Race to the Top* (Hoff, 2009) represents recent products of the standards-based movement.

Schools and school districts whose students fail a state-selected standardized test are subjected to an array of punishments, including the loss of some funding, school choice for their student which results in the outmigration of often their best students, and the termination of teaching staff and closure of the school or district (Dworkin, 2005). Schools that suffer the most draconian sanctions including school closures, staff terminations, and the loss of students to higher performing schools, tend to serve minorities and the poor. Schools that serve the middle class, however, are not negatively sanctioned and may even be given financial rewards for high achievement. Reliance upon single tests to judge school systems, schools, teaching personnel, and even students further violates good testing theory, in that any single test is only an estimate of the knowledge base and should be combined with additional measures (Elmore, 2002; McNeil, 2000). However, to be efficient and to satisfy the demands of the market, such multidimensionality of assessment is impractical.

## Accountability and The Shift In Relational Trust

The premise behind externally-imposed standardized tests is the supposition that schools and school personnel are unable to evaluate themselves on how well they are preparing their students for college and careers. Only through the reliance on externally imposed testing can the public hold accountable the school system, who without these external pressures would fail to adequately prepare students for the future. Systems of accountability that are externally imposed are premised upon a hierarchy of distrust where each organizational group distrusts the layer below (from state agencies through



school districts, campus personnel, to students (Dworkin & Tobe, 2012a). Big business, the public and federal policy makers do not trust the public education systems to provide an education that prepares children to be part of a competitive labor force in a global economy. Current laws assume that through threats of school closures and employee terminations, school districts will work harder to raise student achievement by legitimate means. “In a hierarchy of distrust, actors focus on the appearance of desired learning outcomes and not necessarily the actual attainment of the substance of those learning outcomes (Dworkin & Tobe, 2014: 125). In a sense, the accountability system and its intent to produce conformity among school personnel represents a mechanism of “social control.” In fact, the implementation of school accountability systems is a distinctive form of social control. That is, school accountability systems as enacted by state and federal government specifies expectations of school actors and stipulates the consequences of failure to meet such expectations, as well as the rewards associated with satisfactory compliance. Accountability systems and their working and implantation match well the concept of social control as offered by Jack Gibbs (1989): that social control is the condition under which a party exercises domination over another, often through a third party in terms of a chain of command.

The hierarchy of distrust represents a substantial shift in relational trust found in schools from what Bryk and Schneider (2002) termed “organic trust” to “contractual trust.” The former “...is predicated on the more or less unquestioning beliefs of individuals in the moral authority of a particular social institution, and characterizes closed, small-scale societies” (Bryk & Schneider, 2002: 16). Contractual trust by contrast, is vested in more bureaucratic and formally-defined relationships in which the parties require the force of law to ensure mutual compliance with agreed to expectations. “A contract defines basic

actions to be taken by the parties involved. The terms of the contract explicitly spell out a scope of work to be undertaken by the parties involved, or a product or service to be delivered” (Bryk & Schneider, 2002: 17).

Most modern work relations involve both contractual and organic trust. Changes in the relative mix of these two forms of trust caused by the imposition of externally-imposed accountability system may result in both misunderstandings and even a sense of betrayal by the parties involved. Teachers may still expect that school administrators will relax regulations as might have been the case prior to accountability, but administrators are also under scrutiny to conform to the accountability standards and can no longer make concessions based on personal relationships.

Until the Standards-based School Accountability Movement, teaching offered a guarantee that assumed that unless a serious offense was committed, teachers had life-time employment, relative autonomy and flexibility within their classroom. In a sense, teachers have had a social contract in which they exchanged more competitive salaries (compared to other occupations requiring a college degree) for job security. The UNESCO Institute for Statistics noted that around the world and especially in developed nations, teachers earn less than comparably educated individuals in their countries and are least likely to substantially increase their salaries after 15 years of teaching than are employees in other occupations requiring a college credential (also see Mehrotra & Buckland, 2001; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2001: 194-196). Under the new accountability system, teachers no longer have classroom autonomy, have a specified curriculum, and their employment is no longer secure. The result has been increasing levels of teacher burnout and changes in the nature of the relationships between teachers and other stake-holders within the school system.

## Unanticipated Consequences

### Gaming the System

The shift from organic to contractual trust, caused by an increasingly more invasive school accountability system, has led to numerous “unanticipated consequences” (Merton, 1968). Educational organizations and actors engage in behaviors that can be described as “gaming the system” (Rieley, 2001) in terms of their relations with organization levels above them. That is, gaming the system involves actions that are intended to increase one’s chances of winning, but do not imply that increased intrinsic skill or ability has occurred to effect a win. Gaming occurs when individuals or organizations create the appearance of a legitimate claim to a scarce and valued resource when no actual claim exists. Educational actors, including, school teachers and principals, district administrators and even state education agencies have been involved in gaming. States and local education agencies want to avoid having to close schools and relocate students at all costs, as they would have to do if schools persistently failed to meet their annual test passage standards (known as Adequate Yearly Progress, or AYP). Likewise, states and schools do not want their children to be viewed as low performers or as undesirable future employees, as this could reduce the likelihood that corporations will move their head offices to such low-performing states and schools will not attract higher-income, higher property tax paying parents. Yet, in times of tighter education budgets and very little financial support from the federal government, states under are still expected to meet increasingly higher passing rates on the standardized tests.

The condition faced by American schools and state education agencies

closely resembles that of anomie, conceptualized as a gap between culturally defined goals and structurally facilitated means to achieving those goals (Merton, 1968). Although the outcomes have been clearly defined (test passage) the means by which those outcomes are to be achieved are indefinite. It appears that the national mandate places state education agencies, school districts, and schools in a state of normlessness where rules for goal attainment are either vague or absent, or that in obeying rules desired ends do not accrue to the actor. It can be argued that the goals are specified clearly enough: schools will progressively narrow the achievement gap between subcategories of students until 100 percent of all subgroups of students and students as a whole pass the requisite tests, which is an unachievable goal. Furthermore, NCLB and Race to the Top specify the wholesale use of standardized testing of students. Many states that had previously not used standardized testing consider making the means to goal attainment in tight budget times even more unattainable. When faced with goals that are perceived to be unattainable given the specified means, organizations often attempt to 'innovate,' that is they have to accept the goals but reject the 'socially defined means' to achieve those goals. Gaming behavior and the array of techniques that states, districts, and schools have employed to avoid sanctions under NCLB and Race to the Top represent adaptations to conditions that the educational policy actors consider to be untenable. What follows are a few examples of gaming committed by state education agencies, school districts, and school personnel (teachers and principals).

### Examples of States Gaming the System

The information that follows describes how states have gamed the accountability system and have been taken from several sources, including Carey (2007), *The Atlantic* (2014), *The New York Times* (2013), and *The*

*Washington Post* (2013). The examples cited represent components of school accountability mandated by NCLB and Race to the Top. The array of examples of gaming includes the manipulation of graduation and dropout rates, changing test score and passage rates, and redefining what constitutes an unsafe school.

**High School Graduation and Dropout Rates:** The US graduation rate average is that 70% of a high school freshman class will earn a diploma in four years. The percentages are lower for Latinos and African Americans. Independent assessment of North Carolina's graduation rate is 64% in four years. But the state reports under NCLB that its rate is 96%. Students who dropped out before graduation are not counted because they did not graduate. The numerator is the number who graduated in four years; the denominator is the number who graduated in four years plus those who took longer.

Several states (Massachusetts, North Dakota, and South Dakota count only students who dropped out as seniors and delete from the denominator individuals who left in grades 9, 10, or 11. Wisconsin surveys the high school seniors in their second semester to see if they plan to drop out. If so, they are the dropouts.

**Standardized Test Passage Rates:** Wisconsin reports the highest percentage of students passing the test because they take advantage of the federal rule that states can use the upper bounds of confidence intervals to define passage. If Adequate Year Progress (AYP, or the amount of annual improvement in test results mandated by state and national standards) is 70% passing for the year and the actual passing rate is 65% +/- 8%, and Wisconsin reported a 73% passing rate.

**Persistently Dangerous Schools:** The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that bullying, drugs, and weapons on campus are widespread. Persistently dangerous schools are subject to closing under the

federal legislation. But there are only 28 dangerous schools in the whole country and only six states report that they have dangerous schools. Examples of gaming include the fact that the state of Maryland counts schools as dangerous only student expulsions based on arson, sexual assault, and possession of drugs, firearms, and explosives. Arizona labels a school as dangerous only if there are more than four firearm incidents per year. Rape, gang violence using other weapons, and drugs do not make a school dangerous.

Changing Test Scores: In the March 29, 2013 issue of *The New York Times*, Winerip reported that an Atlanta, Georgia school superintendent and several other school administrators have been indicted by a grand jury for changing test scores at Atlanta schools in order to raise their accountability ratings. Currently, 82 Atlanta educators are under arrest for falsifying test scores (Richmond, 2014). Further, a Connecticut school superintendent was arrested for changing the passage rates for the schools in his district. Passage rate data are used by realtors to indicate to prospective house buyers which neighborhoods have the highest student achievement rates, thereby raising the property values of the houses. In turn, higher property values mean high school taxes collected for the district. The superintendent had the principals and teachers change the answers to the tests before the tests were sent to the state for scanning and grading. The higher scores resulted in higher home values and more school taxes collected. The General Accountability Office of the U.S. government (General Accountability Office [GAO], 2013: 6) reported that 40 states had suspected test score irregularities, including confirmed cases in 33 states.

Starting in the first year of Texas' school accountability system (1994) schools in the state transferred low-achieving students to non-tested grades during the semester in which testing took place. Other schools have encouraged low-achieving students to stay home during the day of the test so that their poor

performances would not lower campus averages. In many instances over the years teachers have been found to have erased wrong answers on the tests and replaced them with right answers (Booher-Jennings, 2005; Booher-Jennings & Beveridge, 2007).

While the examples of gaming the system are plentiful in the U.S., the problem is not uniquely American. Once Neoliberal policies are put into place and externally-imposed, standardized tests are used, the prospect of gaming increases. If the tests are high stakes such that student promotions, teacher salaries or employment, and the survival of schools and school districts depends upon test score results, then one should expect gaming to occur. Duggan (2009) reported that school administrators viewed standardized testing as an assault on their professional judgment and integrity. They objected to the Australian accountability agenda that includes national testing of students, a national curriculum, and the public reports on the performance of schools. In brief, the school administrators were expressing their dissatisfaction over the changing nature of relational trust in Australian schools, from trust that was interpersonal and organic to one that was contractual. Gurr (2007), nevertheless, observed that it was unlikely that Australia will move toward a teacher value-added model as exists in the United States, whereby teachers are evaluated on how much they improve student test performance over the prior academic year. The Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA, 2010-2012) indicated that there were some instances of cheating, improper test releases, and improper test assistance committed by Australian teachers during the 2010, 2011, and 2012 administrations of the National Literacy and Numeracy Tests (NAPLAN). However, the rate among teachers was actually very low, with 34 substantiated cases in 2010, 54 in 2011, and 79 in 2012 across the whole country.

## Teacher Burnout

While gaming represents one frequent response to the shift from organic to contractual trust occasioned by high-stakes accountability systems a more common response of individual teachers and principals has been the experience of job burnout. Psychologists tend to view burnout in terms of personal failures to adequately cope with stress, but as a sociological concept, burnout is explained in terms of structural and organizational causes (Dworkin, 1987, 1997, 2009). Stress can still be a precipitating factor in teacher burnout, but from the sociological view the causal elements operate within the organization of schooling, the policies that dictate how teachers are appraised, and how they are expected to conduct themselves within their teaching role. Accountability systems that hold teachers responsible for the learning outcomes of their students in settings where teachers have little control over their students' non-classroom activities create structural barriers that deprive teachers of their sense of control over outcomes.

Job stress is seen as a precursor to burnout in both the psychological and sociological models. The implementation of accountability systems introduces job stress in several ways. Teachers are responsible for student learning outcomes over which they have limited control, as home environments and parental commitments and resources impact those outcomes. Further, teachers are required to teach to the standardized test, thereby depriving them of both professional autonomy and flexibility in their own instructional inputs. Increased job stress diminishes teacher trust of students/parents, coworkers, and administrators. The lack of trust becomes cyclical particularly in high-poverty schools teachers and principals are unwilling to place their professional fate in the hands of their students and their students' parents. They adopt pedagogical



styles that leave little to student initiative and reject democratic schooling. Job satisfaction for teachers is thus jeopardized (Dworkin, Saha, & Hill, 2003).

Figure 1 presents the adjusted mean teacher burnout scores for samples of Houston, Texas area teachers surveyed between 1977 and 2014 using the Dworkin ten-item teacher burnout scale (Dworkin, 1987, 1997, 2009; Dworkin & Tobe, 2012a, b). The burnout scores are in z-score form, based on factor analysis, with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one. Responses were aggregated across all years prior to the factor analysis in order to provide a common metric across time periods.

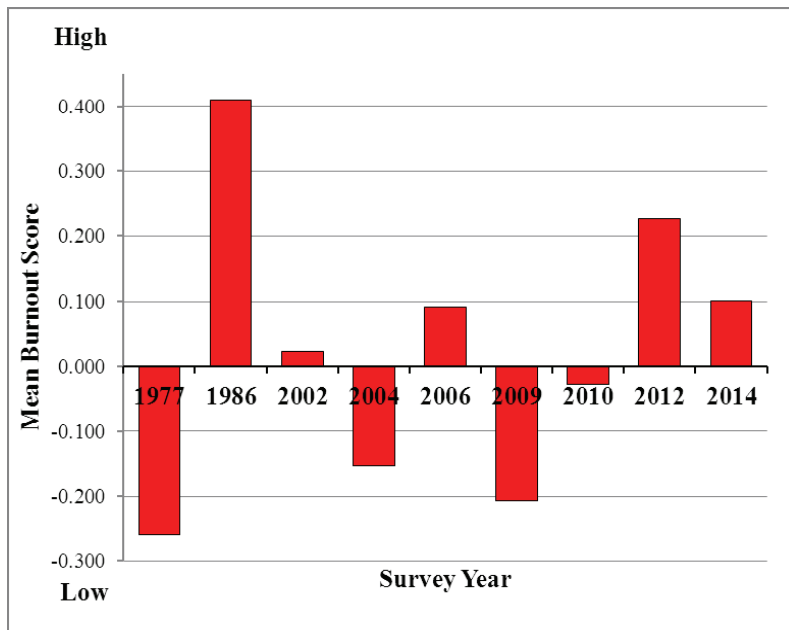


Figure 1 Mean Teacher Burnout Scores by Year

Data from 1977 came from a sample of 3,955 teachers enumerated prior to the presence of any accountability system. It is arguable that the burnout level

found in 1977 reflects the amount of teacher burnout present in public schools in the absence of an accountability system and that deviations from the 1977 level reflect the effects of variations in the implementation of accountability systems. Thus, 1977 represents the baseline against which the effects of accountability on burnout can be assessed.

In 1983 the federal government published a report entitled *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), which held that prompted the passage of an array of state laws that addressed teacher accountability. The federal report contended that diminished student achievement was weakening the US economy and that reforms were needed to make the nation more competitive. In the subsequent years the state legislatures including the one in Texas passed laws a calling for educational accountability and competency testing of teachers. The teacher competency testing in 1986 was purported to be a means by which incompetent teachers would be weeded out. It represented the first assault on the social contract that has assured teacher lifetime employment once they had attained tenure and resulted in the highest levels of teacher burnout across all time periods. The 1986 sample consisted of 1,060 Houston area teachers who were experiencing the implementation of the first teacher accountability system following the publication of report entitled *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) under the Reagan administration.

Collection of the spring 2002 teacher data set occurred soon after the passage of *No Child Left Behind*, but before any of the accountability details were made public or implemented. Although Texas had a working accountability system with student testing and the evaluation of schools in place for several years, there was little evidence to suggest that low student performance would have consequences for teachers or schools within the state at the time of the

2002 survey. Stress levels were nonetheless higher than they were a decade earlier (see Dworkin, 2009) in part because the data were collected within four months of 9/11 and three months after the beginning of the war in Afghanistan. Thus, the social context in which the survey was conducted was fraught with numerous stressors. Additionally, uncertainty regarding how NCLB was going to affect teacher activities and job security added to the stress levels in schools. The 2002 data set consisted of 2,869 surveys of K-12 teachers.

The 2004 survey was also administered during the spring semester. While No Child Left Behind had specified consequences for teachers and school when student failure resulted in schools and districts not meeting their AYP goals, AYP passage standards were still relatively low in the 2003-2004 academic year. Accountability in Texas generally was high stakes for students, but teacher terminations for schools that failed to meet AYP goals remained minimal. In reality, few if any teachers lost their jobs due to low student achievement in Texas schools and thus, teacher burnout was lower than at the time of the initial implementation of NCLB and its social context. The 2004 survey consisted of the responses of 1,771 K-12 teachers.

Sampling in 2006 occurred within six months of the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina that flooded New Orleans and much of southern Louisiana and resulted in the flight of 150,000 Louisiana citizens to Texas and their children to Texas schools. Schools in the Houston area experienced a substantial influx of low-performing students, many of whom had been traumatized by the storm and flooding. Teachers in the Houston area experienced substantial increases in class sizes and the inclusion of students who were unable to meet academic standards and who needed remedial assistance, both because of the trauma and because Louisiana schools were often low performing. Increased class sizes, populated by stressed and low-performing students, strained school

resources and created numerous pressures on teachers, thus increasing teacher burnout. The 2006 sample consisted of the responses of 1,497 teachers in grades K-12.

The data collection in 2009 follows the US economic crisis that occurred the fall semester before. Although many teachers experienced some decline in the value of their savings, the state retirement fund seemed to be healthy and most teachers could continue to assume that their jobs were also safe. Teacher layoffs were not yet an issue in early 2009, thus, most teachers remained somewhat cynical about risks to job security and by then, many had learned how to cope with the accountability system. The 2009 sample consisted of 1,825 teachers in grades K-12.

The Texas Legislature meets every other year and passes biennial budgets. The Legislature met in late spring 2009 and generally imposed budget cuts in programs and the reduction of overhead. The surveyed district pledged not to lay-off teachers but focused on increasing efficiency in all services and used attrition. Although the national economic recession had begun in 2008 and was even more severe in 2009, teachers in Houston were not experiencing downsizing of school districts or campuses. By spring 2010, the economy had affected the Houston labor market. Despite the fact that teacher layoffs were not yet occurring, districts were asked by the state legislature to trim their budgets and economize. Thus, by 2010 there was evidence that the schools would experience budget shortfalls large enough to result in the termination of programs and layoffs of teachers. Burnout was thus higher in 2010 than in 2009.

The 2010 survey reflects the continued belief by teachers that their jobs were secure, despite the mandates of No Child Left Behind for schools that failed to meet their AYP objectives. Many urban schools in Texas began to incorporate value-added models based on student test scores to assess teacher

performance. High student gain scores drove additional compensation for some teachers, while lower gain scores resulted in no additional compensation. Many teacher organizations challenged the validity of the process and the calculation of value-added. Nevertheless, the accountability system resulted in no clear evidence that teachers were losing their jobs. A total of 1,560 K-12 teachers participated in the 2010 survey.

The pledge by conservatives in the Texas government not to raise taxes resulted in substantial cuts in the funding of many Texas agencies. Education suffered more than other sectors of the state economy. In 2011, the Texas Legislation and the governor addressed the shortfall in funding for state agencies by significantly reducing the state education budget. In 2010-11 the budget cuts led to the use of low student performance as a reason for teacher layoffs. Reductions in per student funding of Texas public school amounted to a loss of more than \$5.4 billion over the biennium and by 2012, Texas public schools lost more than 25,000 positions, including nearly 11,000 teaching jobs as reported in the Houston media. The Houston area school districts lost nearly 3,000 teaching positions, some due to attrition (failure to fill jobs after teachers leave) and some due to the termination of programs. The school district surveyed had a reduction in workforce of 6%, mainly through attrition but had a resultant increase in class sizes.

Consequently, teachers in the 2012 survey finally recognized that the threats to job security under NCLB and the Texas accountability system were becoming a reality. School districts rely on principals to make the initial recommendations for program closures and staff layoffs, the relationship between teachers and principals and the content of teacher-principal trust was modified due to financial constraints. The sample of K-12 teachers surveyed in 2012 consisted of 1,575 individuals while the 2014 sample consisted of 1,579

teachers.

In summary, burnout was substantially lower in the period prior to accountability, but rose dramatically once accountability was put into place in the mid-1980s. The years 2004 and 2009 had lower mean burnout scores than did the other post-accountability years. Further, there were no statistically significant differences between 2002 and 2010 but they were higher than the mean burnout scores in 2004 and 2009. The survey of 2012 occurred in the wake of severely reduced state funding to public schools and wide spread teacher layoffs, had significantly higher mean burnout scores than any other year other than 1986, at the inception of accountability and teacher competency testing. With the partial replacement of the state funding to schools and the rehiring of some teachers, burnout levels were reduced in 2014.

The 2014 sample displays a somewhat lower level of burnout than that found in 2012, as there have been no further decreases in school funding levels and layoffs have become less of a concern. However, the demands of the accountability system and the potential for new layoffs have not reduced job threats enough to erase all stressors. The accountability system continues to mandate assessments of teacher performance based on student achievement which teachers report are sources of stress and illness.

The data presented in Figure 1 supports the relationship between burnout and the implementation of the accountability system in two ways. Whenever accountability challenged the job security and professional autonomy and flexibility of teachers or whenever accountability was accompanied by actual teacher layoffs, burnout levels among the teachers rose. However, whenever threatened draconian measures such as school closures and staff terminations did not occur burnout levels in the next year decreased. Nevertheless, burnout scores never returned to the levels that existed in the data set collected prior to

school reform and any teacher accountability system. Further, because many of the teachers in the early data set likely had retired by the time of the enumeration of the most recent data sets, one cannot assume that all or most all teachers experienced the increasing imposition of accountability over the years, although many may have experienced earlier forms of accountability as students. Aside from the years in which environmental stressors were extreme (as following the effects of a hurricane on enrollment and student tension) and the actual termination of teachers in 2012, many of the teachers in the more recent samples may have seen accountability as an expected condition of public school teaching. When the negative consequences of accountability in Texas did not occur, as in 2004 and 2009, stressful conditions diminished as did burnout levels. Thus, the fluctuations in burnout levels nearly precisely correspond to the extent to which the imposed accountability system challenged teacher job security, autonomy, and flexibility.

## Conclusion

This essay has examined the effects of one ideological stance that has been central to much globalization: the saliency of Neoliberalism and its central piece, the demand for accountability. It also places substantial trust in market forces and distrust of public sector institutions, including the public schools. By demonstrating that the public schools are failing, support is garnered for a system of accountability and conformity. The use of “objective” measures such as externally-imposed standardized tests to gauge the performance of schools and school personnel has several unanticipated consequences.

Globalization has had a substantial impact on educational systems in both developed and developing nations and the sociology of education has chronicled

its anticipated and unanticipated effects. Pressure is being exerted on nations to conform to “objective” standards and practices produce homogenization. Inherent in globalized education systems is the need to demonstrate efficiency and effectiveness, often through uniform measures including standardized testing. One aspect of globalization relevant to educational is the neoliberal expectation that through externally imposed testing followed by corrective measures, schools can become efficient, effective and produce a competitive future labor force.

The essential nature of external accountability systems is the belief that the actors in the education system are not trustworthy. In fact, the accountability system is predicated on a hierarchy of distrust, in which each level above and within the school systems do not trust the immediate layer below. Individuals in public education generally choose their careers not because they expect to get rich, but because they hope to make a difference in the lives of children. The educational system in the United States and other developed nations (and in many developing nations) rests on an understanding that school personnel (especially teachers) exchange the potential of higher income for job security. Trust is organic and vested in informal interpersonal relations and commitments. The accountability system under the Standards-based School Accountability Movement transforms the nature of trust into one that is contractual, bureaucratic and formal. Under accountability, the social contract between school personnel and the community is violated and school actors may respond by withdrawing their willingness to strive for the student, school and community and instead focus on their own survival.

The assumption of untrustworthiness creates a self-fulfilling prophecy. On the one hand, levels of burnout rise, thereby further weakening the commitment of school actors to their students and schools. Burned-out teachers and/ or



principals are often unwilling to make the necessary extra efforts for their students. On the other hand, school personnel are more likely to game the system by providing the appearance of real achievement gains on the tests used for accountability in lieu of actual achievement gains. This is especially the case in schools where the student bodies are low income or minorities because raising their achievement requires substantial efforts and collaboration among school personnel.

In the course of this essay we have presented a few examples of gaming, albeit only a few among myriad examples. Where test scores have been fabricated or where student answers are changed by school staff, the real victims are the children themselves. If their standardized test scores do not reflect their actual achievement then they are likely being deprived of needed remedial assistance. Schools may be fraudulently raising scores through an array of techniques that will permit the schools and staff to survive, but it is the children who fail to learn and who eventually suffer when they are neither career nor college ready.

The essay traces teacher data collected over the period from 1977 through 2014 on changes in teacher stress and burnout. Burnout levels among teachers rise and fall as changes in the accountability system occur. When dire threats are not realized burnout goes down. However, the real loss of jobs following the budgetary crises of the past few years has caused burnout to spike. When jobs are cut, then the change in the nature of trust, from organic to contractual is realized, and teachers come to recognize that the promise of job security in exchange for less competitive salaries was a lie. Accountability systems tend to micro manage teacher behaviors and in the process diminish teacher flexibility and professional autonomy to judge how best to educate their students. The violation of the assumed social contract leads some teachers to engage in

survival activities including gaming the accountability system through various subterfuges.

Gaming is also played by school districts and even state education agencies, as has been presented in this essay. The hierarchy of distrust results in the belief that actual achievement gains are presumed to be unrealistic, as there is little faith in the abilities of or commitment to learning by students and their parents. Thus, focusing on minimal standards which are then redefined as excellence becomes normative. When high stakes involve continued employment or continued school operation that depend upon test results, the changing nature of trust and its implications for professional ethics and morale lead people to make compromises. After all, it is the appearance rather than the substance that counts and is measured by the accountability system.

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