

Introducing A Free Schools Policy: A Cross-national Comparison

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Summary

Known variously as free schools, charter schools or partnership schools, similarly autonomous state-funded schools have been introduced in several countries over recent decades. This thesis seeks to explain why similar such policies were introduced in England in 2010 and New Zealand in 2012, but no similar policy has been introduced in Scotland. Kingdon's Multiple Streams framework was used as the backbone of the theoretical framework and, along with policy transfer theory, proved to be very useful in identifying how and why the policies were introduced in England and New Zealand – and what differences make this unlikely to happen in Scotland. It was found that global education policy transfers are subject to national political processes and values. In England and New Zealand these processes and values facilitated the introduction of the policy, whereas in Scotland they prevented it.

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Abbreviations

AAA	Anti-Academies Alliance
CFE	Curriculum for Excellence
CFPS	Centre for Policy Studies
COSLA	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities
DFCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DFE	Department for Education
DPMC	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
DV	Dependent Variable
H	Hypothesis
IEA	Institute of Economic Affairs
INDV	Independent Variable
KIPP	Knowledge is Power Program
LEA	Local Education Authority
MP	Member of Parliament
MSP	Member of Scottish Parliament
MS	Multiple Streams
MV	Mediating Variable
NCEA	National Certificate of Educational Achievement
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NZBR	New Zealand Business Roundtable
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OFSTED	The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Formerly The Office for Standards in Education)
PIRLS	Progress in International Reading Literacy Study
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
PSKH	Partnership Schools Kura Hourua
SFF	Scotland's Futures Forum
SNP	Scottish National Party
SSFE	Secretary of State for Education
TAN/TANS	Transnational Advocacy Network(s)
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TSO	The Stationery Office
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States

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1 Introduction

A new category of school has been created in recent decades in several countries around the world. Known variously as “free schools”, “charter schools” or “partnership schools”, they all have one thing in common: increased freedoms compared to other state schools. Among the first was Sweden, where free schools were introduced in 1992 (Björklund et al. 2005, 13). These schools are publicly funded, but privately operated. They are allowed to make a profit (Böhlmark and Lindahl 2008, 4,5). The first charter schools in the US opened in Minnesota in 1991 – now there are over 3000 (National Education Association n.d.). Amongst the others, in 2011, free schools opened in England and in 2012, the government of New Zealand introduced a Bill to establish “partnership schools/ kura hora” there. These new types of schools are all publicly funded, and increase choice and marketisation. They are not identical, however, because their exact freedoms vary from country to country.

In England, free schools were announced in the White Paper *The Importance of Teaching*, published by the then newly in power Coalition government in 2010. The Coalition stated its aim as being to liberate schools from the state, under the belief that this will raise standards (DFE 2010, 11). Free schools in England are state funded and (unlike traditional schools) opened by teachers, groups of parents, charities and others who are responding to local demand (DFE 2010, 57; Abbott et al. 2013, 185). They are legally academies, a type of school first introduced in 2000 by the Labour government (Abbott et al 2013, 142), and as academies, free schools do not need to follow the national curriculum that other state schools must adhere to (DFE 2011). While free schools increase parent choice, they have been criticised for fragmenting the system (for example, Gunter 2010 in Garrett and Forrester 2012, 61). The Coalition is said to have based the free school policy on the earlier academy reforms in the UK as well as on experience in Sweden and the US (Leeder and Mabbett 2012, 133-134). In the Coalition’s view the Swedish and US models were both successful and transferable to the English school system (Hatcher 2012, 489-490).

In New Zealand the Education Amendment Bill was introduced into Parliament on 15 October 2012. The Bill sets out a framework for the introduction of a new type of school – Partnership Schools Kura Hourua (hereafter known as partnership schools) – that will be in addition to the existing categories of state schools and private schools. These new schools will “bring together education, business and community sectors to provide new opportunities for students to achieve education success” (Ministry of Education 2013a). They are drawing on charter schools in the US, as well as others such as free schools in Sweden and England (PSKH Working Group 2012).

The schools system in Scotland, on the other hand, has not experienced the introduction of any such policy. State education is comprehensive and the overwhelming majority of Scottish children attend schools operated by their local authority.

This thesis is a cross-national comparison of the introduction of the free schools policy in England, partnership schools policy in New Zealand, and recent development of education policy in Scotland. It seeks to explain why similar policies were introduced in England and New Zealand within a short time span of each other – and why no such policy has been introduced in Scotland.

Exactly how this specific policy decision was reached in England and New Zealand is unclear because international evidence of the success of this kind of school is mixed and highly contested. For example, Hatcher discusses empirical studies of charter schools in the US, free schools in Sweden and academies in the UK. The results are mixed but overall the view is taken that they do not deliver better results than other schools (2012, 501). The Angrist et al. review of the performance of a US charter school is more optimistic – in their opinion, the schools do seem to perform better than others. The authors note, however, debate over whether this is due to rigorous standards and longer school days, or because there is a selection bias and the “high expectations” attract students who will perform better under them (2012, 838). In England and New Zealand there has been resistance to the introduction of the policies. For example, in England the Anti-Academies Alliance recently published a briefing quoting the Swedish Education Minister as saying: “We have actually seen a fall in the quality of Swedish schools since the free schools were introduced” (AAA 2013, 1). As many remain unconvinced that these schools will be a positive policy development, it is interesting to understand why these policies were introduced, which gives the thesis an agenda-setting lens. Whilst it is too soon to assess the impact of the policies in England and New Zealand, it is possible to investigate why the idea was on the agenda. Policy transfer theory is useful on this agenda-setting point, as it can shed light on the reason for similar policies appearing on different policy agendas around the world.

Insights from Volden et al. suggest that internal policy learning may explain the development, while Ball’s analysis of global education policy suggests transnational policy actors may have shaped the policy. This cross-national comparison will incorporate both of these perspectives as well as consider other variables that may have caused or prevented the introduction of this policy.

The case selection of England, New Zealand and Scotland was made after careful consideration and other possible countries had been ruled out. First, there are several strong links between all three countries. Of course, England and Scotland operate within the United Kingdom (UK) and all three within the Commonwealth of Nations. The operation of England and Scotland within the UK may be considered a threat to the cross-national element of the comparison, however education policy is governed separately – for England it is determined in London and for Scotland in Edinburgh. Including one country which has not introduced the policy enhances the validity of any results by incorporating a control. If only England and New Zealand were to be included, it would be more difficult to determine causality between variables and outcomes. The inclusion of Scotland increases the likelihood of identifying which indicators are causal and which are spurious. Moreover, the positioning of England and Scotland within the UK make it interesting to explain why policy may be diverging within that state, but

converging internationally between England and New Zealand. Timing is also interesting, as only approximately two years passed between the introduction of the policy in England and New Zealand. Such timing warrants investigation to rule out the possibility of coincidence. The decision to select Scotland as the control is strengthened by the consideration of timing, as a significant education policy was introduced in Scotland around the same time.

Other countries such as Sweden and the US were considered for study, however, as the policies were introduced several years ago in those countries, it would be less feasible to collect primary data than in the three countries that were selected. Moreover, the complex governance structure of the US means that the policy varies from state to state. While it would be possible to select one or two states, this would still not overcome the problem of collecting primary data about the introduction of policy many years ago.

1.1 The Main Research Question and Sub-Questions

The main research question is:

What factors caused or prevented the introduction of a policy to create a new type of school in three countries?

The topic is specifically regarding the introduction of the policy, rather than its performance, or that of the schools. In considering this, however, evidence of the performance of similar policies elsewhere becomes relevant. For example, if the policy has been introduced in countries A, B and C, how it has performed in each of those countries is naturally relevant to the introduction (or not) of the policy in country D.

The sub-questions apply for each country. They are:

1. What were the problems that the policy was said to address?
2. Where did the policy idea come from?
3. Which actors were most influential in the formulation of the policy?
4. What was the role of policy networks?
5. Why was the policy introduced at that specific time?

1.2 The Organisation of the Thesis

Chapter 2 contains the theoretical framework, which is predominantly built on John Kingdon's Multiple Streams (MS), but also incorporates concepts described by other authors that are particularly relevant to this research area. In particular, policy transfer theory is made use of. For each part of the theoretical framework

hypotheses and independent variables are generated. This chapter concludes with a conceptual diagram.

Chapter 3 contains the research design, which describes how each variable is operationalised. A combination of content and discourse analyses will be used, based on desk and primary research (interviews and surveys with members of the policy community and other experts), in order to allow for results to be triangulated.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 contain the results of England, New Zealand and Scotland, respectively. Each of these chapters begins with a brief overview of the school system in that country, as an awareness of the status quo is necessary to understand the results. Then, the results of that country are presented per variable. Each results chapter concludes with a presentation of that country's results in the conceptual diagram first shown in Chapter 3.

Chapter 7 is a cross-national comparison, which draws together the main results from each of the three countries. Similarities and differences are presented in a matrix and a separate matrix shows whether the hypotheses were confirmed. These findings are then discussed.

Chapter 8 contains the conclusions and recommendations. The main findings are that a particular politician taking the opportunity provided by an election win to implement the policy was essential to the policy's introduction in England and New Zealand. The results from Scotland, however, show that as well as support within government, the policy must also fit with the national culture if it is to be implemented. The recommendations are that policy makers improve the rigour of the evidence on which policy is based – and also that such evidence is communicated better, as there were strong suggestions in all countries that the evidence is not compelling and decisions were made for other reasons.

Chapter 9 contains the references.

The appendices contain the sample interviews and data collected from newspapers and blogs.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Chapter Introduction

This thesis fits into the public administration body of knowledge, particularly policy borrowing, transfer and convergence. These concepts will be explained first, in Part 2 of this chapter. Part 3 consists of an explanation of the comparative method, which is essential as a foundation for this cross-national comparison. Part 4 is an explanation of the logic of the garbage can model. The principles of this logic are useful to explain because it is upon this model that Kingdon based his Multiple Streams framework – which is explained in detail in Part 5 of this chapter. Part 5 also contains the hypotheses and their key variables, which are generated for each section of the framework. Some other authors' work has been used in addition to Kingdon in order to build on the MS framework. Part 6 is a conceptual diagram which shows how the various parts of the framework fit together. Variables have been generated and included in this diagram, as such it also shows their expected relationships.

2.2 Policy Borrowing, Transfer and Convergence

The concepts of policy borrowing, transfer and convergence are central to this thesis, as at least *prima facie* there is more education policy transfer and convergence between England and New Zealand than between those two countries and Scotland. There is a debate around the differences between policy “transfer”, “borrowing”, “copying”, “appropriation” and so on (Phillips and Ochs 2003, 451). As Waldow notes, policy transfer can be studied from one of two main perspectives: one is to understand a process, the other is to enable and facilitate a process (2009, 477). Policy transfer is defined by Page and Mark-Lawson as a process which may be more complex than its name indicates. The name suggests “a simple movement of a set of policies from one place to another with no (or limited) change of state” (in Duncan 2009, 453). Much of the public policy literature on policy transfer uses qualitative analysis of a limited number of cases (Marsh and Sharman 2009, 270). Marsh and Sharman recommend regional comparisons and also negative cases. In addition, they recommend moving away from focusing on Western policy transfer (Ibid.). For this research project, the use of Scotland as a negative case builds on the recommendation to include a control. Throughout this thesis “policy transfer” will be used to refer to the movement of a policy from one country to another – but this does not necessitate that the form in which it is introduced in the “borrowing” country is identical to its form in the “lending” country. The transfer and convergence of policy links with the agenda-setting lens of the thesis, as it may explain the movement of the policy between these similar and well-connected countries.

Knill defines policy convergence as “a process by which policies in two or more countries [become] more alike over time” (in Marsh and Sharman 2009, 271). Ball argues that the combination of the shift to governance and trends in globalisation are resulting in the convergence of policies, especially in education. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is central in this, in defining the problems as well as guiding the solutions to them. He

argues that policy borrowing and convergence are taking place through myriad actors both within and beyond the boundaries of the nation state (Ball 2013, 47-48). Selecting England, New Zealand and Scotland is interesting because it will enable conclusions to be drawn about policy transfer and convergence between similar countries which share much in common, not least a language, but may be geographically touching or thousands of miles apart.

2.3 The Comparative Method

As Lijphart describes, the comparative method has two steps: the first is as a method of measurement, the second is to find relationships between the variables (1971, 683). Lijphart states that the comparative method should be opted for when a small number of cases is being studied (Ibid., 684). The comparative method shares a logic with the experimental method, which at its most simple involves the selection of two comparable cases, one of which is subjected to a stimulus while the other (the control) is not (Ibid., 683). In the comparative method the small number of cases means that partial correlations cannot serve as a means of control (Ibid., 684). The combination of a small number of cases but potentially large number of variables is a problem that is particular to this method (Ibid., 685). In order to limit the effects of this problem, two categories of solution as described by Lijphart will be used. The first is to reduce the “property space” (Ibid., 687) of variables so that fewer variables are investigated. The second is to focus the research on comparable cases which are “similar in a large number of constants” (Ibid.). Lijphart explains that the area approach described by Rustow suggests groups including Scandinavia and Anglo-American countries as suitable areas for comparison where appropriate – but geographical areas should be of use to the study, rather than a burden (Ibid., 689).

The case selections of England, New Zealand and Scotland are comparable, in line with the second recommendation above, because all three countries are Western, Anglophone democracies with strong historical links to each other. All are members of the OECD (in the case of England and Scotland, through the UK), the relevance of which is described in part 2.2. Also, in a ceremonial role at least, all three countries share the same head of state. The case selection has been carefully considered and the three were chosen above others due to their similarities and shared history. The apparent convergence of policy in England and New Zealand, but divergence in the case of Scotland, makes this an interesting and topical policy to research. This is especially relevant due to the referendum in 2015 on Scotland’s possible exit from the United Kingdom.

2.4 The Origin of the Multiple Streams Logic: The Garbage Can Model

Kingdon’s Multiple Streams framework will be used to streamline and organise the number of variables. This framework is appropriate because it looks at the early stages of the policy process in order to explain why policy decisions were taken as they were (John 2012, 158-160). As MS is based on the “garbage can” model by Olsen, it is first useful to briefly discuss the key points of this concept. This model depicts “organised anarchies” (Cohen, March and Olsen 1972, 1) which have three properties: one, they are better described as a loose collection

of ideas than a coherent structure; two, processes are not understood even by the organisation's own members; and three, participation is fluid, involvement varies from one time or decision to another (Ibid.). Olsen et al. describe organisations as being "a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be the answer, and decision makers looking for work" (Ibid., 2). Timing is, thus, very important in determining the outcome because the introduction of choices, problems and available energy all depend on it (Ibid.). Thus, the garbage can model comes into being:

"To understand processes within organizations, one can view a choice opportunity as a garbage can into which various kinds of problems and solutions are dumped by participants as they are generated. The mix of garbage in a single can depends on the mix of cans available, on the labels attached to the alternative cans, on what garbage is currently being produced, and on the speed with which garbage is collected and removed from the scene." (Ibid.)

There are four streams which are identified in the garbage can model: problems, solutions, participants and choice opportunities. The streams are relatively independent, but there are connections, and their output can be regarded as the decision (Ibid., 2-3). The garbage can model reminds Kingdon of federal government; where there is disagreement over what should be accomplished, people often have to act without full information, or may have to act without knowing how to achieve their goals (even if their goals are known) (Kingdon 2011, 85). People involved in government may take roles which are more influential than their position suggests would be the case, and also individuals outside of government "drift in and out of decision making" (Ibid.). The logic of the model is summarised by Kingdon thus:

"(1) the flow of fairly separate streams through the system, and (2) outcomes heavily dependent on the coupling of the streams – couplings of solutions to problems; interactions among participants; the fortuitous or purposeful absence of solutions, problems, or participants – in the choices (the garbage cans) that must be made." (Ibid., 86)

It is this logic upon which Kingdon bases his model, which he adapts for the understanding of agenda setting in US national (federal) government (Ibid.). We now turn to MS itself.

2.5 Kingdon's Multiple Streams Framework

In the MS model, Kingdon places a stronger emphasis on "organised" than "anarchy" (2011, 86). The framework uses three streams – problems, policies and politics – which come together at a critical point in time, known as a policy window, when a policy entrepreneur acts to implement a solution to a problem (Ibid., 88; Zahariadis 2007, 65). This theory therefore seeks to answer the three questions posed by Simon that a good theory of choice should answer: how is attention rationed; how and where is the search for alternatives conducted; and how is selection biased (in Zahariadis 2007, 65)? Each part of the framework

(the three streams, policy entrepreneur, policy window) will now be explained in turn. For each stream hypotheses are formulated and for every part key variables are identified.

2.5.1 The Problem Stream

The problem stream puts problems on the policy agenda. Kingdon describes several “problem indicators” such as reports and studies by government or non-government agencies, or simply that there is a perception that an issue “deserves to be” on the agenda (Kingdon 2011, 90-91). Kingdon suggests three questions which should be considered: Is it a problem; whose problem is it, and; how big a problem is it? (Ibid., 91). The problem stream is important to include in this research project because literature has identified the power of the identification of problems in order to introduce changes. There can be an “unrelenting criticism of public services, often by generalising individual failures” (Whitfield in Ball 2013, 104). Ball (2013, 104) holds that exaggeration forms part of a:

“...‘discourse of derision’... ludicrous images, ridicule, and stereotypification... a caricature has been developed and presented to the public as an accurate depiction of the real’ (Kenway in Ibid.)

Building the problem stream into the theoretical framework will allow the testing of the extent to which the identification and exaggeration of problems led to (or prevented) the introduction of the policy changes which are of central concern to this research project.

MS holds that people in and around government look for changes in indicators, which may result in an exaggerated effect on policy agendas. This need to demonstrate the existence of a problem can have adverse effects, as policy makers come to grasp any indicator, even if it is deficient. For example, if it focuses on hard numbers but does not take into account the softer side of the policy (such as the quality of service) (Ibid., 91-93). Kingdon warns that indicators are interpreted, and not a straightforward representation of facts (Ibid., 94). Related to this point, Ball describes new “arts of government” (2012, 24), where governments use new “governing knowledge”, in which numbers are used to surveil (Ozga in Ibid., 33):

“These ‘numbers’ are deployed within schemes like PISA, national evaluation systems, school performance tables, test comparisons, throughput indicators and so on.” (Rinne, Kallio and Hokka cited in Ball 2012, 33).

As well as problem indicators or governing knowledge, in MS, focusing events push potential problems onto the agenda – i.e. make them problems to be dealt with. Kingdon notes that not all policy areas are alike in this respect. He explains that in areas such as transport, a single event (such as a disaster) can have a huge impact in making a problem exist, for example, if an aeroplane crashes. In more “visible” policy areas such as health, crises and disasters have less impact, because failures are much smaller and more often (Ibid., 94-96). Politicians may be influenced by their own experiences and/or give a class bias to the problem definition (Ibid., 96-97). Attention can also be focused by powerful symbols

which represent either a problem, political event or policy proposal, generally reinforcing something already taking place. Such symbols do not in themselves have the power to effect change (Ibid, 97-98).

Focusing events have to be accompanied in order to be effective; Kingdon describes three ways in which this can happen. First, they reinforce some problem which people are already in some way aware of. Second, they act as an early warning of a problem. For example, a bridge falling down may indicate that the whole road system is in need of serious repair. Third, focusing events may help to define the problem in combination with other similar events (Ibid., 98). Alternatively, policy makers may become aware of problems of existing government programmes through systematic or informal feedback, or merely during the course of their day-to-day activities working in the policy area (Ibid., 100-101).

Kingdon warns against overlooking the impact of budgetary or economic considerations even in defining problems. In short, if problems would be too expensive to solve, they may be defined differently, in an affordable-to-fix way (Ibid., 106). During times of severe economic constraint three types of programme come to the fore: 1) Regulations to control costs; 2) Deregulation of the economy in order to save money. Organisations will either “make it or fail in the marketplace”; and 3) Cheap policies (Ibid., 107-108). While constraints due to the general condition of the economy may be grounded in facts, Kingdon notes that perception of the constraint is also very influential in problem definition (Ibid.).

There is a distinction to be made between what is a condition and what is a problem. Conditions are situations that we live with, whereas problems inherently need to be tackled. Values are one of the factors which play a role in determining whether something is a condition or problem (Ibid., 109-111). For example, in this thesis, lack of choice of school or school provider may be described as a problem to some but not others, depending on one’s own values.

Comparisons may be carried out within or across nations. Kingdon notes that for the US to be possibly “not the greatest country on earth” may be in itself a problem (Ibid., 111), but solving a problem is not necessarily the reason for the action of policymakers; for example, if politicians want to create a legacy for themselves or bureaucrats try to keep their job or extend their influence (Ibid., 114). Saliently, Kingdon notes that the linking of a proposal with a perceived problem increases the chance of it moving up the agenda. As such, activists highlight selected indicators in order to push for a particular kind of problem definition (Ibid., 115).

2.5.1.1 The Problem Stream Hypotheses and Variables

H1 Governing knowledge identified a problem in the school system which led to the introduction of the policy.

- INDV1 Governing knowledge

The results for this hypothesis will show how important governing knowledge is in each country in defining problems. In particular, reports by PISA, relevant institutions responsible for education and leading political parties in each country will be used. These institutions are listed in the research design chapter. The expectation is that in England and New Zealand governing knowledge identified problem(s) which required solutions based around devolving more power to schools; whereas in Scotland governing knowledge was on the whole not calling for this type of systemic change to the school system. In Scotland, problems may fit better into the definition of “conditions”, as described above.

H2 A focusing event defined a problem in the school system which led to the introduction of the policy.

- INDV2 Focusing event

It is expected that this will be found to have occurred in New Zealand (in the 2011 earthquake) but not in England or Scotland, as no disaster has been identified in preliminary reading for those countries. It will be interesting to identify whether and, if so, how a connection was made between a focusing event and policy change.

H3 A national or international comparison identified a problem in the school system which led to the introduction of the policy.

- INDV3 (Inter-) national comparison

This hypothesis focuses mainly on PISA, but also seeks to determine whether the identification of similar problems has led to policy transfer (of solutions to those problems) between countries. It is expected that PISA will be a significant influence in each country, however, divergence between policy in Scotland and policy in England and New Zealand may indicate different interpretation or application of PISA data in the former compared with the latter two countries, respectively. Also, the comparisons that were carried out may have led to different problems being identified in each country.

2.5.2 The Policy Stream

Kingdon writes that policies begin life in a “primeval soup” of ideas from which some are successful and others fade away. The policy stream seeks to explain how this happens (Ibid., 116-117).

Policy communities consist of specialists in a particular area who operate both inside and outside of government. They may work in government, academia, be consultants or analysts for interest groups – but they share an area of policy problems. Kingdon found that the degree of integration of the policy community varied from sector to sector. The community of specialists is affected by political events but is driven by quite different forces (Ibid., 117-118). A fragmented system produces policy fragmentation, while a closer knit community facilitates “common outlooks, orientations and ways of thinking” (Ibid., 120). As in many areas of life, there is little “new” in many policies: they are generally recombinations of what has happened before (Ibid., 124).

While policy formulation may be the subject of considerable pressure, for example from lobbyists, Kingdon warns that the power of ideas should not be overlooked. The content of a policy may be simply based on superior arguments winning the day (Ibid., 125-127). On the other hand, how intellectually interesting a subject area is also has an effect on whether policy communities choose to focus on it, or find something more interesting on which to spend their time (Ibid., 127).

Policy entrepreneurs, who are key figures in the policy process, will be explained in more detail below, but within the policy stream they begin work before the policy window appears. It is necessary for them to “soften up” or educate others so that they become sympathetic to their own view and favoured policy. This happens through a variety of means, such as introducing Bills or holding press conferences to encourage debate or ensuring that the issue is mentioned during every speech possible (Ibid., 127-130). Kingdon describes three criteria which must be met in order for policy ideas to become accepted within the policy community:

1) Technical feasibility

Has the idea been properly thought through? For policymakers to accept an idea, there has to be the belief that it will work, so this criterion is strongly linked with the implementation stage of the policy process. Regardless of how successful or otherwise the policy becomes, for the policy to be feasible to begin with, policymakers must believe that it will work (Ibid., 131-132).

2) Value acceptability

Ideas have to be acceptable to the values of the specialists, otherwise they will not take hold. This includes considerations such as efficiency but also ideological values such as about the size and role of government. Such values may be held along party lines or could apply nationally – although it is important to note that, again, the degree to which ideology influences policy can vary among sectors (Ibid., 132-135). As a value in itself, Kingdon notes that efficiency is highly important for policymakers (Ibid., 136-137).

3) Anticipation of Future Constraints

Future constraints could be budget constraints or public acquiescence (Ibid., 137-138).

According to Kingdon, ideas which meet these three criteria are then taken up by the policy community gradually. Through networking, they become shared understandings of what is possible, or what is a good idea. This process is less about coalition building (as in the political sphere) and more about persuasion and diffusion (Ibid., 139-141).

Kingdon’s research found that the existence of a viable alternative (solution) increases the chance of an item rising on the governmental agenda – if there is no solution available then it will be held down the agenda as long as possible. In addition, this section should not read like a check list as there does not need to

be consensus within the policy community; but it does show how some ideas become prominent and therefore regarded as viable (Ibid., 142-144).

Ball's research into education policy networks fits in to some extent with the concept of a policy community but also takes it further. Using the British case as his base but extrapolating his arguments internationally, he argues that "there is a proliferation of policy networks nationally and globally" made up of organisations which operate independently of each other but are connected with each other structurally (Ball 2012, 9). These Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANS) play a prominent role in Ball's analysis of global education policy; they are networks of principled actors which span geographic boundaries and exist with the purpose of promoting their values and ideas. They provide a mechanism by which policy ideas can diffuse around the world. Think tanks may operate on their own or may form part of a TAN (Ball 2012, 12-13). Ball describes complex webs of governance which include various types of actors, including education businesses that are not only shaping education policy but taking its management beyond the boundaries of nation states (Ball 2012, 93). According to Ball there are two current trends in education policy: parental choice and private schooling, which are being pushed by networks of "multilateral agencies, NGOs and businesses' interests and influences [that] can separately or together constitute a powerful policy alternative to state 'failure'" (Ball 2012, 9, 11).

In terms of understanding education policy, Ball argues that one can no longer look solely within the confines of a nation state – private interests have significant influence over the shape of education policy, across states. A privatisation of policy has occurred, where professional knowledge has been replaced by businesses selling "solutions". This means that a "virtuous circle" occurs where businesses generate policy knowledge; the policy is implemented; the implemented policy generates profits; the cycle continues (Ibid., 93-99). As such, Ball argues that these policy networks are new (and therefore different from what Kingdon described several years before, MS was first published in 1984) because they form a "new grid of power" (Ibid., 112-113) which is "above, across, as well as within, state boundaries" (Cerny 1997, 253 in Ibid., 113).

Ball also describes how education businesses use a "saviour discourse" to sell their products as solutions to schools which, it is implied, need to be rescued from failure (Ball 2012, 96-97). This links the problem stream and the policy stream, because the education businesses are, Ball asserts, able to both define the problem as well as provide the solution for it.

On the other hand, Volden et al., imply that it is still governments that are in the driving seat. They hold that governments may get policy ideas either from within their country or from each other. Internally, they may learn from interest groups, public preferences and the effects of previous policies. Externally, they may learn from what has been successful in similar situations elsewhere (2008, 319). They assert that much of what has been attributed to policy diffusion (among or within countries) may in fact be the result of internal learning (Ibid., 330).

2.5.2.1 The Policy Stream Hypotheses and Variables

H4 The policy idea already existed within the policy community and this led to its introduction.

- INDV4 Policy community held idea.

This hypothesis will test whether the idea came from the domestic policy community. It is expected that at some point in England and New Zealand, the domestic policy community began promoting the policy. In Scotland, it is expected that this policy may have been promoted, but if so, unsuccessfully.

H5 The policy is not new; it resembles pre-existing policy in the country.

- INDV5 Similar schools already existed.

This hypothesis is designed to test the extent to which domestic policy learning took place in England and New Zealand (as predicted by Volden et al.). It also will check whether the reason no such policy has been recently introduced in Scotland is because it already existed. It is expected that there will be an amount of domestic policy learning in England from academies, but in New Zealand and Scotland there will not be any similar schools. A difficulty with this hypothesis is in determining how to measure the similarity of types of schools, but triangulation of desk research and primary research will reduce this threat to validity.

H6 Policy transfer of the idea took place which led to the introduction of the policy.

- INDV6 Policy transfer of the idea.

This hypothesis is specifically designed to provide explanation of how the policy idea transferred to each country. It is expected that the idea transferred to England and New Zealand before it was introduced in those countries. A connection between the policy in England and the policy in New Zealand is also likely. It is foreseen that the policy idea may not have transferred to Scotland at all, or, if it did transfer, it was not well received by the policy community.

2.5.3 **The Political Stream**

The definition of “political” used by Kingdon is restricted to the public mood, electoral, partisan or pressure group factors (2011, 145). The “national mood” in a country refers to the general way in which people are thinking. If the national mood moves in one particular direction (such as toward privatisation), it may support a range of policy choices which get promoted on the policy agenda. Accordingly, when ideas contradict the national mood, they are unlikely to be taken seriously. Kingdon argues that the national mood refers less to national opinion polls and mass demonstrations, and more to “collections of attentive publics, activists and political elites” (Ibid., 146-49). Although this is a relatively vague concept, Kingdon provides a clear example of how it works in practice:

“Reagan is elected, and everybody assumes the national mood has swung in a conservative direction. Leading columnists write that the climate is thus-and-so, and this in turn affects the national mood.” (Ibid., 149).

Organised political forces in the form of interest group pressure, political mobilisation and the behaviour of political elites also form part of the political stream. The perception that those in and around government have of the balance of support is key, and although this is another concept that is difficult to pin down, it is influenced by the number of arguments that are heard for or against an idea, which indicate the consequences of an idea's implementation, or lack of (Ibid., 150-153).

Within government the turnover of key personnel can have a significant impact on policy change, but Kingdon notes that the reason particular people come to be in key roles is because of the structures that are in place (Ibid., 153-154). Kingdon notes that in the (US) political stream, coalitions are built through bargaining over policies as well as the bandwagon effect – when a policy is moving, policymakers fall in line in order to maximise their influence (Ibid., 159-162).

2.5.3.1 The Political Stream Hypotheses and Variables

H7 The national mood facilitated the introduction of the policy.
- INDV7 National mood

This hypothesis will allow an understanding to be gained of the importance of the national mood in facilitating or preventing the introduction of the policy. It is expected that there will be a connection between the national mood and other variables, in particular the ability of a policy entrepreneur to act. It is expected that the national mood in some way have facilitated or encouraged a policy entrepreneur in England and New Zealand but in Scotland prevented the policy from being introduced.

H8 A change of key personnel facilitated the introduction of the policy.
- INDV8 Change of key personnel

This hypothesis seeks to confirm whether it was a change in personnel that enabled an individual to become a policy entrepreneur. Preliminary reading suggests that this was the case in England and New Zealand, where a change in members of government facilitated specific individuals to ensure the policy was introduced. It is expected that in Scotland changes in personnel did not facilitate a potential policy entrepreneur to introduce the policy.

H9 Policy transfer by political actors facilitated the introduction of the policy.
- INDV9 Policy transfer by political actors

It is important to understand the role of political actors in policy transfer. As such, this hypothesis is included to test whether political actors actively transferred the policy. It is expected that political actors were involved in England and New Zealand, but in Scotland if political actors attempted to transfer the policy, they were not in positions to implement it.

2.5.4 The Policy Window

According to Kingdon, the three streams come together in the policy window. Kingdon notes that the most common cause of a window opening is a change in administration – as politicians have to decide what to do first. Also, significantly pressing problems can force open a policy window. In either case, action must be taken quickly because windows do not stay open for a long time (Ibid., 166-169). Windows may, then, be subdivided into problem windows and political windows, depending on whether they are mainly open due to changes in the respective stream – but the two windows are related. If a solution addresses the problem and is also politically acceptable, it is far more likely to be successful (Ibid., 174-175). Interestingly, again, perception plays an important role. Kingdon notes that the perception, or lack of, of a policy window has a great effect on the policy process. This can also lead to ideas being pushed when a window is mistakenly perceived (Ibid., 170-172). Policy windows can create spill over effects. These occur when a window is used to create a principle, which guides future thinking on the issue, or when it serves as a basis for a similar decision in a different area (Ibid., 190-192).

Although on the whole in agreement with the value of MS, Mucciaroni argues that the focus should be on the connections between the variables in order to see that agenda-setting is “more purposive and strategically based” (1992, 473) than the concept of a timely policy window may suggest. While the policy window is an important part of this theoretical framework, this critique highlights that the role of the policy window should not be overemphasised. This supports the decision to incorporate the theory of policy transfer and the concept of TANS into the framework. However, preliminary reading regarding the introduction of free schools in England and the introduction of partnership schools in New Zealand indicates that political events played a significant role in the introduction of the respective policies in those countries. As such, including the policy window in the theoretical framework is useful because it will allow for the testing of whether it was necessary to introduce these policies. The inclusion of Scotland becomes very relevant here, as it will be possible to draw conclusions regarding the lack of the introduction of the policy there in relation to the existence or otherwise of a policy window. Similarities and differences between the countries in terms of the policy window results will allow conclusions to be drawn about the usefulness of including this concept in the theoretical framework. There is also a connection with the literature on policy transfer as it may be possible to identify whether this process took place because, or was prevented from taking place by, the (non-)existence of a policy window.

2.5.4.1 The Policy Window Variables

As the existence of a policy window is dependent on independent variables from the problem and political stream, it contains two mediating variables:

- MV3 Problem event
- MV4 Political event

As this part of the theoretical framework contains mediating and not independent variables, it is not necessary to construct separate hypotheses for the policy window.

2.5.5 The Policy Entrepreneur

The policy entrepreneur is the person who brings together the three streams in the policy window. Kingdon suggests that he or she may be a politician, academic, lobbyist or career bureaucrat. Policy entrepreneurs have three qualities: 1) a claim to a hearing; 2) political connections or negotiating skill, 3) persistence – which is probably the most important characteristic. The policy entrepreneur applies these qualities in order to push a solution when a window opens. This requires the policy entrepreneur to be prepared in advance of the window opening – so that the opportunity is seized and not squandered (2011, 179-182). The policy entrepreneur may be motivated simply to solve a problem, but they may be looking for a problem to which they can attach their solution. The motivation in this situation can be summarised as stemming from a personal interest, for example to keep their job; a desire to promote their own values and ideology; and/or even that being a part of the game is enjoyable in itself (Ibid., 123).

Ball points out that neither too little nor too much agency should be attributed to the policy entrepreneur (2012, 14). So whilst this research project aims to identify individuals' key roles in the introduction of the policy, caution will be exercised so as not to underemphasise the other actors, institutions, systems and problems involved – or overemphasise the role of any particular individuals. Ball notes that the policy entrepreneur will often use a “good crisis and its attendant ‘moral panics’” in order to implement a policy – again relying on the construction, rather than the identification, of problems (Ibid.).

2.5.5.1 The Policy Entrepreneur Variables

The existence of a policy entrepreneur also depends on various other factors, as such the mediating variables are:

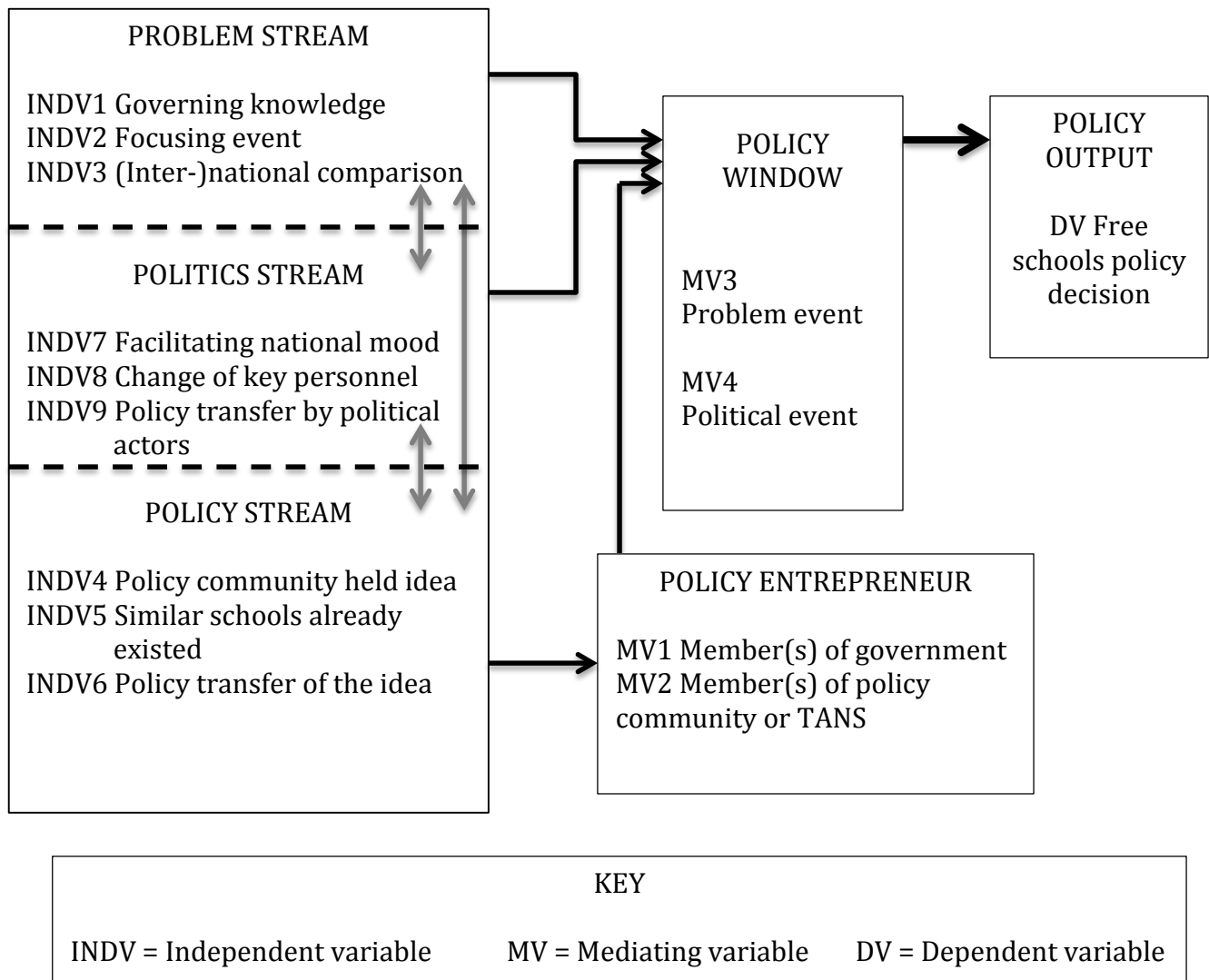
- MV1 Member(s) of government policy entrepreneur
- MV2 Member(s) of policy community or TAN policy entrepreneur

As the policy entrepreneur is likely to be active in one or more of the three streams, it is not necessary to construct separate hypotheses for the policy entrepreneur.

2.6 Conceptual Diagram

Figure 1 is a conceptual diagram based on Zahariadis (2007, 71) and the theoretical framework described in this chapter.

Figure 1 Conceptual Diagram



3 Research Design

3.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter explains how the data will be collected and analysed. Data will be collected using desk research and interviews/surveys; it will be analysed using content analysis and discourse analysis. In Part 2, the approach to interviews will be explained first. Following this, content analysis and discourse analysis will be described. Part 3 explains how these methods will be applied to each of the indicators; Part 4 is a chapter overview. The interview questions can be found in the Appendix.

3.2 Methods

A combination of the methods detailed below will be used in the research. The use of a variety of approaches serves two purposes: firstly, it allows for one (or more) appropriate method to be selected for each variable; secondly, it facilitates triangulation when more than one method is used for the same variable. Triangulation involves the use of multiple sources in order to enhance the rigour of the research (Robson 2002, 174). There are several types of triangulation, for example, data triangulation (using more than one method of data collection); methodological triangulation (combining qualitative and quantitative approaches); and theory triangulation (combining theories/perspectives) (Denzin 1988 in *Ibid.*). All of these triangulation methods will be used – the former two methods through the use of content analysis and discourse analysis of the same variables; and the latter one method by the complementing of Kingdon’s framework with policy transfer theory and the perspectives of Volden et al. and Ball, as described in the theoretical framework. Observer triangulation (using more than one observer) (*Ibid.*) is not feasible for this project.

3.2.1 Interviews

Interviews will form part of both content analysis and discourse analysis. As this research project is a cross-national comparison, effort will be made to ensure that those interviewed in each country are as comparable as possible in terms of their position within the policy community. The fact that interviews will be sought with individuals in three countries unfortunately reduces the number of interviews that it will be feasible to conduct in each. As such, it is intended to interview five education experts in each country. These will include representatives of think tanks, academics, journalists, bloggers, teachers and politicians. Ideally more than five interviews will be carried out in each country however this may not be possible within the time frame. Despite this, interviewing five experts will still enable common views to be identified. Kingdon used a “snowballing technique” whereby respondents are asked if they can recommend others that could be interviewed in order to expand the sample (Kingdon 2011, 251). This will also be used in this research project however caution will be exercised in order to ensure a range of opinions is sought. Interviews will normally be conducted via telephone or Skype as this is more feasible for this international project. When it is not possible to conduct an

interview in this way, but a participant is able to respond to questions by email, the questions will be sent as a survey.

Experts have already been identified who will be contacted and these include politicians, academics and journalists who are all expert in this policy or education policy in general. As they have not yet agreed to participate it is not possible to name them at this point.

3.2.1.1 Semi-structured Interviews

The interviews will be semi-structured, which means that the questions are decided in advance but the order and wording can be altered during the interview depending on the interviewee's responses. Also, if it is appropriate to omit or include additional questions, this is also possible (Robson 2002, 270). This method is appropriate because it will enable the interview to be directed as much as possible towards answers which are relevant to this study, but will also mean that the interview can be shaped for the interviewee in order that he or she can provide as fuller insight as possible. Silverman raises the important question of whether interviews should be "treated as giving direct access to 'experience' or as actively constructed 'narratives' (Silverman 1993; Holstein and Gubrium 1995 in Silverman 2000, 32). As the theoretical framework identified that perception and perspective (for example, the perception of a problem) are important, the latter treatment will be given to the interviews. Of course, when surveys are sent out, the opportunity to tailor the data collection to the participant is restricted to altering the questions in advance of sending the survey.

3.2.2 **Content Analysis**

Content analysis involves studying documents in order to analyse them for certain features (Robson 2002, 350-353). According to Silverman, a set of categories are established, and then the researcher counts the number of instances which fall into each category (Silverman 2006, 159). Documents that are relevant to this thesis include policy documents such as white papers, bills introduced to parliament, peer-reviewed journal articles, minutes of meetings, Hansard/parliamentary records, blogs, tweets, speeches and newspaper articles. How they will be used to check for and measure the indicators of the relevant hypotheses is shown below. In order to manage the data, it is important to employ a sampling strategy (for example a limited period of time) and define the recording unit (such as number of stories on a topic, or the number of times an individual word is used) (Robson 2002, 353). Looking at the context of key words can also be important, for example in order to determine whether the word was used in a positive or negative manner. Categories may be composed of key words, topics or whether the document is favourable, for example (Ibid., 354-355). Again, how this will be coded is detailed per relevant hypothesis below.

3.2.2.1 Coding

A coding system is a construction of pre-determined categories which is used in order to measure whether the behaviour being observed has occurred or not (Robson 2002 325). It is useful for researchers because it allows large amounts

of data to be reduced into organised segments (Marvasti 2004, 91 in Silverman 2006, 163). Reliability is provided by ensuring the categories are precise. Validity is provided by ensuring that content is accurately categorised (Selltiz et al. 1964, 335-342 in Ibid., 159). The purpose of coding is summarised by Strauss and Corbin as being to build on theory; provide rigour to the research process; break biases and assumptions; and provide the necessary grounding, density, sensitivity and integration to generate a rich theory that is a close approximation of the reality it represents (1990, 57). Open coding will be used in this research project. Open coding refers to “the naming and categorising of phenomena through close examination of data” (Ibid., 62). There are various ways of carrying this out, such as coding a document line-by-line, by sentence or paragraph, or the whole document (Ibid., 72-73). In this research project, a mix of these methods will be used – which will be described below. Axial coding “puts those data back together in new ways by making connections between a category and sub-categories.” (Ibid., 97). The aim of axial coding is to identify the conditions that give rise to the category (Ibid.). So for example, if a newspaper scan is done for the term “free schools”, sub-categories may include whether the article gives a positive, neutral or negative opinion. It should be borne in mind that, as Strauss and Corbin note, when the researcher “is actually engaged in analysis he or she alternates between the two modes.” (Ibid., 98).

Coding Opportunities and Risks

One of the dangers of using a coding scheme is that different observers will code behaviour differently (Robson 2002, 325). As this research project will be carried out by the author alone, this specific problem will not occur. However, in order to ensure consistency over time, samples of each batch of coded data will be reviewed at a later date. A disadvantage will be that the method could be considered “crude” (Kingdon 2011, 255), but this problem will be reduced by the fact that all interviews and coding will be carried out personally, as such it will be able to be applied as consistently as possible.

3.2.3 Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is valuable to understand the role that language has played in shaping social outcomes (Robson 2002, 365). It can be used to analyse a wide range of social texts including existing documentation and interview transcripts (Ibid.). Hajer defines discourse as “an ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena” (2005, 300). Discourse analysis brings out “a certain regularity in... particular ideas, concepts and categories” (Ibid.).

Discourses can be seen in the real world by observing metaphors and storylines. For example, Hajer explains how the metaphor of “acid rain” aided understanding in two ways: firstly, it focused attention on the specific issue of what is biologically known as “acid precipitation”, which instead of bringing life (as rain does), brought death. Secondly, this metaphor was symbolic of wider environmental mistreatment (2005, 301). Storylines are also crucial to discourses. These are “a condensed form of narrative in which metaphors are used” (Ibid., 301-302). Metaphors are used as cues when telling the story, so, for example, “acid rain” is used in the story without being explained. While many assume that this results in a mutual understanding of events, Hajer argues that

this is often not the case (Ibid., 302). I.e. “acid rain” might trigger different understandings of the problem in different people.

Whilst an infinite number of metaphors or storylines could be thought of, a discourse-coalition can be identified among actors that may appear to be operating separately. As Hajer explains: “a discourse-coalition refers to a group of actors that, *in the context of an identifiable set of practices*, shares the usage of a particular set of story lines over a particular period of time.” (Ibid., 302). Members of the coalition do not necessarily need to be in direct contact with each other, or even always behave consistently with a particular narrative or each other. When a discourse begins to dominate it can do so in two ways: “discourse structuration” refers to a given discourse dominating how a unit (such a company or society) conceptualises the social world. “Discourse institutionalisation” occurs when the discourse is embedded in particular institutional arrangements (Ibid., 303). Measurement is simple: if many people use the discourse, this can be described as discourse structuration. If the discourse is found to be present in structural arrangements, then it is discourse institutionalisation. If both criteria are satisfied then the discourse is said to be dominant (Ibid., 303). Argumentative discourse analysis (ADA) looks deeper still, in analysing the way that arguments are made. For example, this can include reviewing videos of speeches in order to assess the tone that was used and which words were emphasised – rather than simply reviewing the number of times a particular word was used (Ibid., 305-306).

Hajer's Ten Steps To Discourse Analysis

Hajer describes ten steps which should be followed when undertaking discourse analysis:

1. *Desk research*: a general survey of documents in the field, newspaper analysis in order to produce a chronology and first reading of events;
2. *“Helicopter interviews”*: interviews with well-placed experts;
3. *Document analysis*: analysing documents to identify concepts, metaphors, storylines and so on. Structuring discourses may be seen for the first time;
4. *Interviews with key players*: to identify “causal chains” by finding out how issues were perceived and why they were perceived in that way;
5. *Sites of argumentation*: searching for data which shows the argumentative exchange described above. For example, parliamentary debates, inquiry debates, panel discussions at conferences;
6. *Analyse for positioning effects*: actors involved in an interplay can get “caught up” in it, and when they realise could try to refuse the meaning provided by another actor;
7. *Identification of key incidents* that are essential to the discourse. Where possible, these incidents are transcribed in more detail in order to understand better their effects;
8. *Analysis of practices in particular cases of argumentation*: this stage returns to the data in order to check whether the meaning of what is being said can be related to the practices in which it was said;

9. *Interpretation*: ideally, an account of the discursive structures, practices and sites of production “that were of importance in explaining a particular course of events”.
10. *Second visit to key actors*: the analyst confronts (some of) the actors with the discourses that have been identified. As a means of control, they should make at least some sense to the actors.

Source: Hajer 2005, 306-307.

3.2.4 Reliability

Care will be paid to the reliability of the measurements. This refers to the extent to which it is “repeatable and consistent” (Kellstedt and Whitten 2009, 92). A particular area of concern relevant to this thesis regards coding, for example newspaper articles as being in favour or against an issue (Ibid., 93). In this instance there is a threat to reliability, however the inclusion of a neutral or mixed category reduces the threat as much as possible – as any “border line” articles can be placed into the middle category.

3.2.5 Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a measurement represents what it is said to represent. It is determined by examining face validity, content validity and construct validity. Face validity involves assessing whether “the measure appears to be measuring what it purports to be measuring” (Ibid., 95). Content validity involves making a list of all the relevant concepts to measure. It also involves ensuring that irrelevant concepts are not included in the measurement (Ibid.). Finally, construct validity refers to the “degree to which the measure is related to other measures that the theory requires them to be related to” (Ibid.). This will increase the validity and also show the connections between the variables.

3.3 Operationalisation and Measurement of Variables

This section contains the variables for each stream, as well as their operationalisation.

3.3.1 Problem Stream: Operationalisation and Measurement

3.3.1.1 INDV1 Governing Knowledge: Discourse Analysis

PISA Reports

As made clear in the theoretical framework, PISA reports have been identified in the literature as being very influential in identifying problems in education. Therefore PISA reports will be used as an indicator of whether governing knowledge identified a problem. This could be either a low position in the rankings of countries or a downward trend. A high position or upward trend would not indicate a problem. It will also involve an analysis of the text of the reports – as well as the figures. All countries in this research project participate in the PISA project. Whilst the United Kingdom is included as a whole, its results are also broken down into its constituent parts, including England and Scotland (OECD 2009, 4).

Government Reports

The analysis of PISA will be triangulated with a discourse analysis of government reports from each country in order to identify which problems were being identified before the policy was introduced. For England this will include reports from the Office For Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED); for New Zealand, the Ministry of Education's Education Counts website; and for Scotland an Education Scotland report. In addition, the most recent manifestos of all parties of government in the three countries will be analysed.

Interviews

Which governing knowledge is most influential will be approached in the interviews and the answers triangulated with the analyses of PISA, government reports and manifestos.

3.3.1.2 INDV2 Focusing Event: Content Analysis and Discourse Analysis

Content Analysis

Indicators of a focusing event will be the high presence of a particular event in media analysis and interviews. For the media analysis, Lexis Nexis will be used to scan education articles that were published in each country for one year before the policy was introduced. In the case of Scotland, where no such policy was introduced, the mid-way point between the introduction of the policy in England and New Zealand will be the starting point. In this way, it will be possible to see which problems in the schools systems were receiving most coverage. For England, the London Standard will be analysed; for New Zealand, the New Zealand Herald; for Scotland, The Herald. All of these papers have large readerships within their respective regions.

Key words for this variable are taken from the literature used to write the theoretical framework chapter (for example, Ball 2013, 147-148; 99, 107; 175). They are:

- Failing school
- Parent/ Parental choice
- "Education" within 5 words of "inequality"
- "School" within 5 words of "earthquake"
- "Education" within 5 words of "earthquake"

The final two key word phrases will only be used in the analysis of the New Zealand newspaper, based on preliminary research which suggests that the 2011 earthquake may be a significant event in this policy. The key words will be counted in order to identify which of these topics were most prominent on the agenda.

The main weakness with this analysis is that it is based on selected key words; although these words are valid, if focus events are not described by these key words, they will not be observed in this analysis. This threat to validity is overcome by triangulating these data with interviews. The analysis is reliable as the method could be repeated and the same articles would be found.

Discourse Analysis

The articles used in the content analysis above will then be read in order to conduct a discourse analysis. This will provide a richer understanding of the problems being discussed and how the arguments were made. The discourse analysis will be triangulated in the interviews.

3.3.1.3 INDV3 (Inter-)national Comparison: Discourse Analysis

Content Analysis

An international comparison of the three countries vis-à-vis the OECD average will be carried out in order to identify to what extent PISA highlights problems between countries' performances.

It is important to exercise caution when analysing PISA: two sources of error must be taken into account when analysing and interpreting the data: sampling error and measurement error. The former comes from the fact that PISA is based on samples of students from each country. As such, there is inherent estimation of how that sample represents the country as a whole. Measurement error is caused by factors other than individual students' ability affecting their results, such as testing conditions (Bradshaw et al. 2010, 7-8). Very importantly, these causes of uncertainty affect how the rank order of countries should be interpreted – if two scores that are close together were repeated, the results may well be reversed. As such, the reports focus on *statistically significant difference*, which takes into account this margin of error (Ibid., 8). Moreover, PISA note that many factors affect the outcome of the tests – the data of some of which are not collected. As such, differences may be explained by a wide variety of factors, which may or may not be related to the school systems (Ibid.). So for example, in science in 2009, Shanghai-China ranks first, but second-on-the-list Finland cannot be distinguished from third-on-the-list Hong Kong-China because their scores are not statistically significantly different enough to overcome the causes of error described above (OECD 2010, 150). In PISA 2006, data were collected from 57 countries and economies – all OECD countries plus several partner countries (OECD 2009, 21). In PISA 2009, there were 65 participant countries or economies, composed of all OECD countries plus partner countries (OECD 2010, 20). As such, caution must also be exercised when interpreting rank order due to the increased number of participants.

Discourse Analysis

Documents produced by the governments and governing parties will be analysed in order to search for a discourse that involves international or national comparisons when identifying a problem. Manifestos from the most recent general elections will be prioritised. The results will be triangulated with the interviews.

3.3.2 Policy Stream: Operationalisation and Measurement

3.3.2.1 INDV4 Policy Community Held Idea

Discourse Analysis

Again discourse analysis is appropriate to measure this variable. Here, the discourse is about the policy solutions. Analysis of documents from the policy

community will be key to detecting whether the policy had achieved discourse structuration. This will include publications by leading academics in the field as well as think tanks, and key figures' blogs or presentations that can be accessed. All of these data will give an impression of whether many people were using the discourse or not. Sources for the discourse analysis already identified are as follows:

England

Policy Exchange (Think Tank)

Demos (Think Tank)

Civitas (Think Tank)

James Tooley (Key figure: Ball 2012, 143)

New Zealand

New Zealand Initiative (Think Tank)

Maxim Institute (Think Tank)

New Zealand Business Roundtable

Scotland

Democratic Left Scotland (Think Tank)

Reform Scotland (Think Tank)

Scotland's Futures Forum (Think Tank)

Scottish Democratic Alliance (Think Tank)

The discourse analysis will give an impression of the genealogy of the policy. A genealogical approach is a "coupling together of scholarly erudition and local knowledges" (Foucault 2003, 9). It is explicitly not restricted by scientific knowledge, and is not scientific itself (Ibid.). It is useful, however, because it will allow the identification of whether the policy existed in the policy community, and if so, which connections may have led to its introduction. Genealogy was chosen based on the examples in Ball (2013) which show how education actors and policies are connected around the world. It is also possible that this method will enable the connection of variables among the countries of this research project, which would go some way to explaining the movement (or non-movement) of the policy. The results of the discourse analysis of policy community documents will be triangulated with the interviews.

3.3.2.2 INDV5 Similar Schools Already Existed: Content Analysis

To assess the extent to which the policy is new, a content analysis will be used to compare the similarity of the old and new policies. This will help to determine how much of the policy is based on the domestic policy experience and how much may have been learnt from elsewhere. The results will again be triangulated with the interviews.

3.3.2.3 INDV6 Policy Transfer of the Idea: Content Analysis

Content analysis will be conducted to search for evidence of recommendations being made to bring the policy to the countries being studied in this research project. This will include reports by academics and think tanks, but at this stage not political actors – as they will be considered in INDV9. There is a risk here

that think tanks may be considered political actors, as they can certainly make political recommendations. However, for the purpose of this research project they will be considered as institutions which seek out and then transfer ideas through the dissemination of their publications.

As explained in the theoretical framework, it is important to understand the role of TANS in connecting members of the policy community(ies) around the world. The Atlas Network was identified by Ball as one of the largest and most influential TANS. As such, its membership will be analysed for each of the case countries. In addition, when think tanks and research organisations are studied as part of this research project, their membership of networks will be paid attention to wherever possible. These results will be triangulated with the interview responses.

3.3.3 Politics Stream: Operationalisation and Measurement

3.3.3.1 INDV7 National Mood

Content Analysis

As explained in the theoretical framework chapter, the national mood refers to generally held opinions within the policy community, not the public more generally. Due to it being “a rather amorphous concept” (Soroka 1999, 769), it is difficult to measure. This increases the importance of triangulation. As such, data will be collected from three sources: newspapers, blogs and interviews.

Kingdon recognised that key editorial writers in influential media can influence and represent the national mood (Kingdon 2011, 149). With this in mind, the content analysis will include a newspaper analysis of editorials in a major newspaper based in each country’s capital in order to identify any metaphors or story lines that may represent the national mood. The newspapers that will be analysed are The Times (of London, for England); The Scotsman (Scotland); The New Zealand Herald (New Zealand).

The newspaper analysis will be complemented with a political blog analysis of two major blogs in each country. Support for the validity of expanding the analysis to blogs comes from the blogosphere itself. Sam Freedman both co-authored one of the aforementioned Policy Exchange reports and also then went on to work for the Department of Education when Michael Gove had become Secretary of State for Education (Policy Exchange n.d.b). Although he has since left this post, he recently blogged that Michael Gove is an avid reader of political blogs, in order to help inform his decision making (Freedman 2013). David Farrar runs one of the most popular political blogs in New Zealand – Kiwiblog. In a 2011 presentation to the New Zealand Business Roundtable he estimated that 80% of Ministers read the main centre right political blogs daily (Farrar 2011, slide 12). In addition the blogs that will be selected are all among the most-read in their respective countries, and none will be directly affiliated with a political party (although they are far from politically neutral).

The newspapers and blogs will be searched for one year before the introduction of the policy. Each article with the word “education” will be read, and those found not to be about the education system will be disregarded. This will make the process feasible. The main theme of each article will then be entered into a spreadsheet, and an assessment made as to whether the article is of a positive, neutral/mixed or negative opinion. Then, the other topics referred to in the article will be noted. These results will be triangulated with the interviews.

3.3.3.2 INDV8 Change of Key Personnel: Content Analysis

Election information and government publications will be analysed to check when the key roles in government changed and how this related with the time that the policy was introduced. For Scotland, whether new policies were introduced immediately after the last change of Education Secretary will be checked. This topic will also be covered in the interviews. As well as making triangulation possible, this will give rise to the possibility of identifying key personnel who may not be part of government.

3.3.3.3 INDV9 Policy Transfer by Political Actors: Content Analysis

Content analysis for this variable will focus on key political actors in each country and whether they *transferred* the policy. For feasibility reasons, it is necessary to be selective, so only the parties of government’s manifestos will be analysed. In addition, publications, interviews and speeches by the members of government responsible for education will also be analysed. This analysis will be triangulated with data from the interviews.

3.3.4 Policy Entrepreneur: Operationalisation and Measurement

3.3.4.1 MV1 Member(s) of Government: Content Analysis

Content analysis here will involve reading official documents, parliamentary records, speeches, interviews with members of government in order to identify any particular individual(s) who may be a policy entrepreneur. This will be triangulated with data from the interviews.

3.3.4.2 MV2 Member(s) of policy networks or TANS

Similarly to the MV1, content analysis for MV2 will involve reading official documents, speeches, and interviews with members of policy networks and TANS in order to identify any particular individual(s) who may be a policy entrepreneur. Again, this will be triangulated with data from the interviews.

3.3.5 Policy Window: Operationalisation and Measurement

3.3.5.1 MV3 Problem Event: Discourse Analysis

The desk research part of the discourse analysis will be based on the findings of the desk research for the indicators of the problem stream. These findings will be triangulated with interview questions, which will help to gauge the relative importance of any problems.

3.3.5.2 MV4 Political Event: Discourse Analysis

As with MV3 the desk research part of the discourse analysis for MV4 will be based on the findings of the desk research for the indicators of the problem stream and triangulated with interview questions.

3.3.5.3 Simultaneous Problem Window and Political Window

As described in the theoretical framework, the two types of window are related. The combination of a problem window and political window at the same time offers the best opportunity for the introduction of a policy (Kingdon 2011, 174-175). As such, particular attention will be paid to the possible coincidence of MV3 and MV4.

3.4 Research Design Key Points Review

This chapter has described the research methods that will be used and explained how they will be applied in order to measure the variables. In order to enable rigorous conclusions to be drawn from the analyses, triangulation has been built into the research design as much as possible. The interview questions for each country can be found in the Appendices.

4 England Results

4.1 Chapter Introduction

In addition to the desk research, fourteen experts were contacted, which resulted in five interviews taking place or surveys being returned. The participants were an expert in an organisation within the policy community highly involved in the free schools policy; an independent school principal and blogger on a national newspaper website; an education consultant and blogger; a Department for Education official and a high-profile journalist who is also a free school founder. Following an overview of the English school system, the results are presented per variable and then synthesised into the conceptual diagram.

4.2 Overview of the English School System

The welfare state, representing an increase in state planning and collectivism, was created following the end of the Second World War (Abbott et al., 6). There were several types of schools, including “public” (which are actually paid for) technical, modern and grammar. To be accepted to the latter, students had to pass an “eleven plus” exam at age 11. During the 1950s and 1960s there was increasing criticism of the eleven plus, and local education authorities (LEAs) gradually started to introduce comprehensive school systems – ending selection, which was deemed particularly harmful to working-class children (Ibid., 12-13, 37-38). Whilst the Labour governments of the 1960s promoted a policy of persuading, rather than forcing, LEAs to go comprehensive Crook notes that in fact, the drive for comprehensive education was “bottom up” rather than “top down” (in Ibid., 39). Importantly, the ad-hoc manner by which LEAs introduced comprehensive systems meant that they were not all alike: some secondary schools were 11-16; some until 18 years old, for example (Ibid., 40).

In 1976, Ball argues that Prime Minister Callaghan (Labour) “gave powerful encouragement to ... [a] ‘discourse of derision’ being aimed at schools and teachers” (2013, 82) – although little changed in education for the remainder of Labour’s term in office (Ibid., 83). The election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979 ushered in an era of neoliberal thinking in education policy – promoting the freedom to choose and the role of the markets (Ibid., 84). The 1988 Education Reform Act both centralised curriculum planning with a National Curriculum, and devolved budget management to some schools, offered parents choice within a local market, was suspicious of teachers, and enhanced the roles of governors and head teachers (Ibid., 89).

The policy style of Tony Blair, who became Prime Minister in 1997, has been described as “warmed-over neoliberalism” (Giddens in Ibid., 96), although in Blair’s own view he took a “what works” approach known as the Third Way (Garratt and Forrester 2012, 17). Policies included focusing on the standards of under-performing (later “failing”) schools, replacing failing schools or allowing successful ones to take them over. Ball notes that the leadership was at best

unsupportive of the idea of comprehensives schools (Ball 2013, 99; 104). The newly branded “New Labour” government invested heavily in education, in particular with the stated aim of lifting disadvantaged children out of poverty. Although some changes were made to the types of schools that existed, the market and “choice” remained (Exley and Ball in Garratt and Forrester 2012, 55). New Labour intervened in the curriculum and also in “naming and shaming” failing schools – which were often reopened as “Fresh Start” schools or “Academies” – independent state secondary schools (Ibid., 55-56). Academies (launched as City Academies in 2002) were free from LEA control and sponsored by private companies, charities or individuals (Ibid., 58). Over time, schools did not need to be failing in order to convert to academies and could also be sponsored by faith or voluntary groups, universities or other schools (Ibid., Gunter in Ibid., 58). The academies programme built upon an earlier Conservative policy as well as charter schools in the US (PWC in Ball 2013, 207).

When the Conservative/ Liberal Democrat coalition came to power in 2010, they immediately passed the Academies Act 2010, which enabled excellent schools to convert to academies, as well as expanded the programme to primary schools (Garratt and Forrester 2012, 61). Converted schools no longer needed a sponsor and had extra freedoms (such as from LEA control) (Ball 2013, 211). The Academies Act 2010 also introduced free schools – that could be established by parents, community organisations, charities and businesses, and existing academy chain providers (Ibid.). More detail regarding the freedoms and characteristics of free schools is given in part 4.2.2. In 2010 there were 16,971 state funded primary schools and 3,333 state funded secondary schools in England (of all types) (DFE 2012d, 13). The first free schools opened in 2011.

4.3 Problem Stream Results

This section contains the results of the research into problem identification – based on governing knowledge, a focusing event and national or international comparisons.

4.3.1 INDV1 Governing Knowledge: Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis of governing knowledge was carried out. PISA, OFSTED reports and the governing parties’ most recent manifestos were analysed and the results triangulated with answers collected in the interviews. OFSTED is the government body responsible for inspecting schools in England.

PISA

England participated in the PISA assessments of 2006 and 2009. Overall, England performed well in the international studies. The results are divided into three areas: science literacy, mathematics literacy and reading literacy (hereafter science, mathematics and reading). One of the main problem storylines identified in the report is that England has among the widest ranges of achievement in science, and a larger than average distribution in reading. In mathematics this was less of a problem due to lower overall achievement (Bradshaw et al 2007, 26, 31, 35). Between 2006 and 2009 England’s performance stayed almost the

same, but more economies (the unit of analysis) performed better than England in 2009 as the survey had been expanded (Bradshaw et al 2010, 23-24). Between 2006 and 2009 the gender gap grew in mathematics but reduced to being insignificant in science. There were also fewer high performers in mathematics, and in science the proportion of low and high achieving students decreased (Ibid., 29-30; 35-36). Comparisons among the four nations of the UK were not problematic, for example, in 2009 England performed similarly to the rest of the UK and overall not statistically different from Scotland (Bradshaw et al 2010, 53-54; 57; 60).

OFSTED Reports

For England, OFSTED annual reports from 2007/08 and 2008/09 were analysed. The main storylines identified were that in 2007/08 there was more good or outstanding education than the previous year – but disadvantage was found in terms of poverty and some ethnic groups performing significantly less well. When found together, “disadvantage compounds disadvantage” (OFSTED 2009, 5-6). The 2008/09 report found that there had been sustained improvement over the previous four years – however, those from deprived backgrounds were not improving. In addition, the report noted that there was a “stubborn core” of teaching that was inadequate (OFSTED 2010, 7-8). Another storyline that featured in this report was that improvement is often linked to strong leadership and management, and imaginative curricula have beneficial effects (Ibid., 22, 24, 28). The performance of academies was mixed, although links with other educational providers did seem to have a positive effect, and there was also evidence of positive spill-over effects to other schools (Ibid., 33).

Manifestos

Key storylines in the Conservative 2010 manifesto were that discipline in schools, the quality of teachers and the rigour of examinations were all too low and must be improved (Conservatives 2011, 51-52). The Liberal Democrat manifesto criticised the national curriculum for being too rigid and also stated that there is too much political interference in schools, which should be freed from government (Liberal Democrats 2010, 36-37).

Interviews

The problems identified in the interviews were a “long-tail of underachievement”, particularly affecting disadvantaged communities. Low standards were mentioned by most participants and the DFE official also mentioned the lack of choice many parents had. Participants revealed that these problems were on the agenda because of budget constraints and the belief that investment by Labour had not yielded the desired results – especially for disadvantaged children. There was a consensus about the importance of PISA, which was mentioned by two participants without being prompted, and another two when asked whether PISA was influential.

4.3.2 INDV2 Focusing Event: Content Analysis and Discourse Analysis

The London Evening Standard was analysed from 1 November 2009 to 31 October 2010. The results are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1 London Evening Standard Newspaper Analysis

Key word	Number of Articles
"Parent choice" or "Parental choice"	1
"Failing school"	18
"Education" within 5 words of "inequality"	0

Newspaper data source: Lexis Nexis

The number of articles for each key word suggests that failing schools form a significant part of the identified problem, with parental choice composing a smaller part of the discourse. Inequality in education did not feature at all.

The storylines of the "failing school" articles are that there are too many schools not preparing students either for university or working life (mentioned in three articles), OFSTED is dissatisfied with many schools (mentioned in four articles) but also that academies may also have problems (mentioned in one article). Some support was registered for the then new Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove (one very favourable article). The storyline of parental choice in schools was carried in the newspaper only once, in an article which strongly made the case that parents often have no choice about which school to send their child to. Inequality in education was not found to be a problem by the newspaper analysis. Overall no single event which could be described as a focusing event, was identified, however, the topic of "failing schools" was the major on-going storyline in the media according to these analyses.

Interviews

The interviews also did not reveal a single focusing event in England. Publications by the Sutton Trust, PISA and an ideological belief in the importance of choice were all suggested as being relevant to the introduction of the policy.

4.3.3 INDV3 (Inter-)national Comparison: Content and Discourse Analysis

PISA

Table 2 shows the performance of England vis-à-vis the OECD average for 2006 and 2009. There was little change in overall performance in this time period. This is confirmed by analysis from the reports about the performance over time – which was very constant.

Table 2 PISA Results Over Two Cycles

Subject/ Unit of Analysis	Year		Difference over time
	2006	2009	
Mathematics			
OECD Average	498	496	Not analysed in reports
England	495	493	“does not differ greatly” 2006-2009
Science			
OECD Average	500	501	Not analysed in reports
England	516	515	“similar” 2006-2009
Reading			
OECD Average	492	493	Not analysed in reports
England	495	493	Not statistically different 2006-2009

Sources: Bradshaw et al 2007; Bradshaw et al 2010.

Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis of the three main parties' manifestos before the 2010 election also checked for storylines regarding national or international comparisons. The incumbent Labour party made no references to international comparisons in its manifesto, preferring to refer to its own achievements, as well as what it would do to increase choice and empower schools (Labour 2010, 27-28). The manifesto of the Liberal Democrats identified the gap between rich and poor as being a key problem, as well as a rigid national curriculum and government interference in schools (Liberal Democrats 2010, 33, 36-37). The Liberal Democrats became the minor party in the Coalition government following the 2010 election. The major party in the Coalition is the Conservative party, the 2010 manifesto of which explicitly refers to “Britain slipping down the world league table” (Conservatives 2010, 51), as well as also identifying the rich/poor gap as being a problem (Ibid.). This storyline is interesting as although England is lower in the PISA league tables, as explained previously, this seems to be because performance had stayed the same while new countries had been included in the PISA survey.

The foreword to the White Paper that introduced free schools in England was written by Prime Minister David Cameron (Conservatives) and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg (Liberal Democrats). In it, they again use the storyline of a fall in the PISA ranking from 2000 to 2006 – the last date at which data were available, despite the cautions advised above (2010, 3). Later in the document, PISA rankings and those of another regular international study, PIRLS, are provided as evidence to show the apparent fall in standards (Ibid., 47). PISA is discussed above, however, of PIRLS, the statement is:

“For example, England fell in the PIRLS rankings from 3rd out of 35 in 2001 to 15th out of 40 in 2006” (DFE 2010, 47)

The international PIRLS reports, which are referenced in the above quotation, confirms this (Mullis et al. 2003, 27; Mullis et al. 2007, 40), however, the National Report for England of PIRLS 2006 notes how:

“The performance of the three highest attaining countries in 2001, Sweden, the Netherlands and England, was significantly lower in 2006.” (Twist et al. 2007, 19)

This analysis raises a question for the policy stream – why borrow policy from Sweden if that country is also falling down the league tables? This question has been included at this point to aid readability.

Another key storyline is that others are improving while “we” (presumably England is being referred to) are standing still (2010, 3). The PISA Scotland 2009 report, however, cautions that due to significant changes to the way in which the tests are carried out, it is not possible to compare before 2003 (maths) and 2006 (science) (Cooke and Bejtka 2010, 6). This raises concerns about Cameron and Clegg making precisely such a comparison. While there is some room for questioning this storyline, as the results in 2006 and 2009 were very similar, the argument that standards have stagnated does seem valid, at least for this three-year period (although these data were not publicly available when the White Paper was written).

Interviews

Again, participants highlighted the importance of PISA in justifying this policy on the grounds of international performance, and the belief is that autonomy will improve performance. Only one participant mentioned PIRLS and TIMSS, which are the international studies comparing performance in reading (PIRLS) and mathematics and science (TIMSS) conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

4.4 Policy Stream Results

Content and discourse analysis were used to identify where the policy idea originated. As above, desk research was triangulated with interviews.

4.4.1 INDV4 Policy Community Held Idea: Discourse Analysis

Reports on education from think tanks in each country were analysed to search for references to free schools, interviewees were also asked about the origin of the policy. Data which were found to show the *transfer* of the policy are presented in Part 4.4.3.

Desk Research

In England, three think tanks were found to have recommended the policy prior to its introduction. The most recent of these was clearly Policy Exchange. Michael Gove, the current Secretary of State for Education, was one of the founders of this think tank. The Policy Exchange website even explains how free schools were one of its policy ideas (Policy Exchange n.d.a). The most recent report before the policy’s introduction in England was published in 2009. In it, four

recommendations are made: new entrants should be allowed to establish academies; they should not be overseen at national level, but at the local or regional level by a range of actors (“authorisers”); all schools should be nationally funded in order to improve transparency; once the networks of authorisers is established it should be able to commission schools (Freedman and Meyland-Smith 2009, 59-63). Whilst this shows the policy community holding the idea, the same report makes it clear that the idea was borrowed from overseas, as will be explained in Part 4.4.3.

The Adam Smith Institute also discussed free schools; two mentions were found in reports from that organisation before the policy was introduced. The first, in 2000, detailed that the Conservatives may introduce such a policy if elected (Pollard 2000, 5). This again shows that the policy idea has been close to the Conservative Party for several years. Whilst it shows that the idea existed in the English policy community before Policy Exchange recommended it, it was the latter think tank which prepared and promoted the policy the most before its eventual introduction in 2010.

Also in 2000 a free schools policy was promoted by the Politeai think tank, in a booklet written by the then Shadow Secretary of State for Education William Hague (Conservative and the current Foreign Secretary). This plan was extremely similar to the free schools policy introduced in 2010: “...companies, charities and religious groups would own and manage the schools, pupils would be paid for by the State” (Lightfoot 2000). Interestingly, perhaps tellingly, the schools were to be called “partner schools” (Ibid.) – almost the same name as the policy introduced in New Zealand in 2012. This finding highlights a problem with attempting to separately analyse think tanks, political actors and policy transfer – as they are clearly linked.

Interviews

There was a consensus among the participants that the policy appeared on their radar very quickly. The earliest it had been heard of among the participants was 2007, when Michael Gove was given the shadow education brief. For the other participants it was around 2009, approximately one year before the 2010 general election. Even then, it was usually because there was a personal interest or involvement in the policy – such as deciding to set up a free school. One participant noted that Gove developed a relationship with the think tank Policy Exchange whilst in Opposition and a lot of work was done on the policy in advance of the election.

4.4.2 INDV5 Similar Schools Already Existed: Content Analysis

Comparison With Existing Schools: Explanation

A content analysis was conducted of the characteristics of state schools, academies and free schools in England. In addition, data were gathered on KIPP schools in the US. Due to several reforms over the years, as described in the overview of the English school system, England already had a large variety of schools. Most schools were classified as “maintained schools”, which are funded by central government via the local authority. Of these there are four types (DFE 2013b), but for this analysis, “community schools” were selected to represent

state schools in England as they represent the majority of maintained schools (DFE 2012a.). It is, however, very important to note the features of some of the other types of schools that exist in England, as they have some similar features to academies and free schools. Foundation schools, for example, may select some or all of their students based on religious reasons, although not all do, and enrolment is the responsibility of the governing body (not the local authority) (DFE 2012b). Some maintained schools (164 in 1998) are also defined as grammar schools, which means that they select some or all of their students based on ability (and then perhaps also on aptitude). If these schools convert to academy status, they can remain selective in their enrolment, by 1 July 2011 75 grammar schools had converted (DFE 2012c). The international data is shown in Table 3 to aid readability, however, the international comparisons will be made in Part 4.4.3 (INDV6) which will analyse whether transfer of the policy idea occurred.

Analysis

Table 3 shows some interesting similarities – as well as differences. Free schools and academies in England are governed with less community involvement than traditional state schools. The analysis shows that the freedoms of academies and free schools in England are almost identical. In fact, this is unsurprising because free schools have the legal status of academies. The difference, however, is in their establishment – academies before 2010 academies were created in a top-down way, such as when schools classed as failing were converted (Ball 2013, 206-297). When parent, community, religious or business groups apply to open a new school, that would be a free school (Ibid., 211). Free schools and academies in England have more freedom over their curriculum than their counterpart state schools. The (potential) involvement of religious organisations in education is not changed by the introduction of free schools. The ability of holding “longer” schools days is seen as a key freedom of free schools and academies, vis-à-vis community schools. However, this is disputed – it has been noted that schools in England already had this freedom. For example, they would often run breakfast clubs or after school clubs. Whilst this is not the argument given by the Government, the Academies Commission admits that this is the case – but argue that many head teachers feel that becoming an academy empowers or gives permission to actually use these freedoms (Gilbert et al 2013, 49). It should be noted that this Commission was in part set up by the Pearson Think Tank (Ibid., 14) – part of one of the largest education businesses in the world.

Finally, all of the school types are generally non-selective. However, this is not a change from the previous systems. In fact, where selection was already allowed in England, it is allowed to continue if schools convert to academy status.

In England, free schools are very similar to academies – the main difference identified in the analysis is that free schools are new schools, opened in a bottom-up approach. However, academies were already quite different from most state schools in England, so this must be borne in mind. The evolutionary development of the English school system means that some of the features of academies already existed in other school types, although the involvement of the

private sector is new. The ability to hold longer school days is questionable – as it appears that this was never prevented before.

Interviews

Participants gave a range of answers when asked about how different free schools are to other schools in England. It was pointed out several times that they are legally academies, but with a different mechanism to establish them. In terms of their freedoms, by its nature, autonomy will not always be used as it is expected to be. Two participants noted disappointment that free schools did not always make the most of their freedoms, in some cases appearing little different in practice from community schools. The DFE official described the “range of freedoms” that the schools had, some of which can be seen in Table 3. Perhaps the answers are best summed up by the response of one participant that in practice, free schools are “all things to all men”.

Table 3 Content Analysis of Various School Types in England and KIPP

	State Schools*	Pre-2010♦ Academies	Free Schools	KIPP	New in Free Schools	Same as KIPP
Profit	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Governance	Governing body. At least 1/3 are parents; up to 1/3 staff; 1/5 LEA; 1/5 from the community; may be up to 2 “sponsor governors” who have donated money or other services to the school.	Not local authority. May be sponsored by business, religious, community or other groups. Governing body has greater autonomy. Must have 2 parent governors.	Not local authority. May be sponsored by business, religious, community or other groups. Governing body has greater autonomy. Must have 2 parent governors.	Non-profit KIPP Foundation provides support. Managed locally.	Yes – as academies	Yes
Curriculum	National Curriculum	Free to choose	Free to choose	Same state and federal curricula as other public schools	Yes – as academies	No

	State Schools*	Pre-2010♦ Academies	Free Schools	KIPP	New in Free Schools	Same as KIPP
Secular	No	Can be faith-based	Can be faith-based	Yes	No	No
Longer day/term	Yes – but not always encouraged	Yes – it is encouraged	Yes	Yes	Yes – as academies	Yes
Establishment – top-down or bottom-up	Top-down	Top-down	Bottom-up	Bottom-up	Yes	Yes
Enrolment	Not selective	Some conversions are. New academies cannot select.	Not selective	Not selective	No	Yes

*Due to the years of reforms, there are several types of schools in England. The most common are “community schools”, as such this column refers to this type of school.

♦Before changes were made by the Coalition government at the same time as introducing the free schools policy, which are legally regarded as academies.

Sources: Abbott et al. 142; DFCSF 2010, 13; UK Government 2013; Ball 2013, 157; TSO 2003, 7, 17.

4.4.3 INDV6 Policy Transfer of the Idea: Content Analysis

Desk Research

In 2004 a Policy Exchange report described how in Sweden independent schools were found to be improving the system as a whole, and in the Netherlands the ability of parents to establish new schools was not causing chaos (Hockley and Nieto 2004, 12, 15). In the US, charter schools are described as being able to:

“...enjoy operational independence and are free to use pioneering educational techniques to raise academic achievement. They are also free to develop and pursue an alternative curriculum.” (Ibid., 16)

The aforementioned 2009 Policy Exchange report contained a comparison of free market reforms in three countries – academies in England, free schools in Sweden and charter schools in the US. Seven criteria were used and it was argued that no one type of system yet had the right balance in terms of design and regulation of the free market (Freedman and Meyland-Smith 2009, 6-7). The report held that the four recommendations outlined in 4.4.1 would enable

England to combine the best parts of Swedish free schools, charter schools in the US and the academies programme in England (Ibid., 59-63). This is convincing evidence of transfer of the policy idea to England from these countries.

Perhaps the most surprising observation of Table 3 is that the KIPP schools, according to the KIPP website, do not have freedom over the curriculum. This is despite the references made to KIPP practices by members of government in England. Table 3 does, however, show policy convergence with (and possible transfer from) KIPP in key characteristics such as the bottom-up nature of the establishment of schools and the longer school day. However convergence does not prove causality. Moreover, as was described in Part 4.2.2, at least one of these “new” freedoms already existed.

Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANS)

The membership list of the Atlas Network was accessed online. Several members are based in England – including Policy Exchange. The others are: Civitas, The Cobden Centre, EG West Centre, Institute of Economic Affairs, Liberty League, Politeai, Adam Smith Institute, Centre for Policy Studies (Atlas Network 2013). The websites and reports of the other think tanks were checked for reference to or support of the free schools policy. No references to free schools were found on the websites or reports from The Cobden Centre or the Centre for Policy Studies before the introduction of the policy (The Cobden Centre, n.d.; CFPS n.d.). Liberty League is a networking organisation for those who “are committed to the defence of freedom” (Liberty League, n.d.) but does not itself appear to have published anything on this policy. The EG West Centre is based at Newcastle University, and its Director is James Tooley. Its interests in terms of UK education policy involve introducing profit making chains to the education system as well as encouraging entrepreneurialism and competition in education (EG West Centre n.d.). The Institute of Economic Affairs, on the other hand, currently employs staff connected with the policy in New Zealand. For example, Gabriel Sahlgreen wrote a supportive paper as cited by the Maxim Institute in New Zealand (this is explained further in part 5.4.1) (IEA n.d.).

One of the features of the Adam Smith Institute report referred to in Part 4.4.1 is an extremely positive appraisal of the school system in New Zealand – for its 1988 reforms which:

“... introduced Charter Schools, to great effect... These changes have resulted in the devolution of power, responsibility, and information to parents, communities and teachers... An astonishing 82 percent of parents now claim to be satisfied with their children's education.” (Pollard 2000, 9).

This definition of charter schools should not be confused with its namesake in the US, although some of the characteristics of it are clearly similar. The above quotation suggests that the process of policy transfer between countries researched in this study may be self-affirming. However, it is beyond the scope of the research design to investigate further.

This content analysis therefore shows that the policy idea was transferred to England from the US and Sweden in particular, most successfully by Policy Exchange.

Interviews

Policy Exchange was identified in three interviews as the think tank which transferred the idea and recommended it for introduction in England. Some, such as the DFE official, did not identify any specific actors such as think tanks that had been particularly influential.

4.5 Politics Stream Results

4.5.1 INDV7 National Mood

The Sunday Times and two blogs were analysed to gauge the national mood. The Sunday Times was selected as this is the most-read Sunday broadsheet newspaper in England. Although this newspaper does cover Scotland as well, it is based in London and focuses mainly on England. In addition, any articles that referred to Scotland or other parts of the UK were not included in the analysis. Whilst this may raise questions of validity, there is no England-only newspaper that could be used. The journalist who had written about education the most during the selected time period is Jack Grimston (49 relevant articles). A summary of the articles is shown in Table 4. The content analysis shows a negative national mood concerned about low standards and high costs, and discussing private schools.

Table 4 Content Analysis of The Sunday Times

Code	Number of Articles	Percentage of Articles
Positive	6	12
Neutral/mixed	14	29
Negative	29	59
Schools	23	47
University	29	59
Low standards	16	33
High costs	14	29
Private schools	4	8

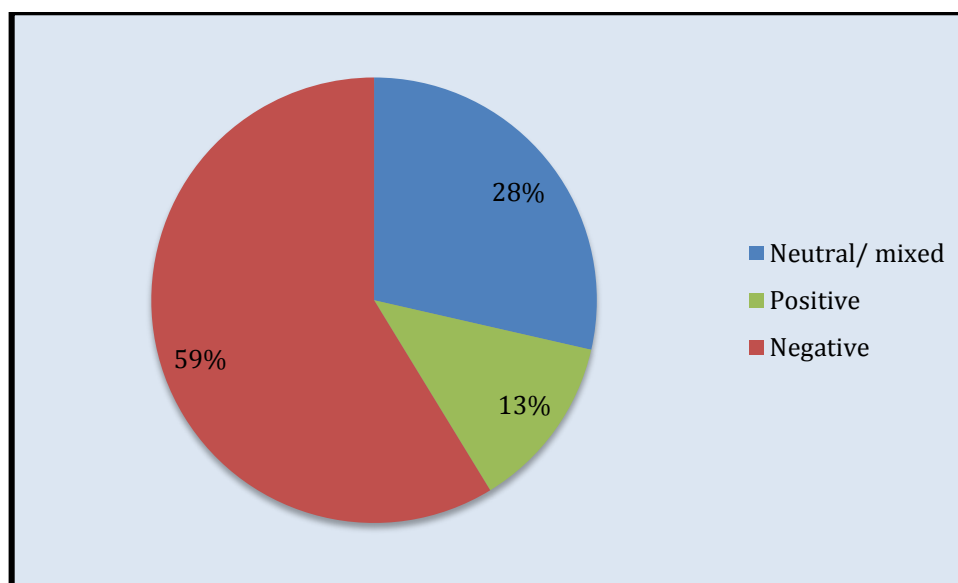
Table 5 shows a summary of the content analysis of blog articles in England. Guido Fawkes and Dizzy Thinks were selected because they are two of the most popular in England and are both London-based. Prime Minister David Cameron has used Guido Fawkes as a source in the House of Commons (Edemariam 2013) and both blogs feature in the Total Politics top five of the top 100 political blogs 2008-9 (Total Politics n.d.), one of the few political blog rankings available. The blogs again show a negative national mood. Interestingly, the blogs were more concerned about schools than universities – the opposite of the newspaper analysis above. Again, private schools were on the “national consciousness” but the blogs also discussed academies and free schools.

Table 5 Content Analysis of Blog Articles in England

Code	Number of Articles	Percentage of Articles
Positive	2	14
Neutral/mixed	4	29
Negative	8	57
Schools	12	86
University	2	14
Private schools	4	29
Academies	2	14
Free schools	2	14

An Approximation of the National Mood in England

Based on the number of positive, neutral/mixed and negative articles in all three data sources it was possible to approximate that the mood was mostly negative, and that positive opinions were heard least of the three categories – see Figure 2.

Figure 2 The Combined Data for the National Mood in England*Interviews*

Perhaps due to the vague nature of the concept of the national mood, participants gave quite different responses when questioned about it. One participant felt that it was better before the last election, because the maintained sector had more of a say, but now “there is a strong sense that the government is not listening”. Another participant noted frustration with Whitehall and centralised policies – which were regarded as not working. As such there was already a move to devolving power away from central government, but not necessarily to local government, as it was not performing as well as it should have been. Another participant felt that the move towards academies was “not hugely contentious” and that increased autonomy was generally felt to be not a

bad thing. Introducing profit making in education would, it was mentioned in one interview, have been impossible.

4.5.2 INDV8 Change of Key Personnel: Content Analysis

Desk Research

As already identified in the desk research section of INDV4, there is a connection between Gove and the free schools idea existing in the policy community, as the policy had been lauded as a good idea for the English education system for several years by the think tank Gove established, Policy Exchange. As Secretary of State for Education (SSFE) it was clearly his responsibility to implement the educational commitments in the Conservative manifesto – which included a commitment to introduce a free schools policy (although it was not yet named as such) (Conservatives 2010, 53). In literature on free schools, Gove entering government is very closely linked with the introduction of the policy (for example, Ball 2013, 157; Abbott et al. 2013, 185).

Interviews

Every participant identified Michael Gove becoming SSFE as the key change in personnel that facilitated this policy. One participant noted that a similar policy “parent sponsored schools” existed under the previous government, but did not have ministerial backing. Another key figure identified in laying the groundwork for free schools under the previous Labour administration was Lord Adonis. However, whilst, as one participant described it, “success has many fathers”, Gove becoming SSFE was clearly key.

4.5.3 INDV9 Policy Transfer by Political Actors: Content Analysis

Desk Research

Content analysis revealed that the same Conservative manifesto analysed in Part 4.3.3 which drew international comparisons also shows that the Conservative Party is a political institution that transferred the policy. The manifesto singles out Sweden and the US as providing a model for England to copy – so that “any good provider will be able to set up an Academy” (Conservatives 2010, 53). An interesting shortcoming of the 2010 White Paper that then introduced this manifesto commitment is that the following phrase is given but, despite its content, not referenced with evidence:

“It has been virtually impossible in this country to establish a new state-funded school without local authority support, despite convincing international evidence of the galvanising effect on the whole school system of allowing new entrants in areas where parents are dissatisfied with what is available.” (DFE 2010, 57)

While it is laudable to attempt to introduce a galvanising effect on the whole system, it would have been useful at this point for the White Paper to reference the evidence which indicates that this will happen, but was not done. The government could be referring to the Policy Exchange report published six years previously (described in Part 4.4.3), but this can only be a point to ponder. Rather, on the following page, two examples of US charter school chains are

provided, which are shown to be excelling in their performance (although the references are to the organisations' own websites, not peer-reviewed studies). Why this success would transfer to England and in what way it will provide the galvanising effect is not evidenced on these pages (Ibid., 58). Whilst this evidence may exist elsewhere, these arguments would have been more convincing if it had been included at the time.

There is, therefore, a clear (but perhaps not evidence-based) connection between the discourse of a problematic lower PISA ranking identified in Part 4.3.3 and the transfer of this specific solution. In addition, the booklet written in 2000 by the Conservative politician William Hague for the think tank Politeai (described in Part 4.4.1) shows again the political involvement in the transfer of the policy.

Interviews

One participant noted how Michael Gove took several trips to the US and Sweden to see how the policy worked there whilst in Opposition, which confirms the findings above. The DFE official also referred to the government's learning from policies elsewhere, specifically US charter schools.

4.6 Policy Entrepreneur Results

4.6.1 MV1 Member(s) of Government: Content Analysis

Desk Research

Content analysis identified the SSFE Michael Gove as being the member of government most closely associated with the policy. The White Paper, which officially introduced the policy, has two forewords: The first is written by Prime Minister David Cameron and Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg; the second is written by Michael Gove (DFE 2010, 3-7). However, Michael Gove is the member of government most publicly associated with this policy. For example, an analysis of Hansard reveals that it was Michael Gove who explained the policy to Parliament on November 2010 and also updated Parliament in May 2011 (House of Commons Hansard Debates 15 November 2010 and 23 May 2011). Searches of Hansard found that neither Cameron nor Clegg have speeches associated with free schools recorded. In addition, Gove has given high-profile speeches at the think tanks Policy Exchange and the Social Market Foundation, and the 2010 Conservative Party Conference where his involvement and personal passion for the policy is clear (Gove 2011; Gove 2013; Gove 2010b).

Interviews

Michael Gove was clearly identified as the member of government who ensured that this policy was brought into being: "The drive came from Gove." Nobody else inside government was identified as being as important in introducing this policy as Gove, by any participant.

4.6.2 MV2 Member(s) of Policy Networks or TANS: Content Analysis

Desk Research

Secondary research identified a small number of people who may have had a significant impact on the introduction of this policy. Again, this highlights a link between the Policy Exchange think tank and the policy. As referred to in part 4.4.1, in 2004 Tony Hockley and Daniel Nieto produced a report for the think tank which was about increasing school choice, focusing on diversity in the schools systems of Sweden, the Netherlands and also charter schools in the US (Hockley and Nieto 2004). In 2009 Sam Freedman and Daisy Meyland-Smith produced a report for the same think tank entitled “A Guide to School Reforms”. This publication contains “ten key lessons” drawn from the experiences of academies, free schools in Sweden and charter schools in the US (Freedman and Meyland-Smith 2009).

Interviews

Several names from the policy community were suggested – many connected with the think tank Policy Exchange, in fact, one participant directly referred to “the team within Policy Exchange” as being instrumental. Individuals at Policy Exchange identified in the interviews as having a particularly significant impact on the policy are James O’Shaughnessy and Sam Freedman. One participant noted how Rachel Wolf ensured that free schools were high on the agenda when working for Michael Gove. The diversity of the names given in the interviews shows a lack of consensus about a policy entrepreneur outside of government. Rather, a number of people who were highly and variously involved with the policy were identified. It was also noted that Gove was also working on the policy whilst outside of government.

4.7 Policy Window Results

4.7.1 MV3 Problem Event

No single problem event was identified in England, rather, serious on-going problems formed a discourse of failure, especially for disadvantaged students. This problem was compounded by a lower PISA ranking. In 2010 the Conservative Party referred to this lower ranking in the world league tables in its manifesto. Triangulation of the content and discourses analyses of the problem stream therefore points to the publication of PISA 2009 as being the closest identified occurrence to a problem event. However, this is a different kind of problem event than those described by Kingdon, which are disasters such as a bridge collapse or earthquake (Kingdon 2011, 94-96) – i.e. with graphic and immediate loss of human life. One interview participant commented in a way very much in line with the logic of Olsen’s garbage can model as outlined above: “[They] tried a comprehensive system and decided it wasn’t working so decided to try something else.”

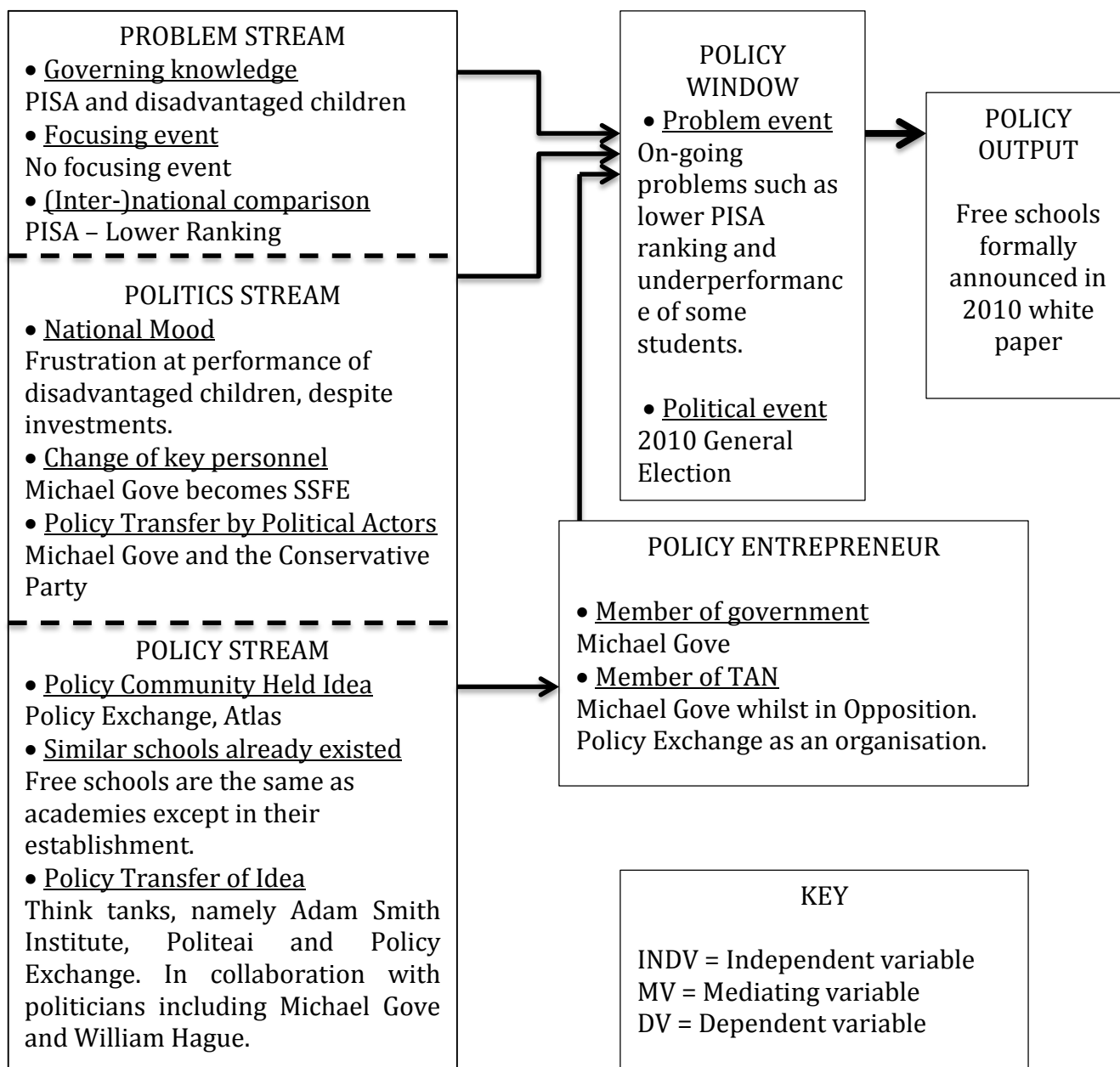
4.7.2 MV4 Political Event

The 2010 election is clearly the main political event that facilitated the introduction of the policy. However, it only did so because Michael Gove became

Secretary of State for Education. Going slightly further back, Michael Gove becoming Shadow Secretary of State for Education whilst in Opposition was also important as this gave him more time to prepare the policy for introduction.

4.8 England Results Summary

Figure 3 England Results Synthesised into the Conceptual Diagram



5 New Zealand Results

5.1 Chapter Introduction

In addition to the desk research, eighteen experts were contacted which resulted in one interview and two survey responses: from one academic researcher who has specialised in this policy and two from teachers. Extensive efforts were made to seek the opinions of a civil servant and/or Minister however unfortunately it was not possible to conduct an interview or have a survey completed by somebody in those positions. In addition, several academics, journalists and bloggers were contacted but were unavailable. Following an overview of the New Zealand school system, the results are presented per variable and then synthesised into the conceptual diagram.

5.2 Overview of the New Zealand School System

New Zealand has one of the most autonomous education systems in the world – since the 1989 Education Act established self-managing schools (Nusche et al 2012, 13). The country has a parliamentary form of government, and in 1996 the electoral system was changed to a form of proportional representation, which has increased the number of smaller parties in both the parliament and the government (Ibid., 14). New Zealand has a mix of school types – primary schooling is generally from age 5 to 13 and then secondary schooling is from 13 to 18. In some instances, children may attend a third type of school between primary and secondary school (such as junior high) or begin secondary school at age 11 (Nusche 2012, 15-16). 85% of students attend state schools, which have no religious character, but 11% attend state-integrated, which follow the national curriculum and often have a religious character. 4% attend private schools, which are either religious or of a particular educational philosophy such as Montessori (Ibid., 16).

The 1989 Education Act also provides for Māori communities to establish and run their own schools – currently around 3% of New Zealand’s population attends such a school (education may therefore be in Māori). There are also a small number of Pasifika-medium schools for children of Pacific island background (Ibid.).

Reforms since the 1980s have sought to devolve power to the schools. For example:

“The Tomorrow’s Schools reform policy texts included an existing social democratic partnership rhetoric, positioning principals as professional leaders working collaboratively with elected parent boards of trustees.” (Court and O’Neill 2011, 119).

However, Court and O’Neill argue that the “choice” created for parents was really being steered from the centre – the Ministry of Education – through National Education Goals and National Administrative Guidelines (Ibid., 121). These

include overarching goals, a national curriculum and administrative guidelines for schools (Nusche et al 2012, 18). The national curriculum sets out objectives and expected performance for each level. There is an English version and a Māori version, which is more tailored to Māori values (Ibid.). National standards were introduced in 2010 at primary level; students are assessed by their teachers against nationally-set criteria. Initially reports went to the parents but from 2012/13 schools also have to report these results to the Ministry of Education (Ibid.). Secondary education is assessed through the National Certificate of Educational Achievement (NCEA) – in three levels (1,2,3) generally in years 11, 12 and 13. The state school system is free and non-selective (Ibid., 19). In the 1990s attempts were made to retain community involvement in schools, but to negotiate teachers' pay and conditions at school level, rather than nationally (Court and O'Neill 2011, 122).

In December 2012 the Education Amendment Bill 2012 was introduced to the New Zealand parliament. The Bill allows for the creation of a new type of school – partnership schools – which, according to the partnership schools Working Group website, will “bring together education, the business sector and community groups to provide new opportunities for students to achieve education success.” (PSKH Working Group 2012). In the Confidence and Supply Agreement between the National Party and ACT New Zealand party in 2011 it was stated that initially these schools would be located in south Auckland and Christchurch (National – ACT New Zealand 2011, 3).

5.3 Problem Stream Results

5.3.1 INDV1 Governing Knowledge: Discourse Analysis

PISA, Education Counts and the governing parties' most recent manifestos were analysed and the results triangulated with answers collected in the primary research.

PISA

The main storylines identified in PISA reports are that New Zealand has among the best performance in the world but Māori and Pasifika students routinely underachieve. For example, in 2006 only two countries were significantly higher than New Zealand in science, eight others were not significantly statistically different and 46 had significantly lower performance (Telford and Caygill 2007, 6-7). New Zealand also had the largest range of any country, which is partly because of some very well performing students. As such, the 2006 report recommended that New Zealand concentrate on helping students who are at risk of underachieving (Ibid., 8). While students of European and Asian ethnicity performed among the best in the world in 2006, many Māori and Pasifika students were performing much worse. Māori and Pasifika students often perform lower than the OECD average (Ibid., 12-13; 26; 32-33).

In 2009 New Zealand had similar results. For example, in reading, only four countries out-performed New Zealand. But New Zealand had a higher proportion of weaker students than some similar countries (Telford and May 2010, 8-10);

with Māori and Pasifika students again scoring on average lower than other students, and also below the OECD average (Ibid., 12). In mathematics, the same storyline of high performance overall but low performance for Māori and Pasifika students was repeated (Ibid., 24; 27-28). This was also the case in science (Ibid., 35; 38).

Education Counts

The Ministry of Education's Education Counts website provides regularly updated statistics and analysis regarding education (Education Counts n.d.a). Data are available for 54 indicators but two were selected for the discourse analysis due to feasibility; school leavers with NCEA Level 1 or above, and school leavers with NCEA 2 or above. These indicators were selected because NCEA (National Certificate for Educational Achievement) is the national qualification for New Zealand; as such they are a valid way to assess what problems were identified in the school system.

The main storylines identified were that the percentage of schools leavers attaining Level 1 has increased steadily from when the NCEA was introduced in 2002 to 2011. This is true for the average and all ethnic groups but *particularly* Pasifika and Māori. For example, in 2002 the Māori NCEA attainment rate was slightly below 40%. In 2011 this was almost 70%. Pasifika attainment rose from slightly above 50% to almost 80% (Education Counts n.d.b, 2). The socio-economic mix of a school is also found to have a clear positive correlation with the outcome of the school; more school leavers from higher socio-economic deciles achieve NCEA Level 1 (Ibid., 3). The indicator for NCEA Level 2 drew the same conclusions regarding overall improvement, and especially for Māori and Pasifika students. In addition, socio-economic background was also found to be very important in determining outcomes (Education Counts n.d.c, 2-3).

Manifestos

National is the main party of government in New Zealand. In the Policy 2011 document, the main education problem storyline identified a need to continue improving poor quality school buildings, particularly following the earthquake, and get better value for money, for example by exploring public-private partnerships. Māori and Pasifika underachievement was not mentioned as a storyline (National 2011, 1-4). The ACT New Zealand manifesto, however, begins by highlighting the "well-known long-tail of underachievers" (ACT New Zealand n.d.). The Māori manifesto did not clearly identify problems – but rather focused on its plans for the future. The highest priority was a literacy and numeracy strategy for deciles 1-3 schools, which are in the most disadvantaged areas. Another recurring storyline was the aim to make the school system more appropriate to the needs of Māori families (Māori Party 2011, 14-15). United Future campaigned on four key issues, none of which was education-related (United Future 2011b).

Interviews

Participants identified a range of problems in New Zealand education: underperformance of particular demographics – Māori, Pasifika and lower socio-economic background children; a lack of funding; class sizes; "supposed teacher shortages" and national standards.

5.3.2 INDV2 Focusing Event: Content Analysis and Discourse Analysis

Key word searches were carried out in the New Zealand Herald from 15 October 2011 to 14 October 2011, using the words “parent choice”; “parental choice”; “failing schools” and “education” within 5 words of “inequality”. In addition, based on the literature and storylines identified in the National Party manifesto (above), two additional key word searches were carried out for New Zealand: “school” within 5 words of “earthquake” and “education” within 5 words of “earthquake”.

Table 6 Newspaper Keyword Analysis

Key word	Number of Articles
“Parent choice” or “Parental choice”	10
“Failing school”	11
“Education” within 5 words of “inequality”	7
“School” within 5 words of “earthquake”	35
“Education” within 5 words of “earthquake”	10

Newspaper data source: Lexis Nexis

Discourse analysis of the ten articles featuring the key word “parent choice” or “parental choice”, revealed that six were in some way favourable for increasing parental choice: three about school uniforms and stationery and three about charter schools (as partnership schools were known at the time, and had already become a topic in the news). One article claimed that parental choice is often informed by “ropey” government statistics and another opined that parents would not choose charter schools because they would have untrained teachers. Overall, it seemed there were more voices in favour of increasing parental choice.

The news coverage of failing schools in the year before the introduction of the policy was already featuring charter schools – mentioned in six articles. Most of the articles were relatively neutral explanations of the schools, although one editorial was strongly in favour and two articles were strongly against them. There is a link with the governing knowledge results – as several articles connected the storyline of failing schools with low-income, Māori and Pasifika families, although one pointed out the demonisation of these families in the media – arguing that it is the schools failing the families and not vice-versa. Inequality was often linked with racism, low expectations and poverty. Two articles mentioned that a new Teach First policy should be supported because innovative solutions should be sought to reduce educational inequality.

However the overwhelming storyline in the content and discourse analysis is the Christchurch earthquake of 2011. Closer analysis of the discourses of the articles revealed that post-earthquake recovery plans were very unpopular, especially

the closing and merging of schools, which was considered arbitrary. One governor of a Māori school being merged with another Māori school claimed this was being done so that there would be enough children to justify the creation of a charter (partnership) school. The overwhelming impression given by the articles was that the building damage caused by the earthquake was severe and decisions were not being made with the involvement of the communities. Several articles suggested that the earthquake was being misused as an opportunity to advance unpopular policies. One article featured a comment from a New Orleans citizen who drew parallels between the huge increase in charter schools there after hurricane Katrina and the creation of charter (partnership) schools in New Zealand following its own natural disaster.

Interviews

The Christchurch earthquake of 2011 was identified by one participant as being supportive to the introduction of this policy. Another participant expressed concern that the school mergers in Christchurch were problematic.

5.3.3. INDV3 (Inter-)national Comparison: Content and Discourse Analysis

PISA

The PISA results from 2006 to 2009 show no statistically significant difference in any subject between the cycles – see Table 7. In addition, New Zealand performed well above the OECD average. A recurring factor in the various reports analysed is the inclusion of new countries to PISA. For example, Shanghai-China did not participate in or before the 2006 study, but entered the 2009 study with the highest score in every category (Telford and Caygill 2007, 11, 23, 31; Telford and May 2010, 35, 25, 13). While this makes new comparisons possible for 2009, it highlights why rank order from cycle to cycle should be compared with caution.

Table 7 PISA Results Over Two Cycles

Subject/Country	Year		Difference over time
	2006	2009	
Mathematics			
OECD Average	498	496	Not analysed in reports
New Zealand	522	519	“No statistically significant change” 2003-2009
Science			
OECD Average	500	501	Not analysed in reports
New Zealand	530	532	“No significant change” 2006-2009
Reading			
OECD Average	492	493	Not analysed in reports
New Zealand	521	521	No change from 2000-2009

Sources: Telford and Caygill 2007; Telford and May 2010.

Discourse Analysis

No storylines regarding national or international comparisons were observed in policy documents from the main party in government, National, or two of the supporting parties in government – the Māori Party and United Future (National 2011, Māori Party 2011, United Future 2011a). The 2011 ACT manifesto, available on its website, does however make national comparisons by identifying that 20% of New Zealand students are being failed by the education system.

Interviews

One interviewee revealed that PISA was an influential international comparison and also the problem of certain groups underperforming.

5.4 Policy Stream Results

5.4.1 INDV4 Policy Community Held Idea: Discourse Analysis

Desk Research

Reports from several think tanks in New Zealand were checked for reference to the policy, prior to its introduction. The clearest identified support of this policy was found in the work of the Maxim Institute and New Zealand Business Roundtable (NZBR) (which subsequently became part of the New Zealand Initiative).

The Maxim Institute also represents a link between the problem identification and very similar policy solutions: in 2006 it published a report regarding underachievement of Māori students. The recommendations were to increase the responsiveness of the school system to community needs and for greater school freedoms (Maxim Institute 2006, 1, 17).

The NZBR also promoted the policy idea, for example in March 2011 its director Richard Kerr argued that the government response to the Christchurch earthquake should be bottom-up policy; rather than top-down planning, which was said to be unviable (Kerr 2011a, 1-3). Interestingly, Kerr noted how, although there was much work to be done, both the ACT party and Māori party had “embraced the concept of choice” (2011c, 3).

Interviews

The participants in the research in New Zealand did not mention any think tanks in their responses.

5.4.2 INDV5 Similar Schools Already Existed: Content Analysis

Comparison With Existing Schools: Explanation

In New Zealand the majority of schools are “state schools”, the characteristics of which are described in Table 8. Other types of school in New Zealand include state integrated schools, which are largely government funded and have a particular religious or learning philosophy base. Around 10% of students attend one of these schools (Ministry of Education 2013b), but as the vast majority of students attend state schools, these were included in the analysis. Then, in addition to the characteristics of partnership schools, KIPP schools in the US and

free schools in England were included in the analysis – as it has been said that the policy has taken inspiration from those schools. The data regarding free schools in England was taken from Part 4.4.2. The international data is shown in Table 8 to aid readability, however, the international comparisons will be made in Part 5.4.3 (INDV6) which will analyse whether transfer of the policy idea occurred.

Analysis

Partnership schools will in some ways resemble existing schools in New Zealand, as there is the (potential) involvement of religion and like other schools they will be generally non-selective. However, there are significant differences – namely that partnerships schools will be permitted to make profit and also regarding freedom over the curriculum compared to state schools. The bottom-up nature of the establishment of partnership schools is also striking. In summary, there is evidence of domestic policy learning but also of significant new policy ideas.

Table 8 Content Analysis of Various School Types in New Zealand, Free Schools in England and KIPP in the US

	State Schools	Partnership Schools	KIPP Schools	New in New Zealand	Same as KIPP	Same as English Free Schools
Profit	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
Governance	Elected board of trustees comprising five parents, the principal, a staff member, and student representative in secondary schools.	Non-profit/for-profit group	Non-profit KIPP Foundation provides support. Managed locally.	Yes	Yes – but non-profit only	Yes – but non-profit only
Curriculum	New Zealand Curriculum or Te Marautanga o Aotearoa	Can choose any approved	Same state and federal curricula as other public schools	Yes	No	Yes

	State Schools	Partnership Schools	KIPP Schools	New in New Zealand	Same as KIPP	Same as English Free Schools
Secular	Yes	Can be faith-based	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
Longer day/term	Minimum two hours in morning and two hours in afternoon, some half days every year – but all schools exceed this.	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Establishment - top-down or bottom-up	Top-down	Bottom-up	Bottom-up	Yes	Yes	Yes
Enrolment	Not selective	Not selective – may hold ballot if oversubscribed	Not selective	No	Yes	Yes

Banks, J n.d., 20-23; National/ ACT New Zealand 2011; KIPP 2013.

Interviews

Participants differed in their opinion of how different the partnership schools policy is from pre-existing school types. One participant felt that partnership schools were “reasonably different” although there were already some provisions to set up new schools. The participants took generally took cautious (at best) stances on the policy; with one stating that the policy is inherently right wing and another making it clear that the policy is “bad idea”.

5.4.3 INDV6 Policy Transfer of the Idea: Content Analysis

Desk Research

The Maxim Institute published a 2005 report on parental choice comparing the status quo in New Zealand with “international trends”, looking favourably on free schools in Sweden, charter schools in Arizona, US, private schools in the

Netherlands, and free market-oriented education policy in Australia (Thomas and Oates 2005, 32-40).

Private involvement in education was eulogised in a speech at the Maxim Institute by Professor James Tooley in 2010. Tooley is an education specialist based in England who particularly focuses on private provision of education (for example Tooley 1996; Tooley 2000). At one point he says that, at least in the developing world:

“When the private sector is given free rein there is this clear advantage in achievement” (Tooley 2010, 35 minutes)

While not referring to the policy itself, this speech is clearly in line with of some of its principles.

In 2009, Richard Kerr wrote how one in eight Swedish schools was a free school, and that they had become popular across the political spectrum. In addition, the profit motive for improvement “across-the-board” was highlighted (2009, 1-2). In May of 2011, Kerr described a visit he had made to the US to learn about charter schools there. The report was favourable, with the only concerns being that the model was not being rolled out widely enough for the positive effects to be systemic, unlike in Sweden and reforms in the Netherlands (2011b, 1-3). Also in August 2011, Kerr wrote about the problem of a lack of choice in New Zealand education, particularly for Māori families. The solution was “the power of exit”, as exists in Sweden (2011c).

In addition to his own pieces on the topic, the NZBR website showcased articles and reports from around the world. These include Gabriel Sahlgreen’s positive report about the effect of the profit motive in education in Sweden, and a Wall Street Journal article about the charter school programme, which had a mixed view of President Obama, mainly because he did not proclaim the merits of charter schools and competition in education prominently enough (Sahlgreen 2010; Peterson 2010). The NZBR, then, may be identified as a node where the Māori and Pasifika underachievement and post-earthquake recovery problems in New Zealand were connected with the free/charter school solution from overseas.

Analysis of the policy changes in New Zealand and international data shown above in Table 8 reveals that transfer of the policy idea may have taken place. Partnership schools in New Zealand and KIPP schools all seem to be governed with less community involvement than traditional state schools in those countries. Longer school days and terms are key features of free schools, partnership and also KIPP schools. Congruence with KIPP and English free schools supports the aforementioned government claim to have been inspired by these two systems. Areas where policies have not converged include the profit motive in partnership schools (which does not exist in free schools or KIPP) and the potential involvement of religion in partnership and free schools (but not KIPP). The addition of profit to the state-funded school system in New Zealand is genuinely new – perhaps inspired by Sweden or other charter schools than KIPP

in the US, which are allowed to make a profit (for example, Sahlgreen 2010, 6; Miron et al. 2010, 2). The new elements of the partnership schools policy in New Zealand that show similarities with policies around the world indicate policy convergence and suggest policy transfer.

Transnational Advocacy Networks (TANS)

It is possible that the NZBR took hold of this policy due to its membership of the “Economic Freedom Network” of think tanks. In 1999, a Canadian think tank and member of the network published an article praising the changes in New Zealand during the 1990s that made schools self-governing and also de-zoned them. The schools are in fact called “charter schools”, but the reforms were said to be incomplete because most schools did not have control of 100% of their budgets and the unions had blocked the proposal to allow popular schools to expand and unpopular schools to close (The Fraser Institute 1999). In addition, the New Zealand Institute and the Maxim Institute are both the only members of the Atlas Network based in New Zealand (Atlas 2013). The Atlas Network gives an impression of the links that exist between the policy communities in London and New Zealand. For example, Sahlgreen, author of the report showcased on the NZBR website (as mentioned above) is currently working for the Institute of Economic Affairs (IEA) in London. In addition to this connection, Ruth Porter, the current Communications Director at the IEA, has previously worked at the Maxim Institute in New Zealand (IEA n.d.).

Interviews

The participants in the research in New Zealand did not mention any think tanks or TANS transferring the policy in their responses, however this may be partly due to the limited number of experts who it was possible to interview.

5.5 Politics Stream Results

5.5.1 INDV7 National Mood

The Sunday edition of the New Zealand Herald was selected due to its wide readership and status as a quality paper. All editorials between 15 October 2011 and 14 October 2012 were analysed, and 8 found to be related to education.

Again the coding shows that the overwhelming mood was negative, with the two most common concerns being related to the financing of education. The results are shown in Table 9.

Table 9 New Zealand Herald Newspaper Analysis

Code	Number of Articles	Percentage of Articles
Positive	1	11
Neutral/mixed	1	11
Negative	7	78
Schools	7	78
University	2	22
Underfunding	2	22
Too expensive	2	22

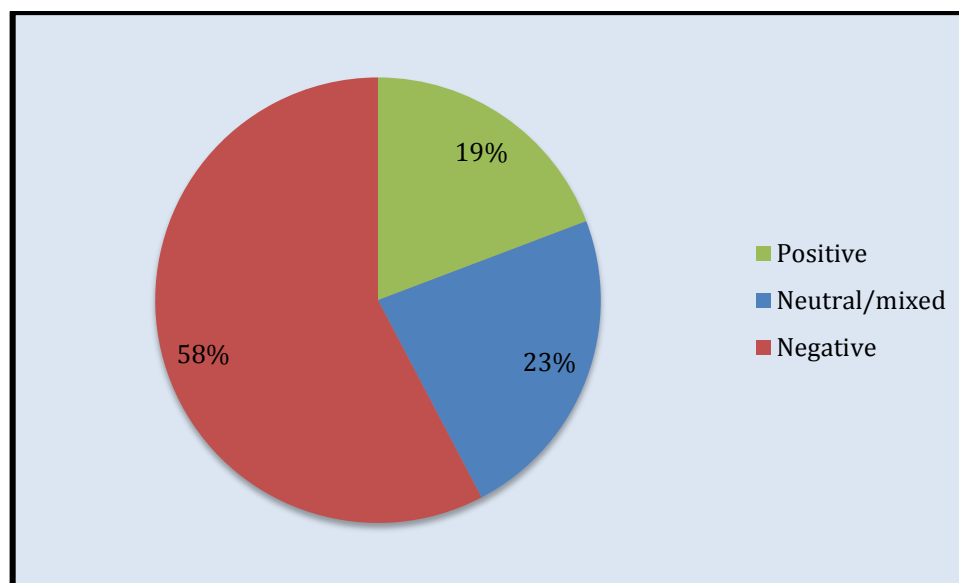
Table 10 shows a summary of the coded New Zealand blogs for the selected time period. The two blogs selected were Hard News and Kiwi Blog, which are among the most popular in New Zealand. The former was analysed for the same time period as the newspaper, however as Kiwi Blog had an exceptionally large number of relevant articles it was necessary to sample a one month time period (28 May 2012 to 27 June 2012), which is the approximate mid-point of the newspaper and other blog analyses. The coding results show a negative national mood, although less than 50% were coded as such. Interestingly the issues raised by the blogs differed to the newspaper analysis – the blogs were more concerned about the new national standards and league tables that had been recently introduced, than the funding of education. In addition, the use of unreliable data was a recurring theme.

Table 10 Content Analysis of Blog Articles in New Zealand

Code	Number of Articles	Percentage of Articles
Positive	4	24
Neutral/mixed	5	29
Negative	8	47
Schools	13	77
University	1	6
National standards	6	35
League tables	5	29
Unreliable data	3	18

An Approximation of the National Mood in New Zealand

Based on the number of positive, neutral/mixed and negative articles in all three data sources it was possible to approximate that the mood was mostly negative, and that positive opinions were heard least of the three categories – see Figure 4.

Figure 4 The Combined Data for the National Mood in New Zealand

Interviews

One respondent felt that “reform was inevitable”, which fits in with the national mood analysis above. However, he noted that this did not mean any reform would be acceptable: “there is a great deal of concern about this policy”, at an earlier point in the interview he had described it as “an inherently right-wing solution”, questioning whether it was the right solution for the identified problems. Interestingly, the participant also self-reflects on his position in the discourse, acknowledging (without being asked) that he associates predominantly with people who share similar opinions to him. This fits with but also challenges Hajer’s 10 steps to discourse analysis described in Part 3.2.3 – as the participant came close to recognising himself that he may be “caught up” in one discourse at the expense of another. However, this ability to self-reflect is not expected in the 10 steps described by Hajer. Another respondent noted how “faith was being lost in the Ministry of Education and communication between educationalists and policy makers was not good”.

5.5.2 INDV8 Change of Key Personnel: Content Analysis

Desk Research

Following the 2011 election, eight parties were elected to Parliament. The National Party had the most Members of Parliament (59) and formed a government, with “confidence and supply agreements” with three smaller parties: Māori Party (3 MPs), ACT New Zealand (1 MP) and United Future (1 MP) (New Zealand Parliament n.d.). The Minister of Education is Hon Hekia Parata of the National Party, but John Banks, leader of the ACT party is a minister outside cabinet who has several responsibilities in government, including Associate Minister of Education (DPMC 2013). It appears to be the involvement of John Banks that was most significant – as he is the only elected MP from ACT New Zealand, and the partnership schools policy was announced in the Confidence and Supply Agreement between the National Party and ACT New Zealand, but in none of the agreements with the two other parties in government (National –

ACT New Zealand 2011; National – Māori Party 2011; National – United Future 2011b). Moreover, this policy existed in the manifesto of ACT New Zealand but none of the other parties of government. As such, it seems highly likely that there is a causal connection between John Banks' membership of government and the policy being introduced.

The newspaper analysis undertaken as part of the desk research into the national mood also uncovered suggestions that the appointment of a senior civil servant, Lesley Longstone, may explain the Policy movement from England to New Zealand:

“Longstone was appointed in July and started work two weeks before the election. Her last role was overseeing the introduction of free schools - the UK version of charter schools - in Britain [sic]... A YouTube video from January shows her speaking enthusiastically to a free schools conference... Asked what role, if any, Longstone had played in the deal, a Ministry of Education spokesman said there would be no comment on coalition negotiations.” (Laxon 2011)

However, despite this suggestion, as the idea was already in the ACT New Zealand manifesto, Longstone taking up a position two weeks before the election cannot be the cause of the outcome – in addition, as shown in 5.4.1, the policy idea already existed in New Zealand. This does not, however, rule out the possibility that Longstone was recruited and brought to New Zealand in anticipation of this policy being implemented following the 2011 election, however that is a different question.

Interviews

In the interviews John Banks becoming Associate Minister for Education was identified as the key change in personnel that facilitated the introduction of the policy, although not all participants felt able to answer this question.

5.5.3 INDV9 Policy Transfer by Political Actors

Desk Research

The ACT manifesto described in Part 5.3.3 points to solutions by noting that Australia, Sweden, the US and Great Britain are all “showing the benefits of making education more market-like and entrepreneurial” (ACT n.d.). As in England, the storylines of underachievement and this policy solution were connected – transfer of the policy was made by a political actor.

Interviews

It was noted that politicians had particularly looked to free schools in Sweden and the UK and charter schools in the US. According to one participant “New Zealand education seems to follow plans which have failed elsewhere... like England or the USA”. The only political actors mentioned as transferring the policy were John Banks and his party ACT New Zealand.

5.6 Policy Entrepreneur Results

5.6.1 MV1 Member(s) of Government: Content Analysis

Desk Research

As identified in part 5.5.2, John Banks appears to be the member of government closest to the policy in New Zealand. This is corroborated by a recent speech in Parliament made by Banks regarding the policy:

“The Bill as it relates to Partnership Schools is drawn from a proposal in the ACT and National confidence and supply agreement... Partnership Schools spring from the values of the ACT party.” (Banks 14 May 2013)

Other Members of Parliament, in disagreeing with the policy, support the conclusion that Banks should be identified as the policy entrepreneur. For example:

“The question the Government asked itself was: “How do we get the votes in the House? Well, we do it by giving John Banks charter schools.” It asked: “Is this consistent with Act Party ideology?”, rather than: “Is this consistent with the evidence-based approach to education?”.” (Hipkins 14 May 2013)

In addition, partnership schools were recently described as “...the brainchild of ACT leader, John Banks” during the introduction of Banks by a reporter before a TV news interview (TVNZ 2013).

Interviews

Again, John Banks was identified as the key member of government regarding this policy. The Minister of Education and Catherine Isaac were also mentioned as having important roles. Not all participants could identify a particular member of government who was particularly influential in this policy's introduction.

5.6.2 MV2 Member(s) of Policy Networks or TANs: Content Analysis

Desk Research

Part 5.4.3 associated the policy in New Zealand with the Maxim Institute think tank, in particular Thomas and Oates. In addition, the several articles by Richard Kerr regarding free schools in Sweden, charter schools in the US and the need for systemic reform from the bottom up suggest that he may have played a key role in the policy development in New Zealand. However, while he may have played an important role in transferring the policy, he passed away in October 2011, a month before the last general election which preceded the introduction of the policy to parliament. Following his passing, the NZBR continued to be supportive of the policy and may have helped facilitate its introduction (for example Partridge and Wilkinson 2011, 1-2). The publication of articles from the Wall Street Journal regarding charter schools, as well as a London-based think tank report on Swedish free schools suggest links between these organisations may form a loose type of TAN.

Interviews

The participants did not mention or identify any members of the policy community outside of politics as being particularly influential in the policy's introduction.

5.7 Policy Window Results**5.7.1 MV3 Problem Event**

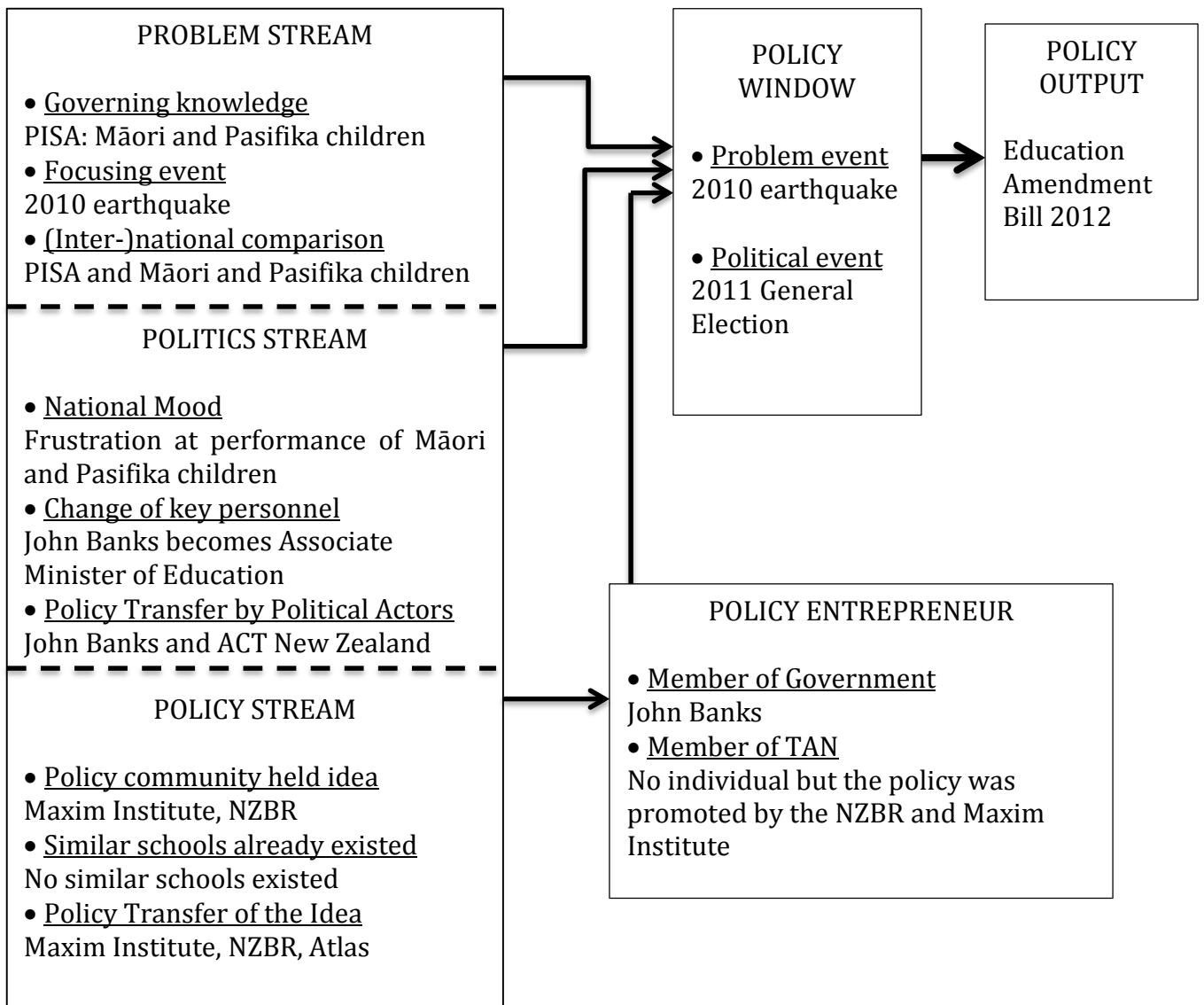
A similar on-going problem to that found in England was identified in New Zealand – international comparisons highlighting the underachievement of (in the case of New Zealand) Māori and Pasifika students. However this problem was identified in more than one PISA cycle, so cannot be described as “an event”. While the publication of the PISA reports may be events in themselves, the Christchurch earthquake that struck New Zealand in 2011 is the clearest example of a problem event identified in this research project. The event was catastrophic and, as the newspaper analysis shows, became the dominant story in the education discourse. It is interesting, then, that the main educational discourse was around the earthquake, national standards and league tables; but the problem discourse provided by government to explain the introduction of charter schools focuses more on disadvantaged groups.

5.7.2. MV4 Political Event

The 2011 election in New Zealand is clearly the key political event that facilitated the introduction of the policy. It was this event that led to the National – ACT New Zealand agreement that included the policy. The policy was led by ACT, who interestingly only have one MP, John Banks. Despite only having a single MP, due to the electoral system and bargaining, Banks became an Associate Minister of Education following the election, bringing the policy with him.

5.8 New Zealand Results Summary

Figure 5 New Zealand Results Synthesised into Conceptual Diagram



KEY		
INDV = Independent variable	MV = Mediating variable	DV = Dependent variable

6 Scotland Results

6.1 Chapter Introduction

In addition to desk research, twenty-three experts were contacted which resulted in a survey response from one teacher and telephone interviews with three other experts on education policy: Walter Humes and Tom Bryce, who are both leading education academics in Scotland and have written widely on education in Scotland, and Maria Walker, the Director of Education, Learning and Leisure at Aberdeenshire Council. In order to ensure the results were as comparable with England and New Zealand as possible, interviews were also sought with senior members of government and others close to government. However, these contacts did not result in interviews or surveys being carried out. During the interviews in Scotland it quickly became apparent that it was necessary to be more flexible with the questions than in the other two countries. As there is no free schools policy, it was useful to ask about other policies that have been introduced recently in Scotland. This means that several interviewees discussed in some detail the new Curriculum for Excellence, which has been the most significant education policy in Scotland in recent years. Following an overview of the Scottish school system, the results are presented per variable and then synthesised into the conceptual diagram.

6.2 Overview of the Scottish School System

Since the union of 1707 which formed the United Kingdom, education in Scotland has been separately organised from that in England and Wales (Clark, MM. and Munn, P. 1997, 3). The Secretary of State for Education in the UK Government is actually only responsible for policy in England (Ibid., 3). In 1980, before devolution of more powers to Scotland from London, the Education Minister (for Scotland) won legislative time in two parliaments – enabling the Education (Scotland) Acts of 1980 and 1981 to be passed. These Acts gave parents of children with special needs the right to have them educated in special schools or in mainstream schools. They also gave parents the choice to send their child to their local school or to select another – which must accept the child unless the school is oversubscribed (Pickard 2008, 216). Legislation by the Scottish Office allowing schools to “opt out” of local authority control (following the English example) and be funded directly by the Scottish Office was passed but was unpopular – only two schools opted out, compared with hundreds in England (Ibid., 218). The Scottish Office then devolved management powers, which undermined the case for schools to opt out (Ibid., 219). From 2000, Schools Ministers made it clear that:

“... provided standards were monitored, maintained and raised, education authorities should be freer to adapt the curriculum and organise schools according to local needs. One model was no longer deemed to fit all...”
(Pickard 2008, 222)

Pickard holds that ministers were keen to ensure the development of education in Scotland “in the Scottish tradition” (Ibid., 223) rather than follow England on

every issue – although there were some areas, such as public-private partnerships, where Scotland did follow policy south of the border (Ibid.). In the early 2000s a discussion was launched which led to the Curriculum for Excellence (CFE). Despite its name, the CFE set to define “the characteristics that education sought to instil in young people” – allowing schools to create and adapt an appropriate curriculum to meet these goals (Ibid., 223). In Scotland the vast majority of students attend state funded schools provided by the local authority (Smith 2008, 11). Since 2009 the Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning has been Michael Russell, of the Scottish National Party (SNP) (The Scottish Government 2012b).

6.3 Problem Stream Results

6.3.1 INDV1 Governing Knowledge: Discourse Analysis

PISA

The main storylines identified in 2006 were of very good performance (above the OECD average in all three areas) and a relatively small gap between high and low achievers (The Scottish Government 2007, 3-4; 9-11). Gender was identified as an increasing problem: in 2006 it had become a significant indicator in mathematics and was still significant in science. The bigger problem, however, was the effect that socio-economic background had on educational achievement – this effect was larger in Scotland than in many other countries – almost 16% of variance in performance (Ibid., 14).

In 2009, Scotland performed similarly in reading to 2006, although this was less well than in 2000 and 2003 (Cooke and Bejtka 2010, 12). Scotland’s range in performance was similar to 2006, but greater than in 2003 (Ibid., 13). Socio-economic factors were similarly likely to affect achievement as in other countries, however in Scotland the extent to which they affect performance was particularly strong, as in 2006. The 2009 mathematics results were also similar to 2006, although lower than 2003. Males performed better than females at a rate similar to the OECD average (Ibid., 16-17). In Science, Scotland also performed similarly well as the previous study, above the OECD average. Socio-economic background is not mentioned in the mathematics and science results (Ibid., 18-19).

Education Scotland Reports

Education Scotland is a government body which publishes analysis of inspections and other statistical data (Education Scotland 2012, 1). Discourse analysis was carried out on the 2008-2011 report as this report coincides with the introduction of the policy in England and New Zealand as well as the government documents analysed above. As such, it is valid to compare problems identified in this report with the government publications of the other two countries. The key storylines identified in this report were that – based on PISA data – Scotland is performing approximately as well as the other parts of the UK, or slightly better (Education Scotland 2012, 2). Overall, the storyline of education in Scotland seems very positive. Good points are clearly described but areas for concern or improvement seem less explicit. For example, “Young people are polite,

courteous and friendly and show a positive attitude to learning” (Education Scotland 2012, 18) is a key strength listed for secondary schools, but a following aspect for improvement states that “There is room to improve tracking and monitoring... particularly for those young people who are at risk of missing out” (Ibid., 19). The storylines suggest that schools and students are generally doing well, however those students “missing out” are not specifically identified. As such, the overall storyline is that Scotland is already performing well and also going in the right direction.

Manifesto

The SNP 2011 manifesto carried a positive message: that Scottish education was good, but should be improved. A recurring storyline was that schools needed to continue to be refurbished, and it was also mentioned that learning communities of schools should be given more autonomy (SNP 2011, 23-24).

Interviews

As was succinctly explained by Tom Bryce, problems depend on one’s perspective. Walter Humes noted that there were concerns about continuity and progression between levels, which was also noted by Maria Walker. Another participant mentioned that there had been concerns about “old” Standard Grade courses not being “sufficiently rigorous” – pupils were said to be “marking time”. Humes and Walker both commented on a particular group of students who were underperforming – for Humes the “bottom twenty per cent” and for Walker the “bottom middle”. Humes also pointed out the complexity of many social problems, which go beyond the scope of education system.

6.3.2 INDV2 Focusing Event: Content and Discourse Analysis

In Scotland the analysis was carried out for approximately the mid-time period of the other two countries’ analyses. The Scotsman and Scotland on Sunday were analysed from 1 November 2011 to 31 October 2012.

Table 11 Newspaper Keyword Analysis

Key word	Number of Articles
“Parent choice” or “Parental choice”	0
“Failing school”	6
“Education” within 5 words of “inequality”	1

Newspaper data source: Lexis Nexis

Of the six articles found regarding failing schools, most were relevant and so valid to include. A recurring storyline was that schools should not blame social deprivation for low standards, as some schools in similarly deprived areas perform better than others. Underachievement in general is a clear storyline running through five of the articles. One was particularly critical of First Minister Alex Salmond’s education policy track record, and noted that policies such as academies and free Schools would simply not be considered in Scotland *because*

they had been implemented in England (regardless of their performance). In one article Michael Russell was quoted as saying that “super” head teachers may be sent to failing schools in order to improve them. No focusing event was identified in the newspaper analysis.

Interviews

Nothing that could be identified as a focusing event was mentioned by any of the participants. On the contrary, it was mentioned several times that education policy development in Scotland develops slowly over a long time, by consensus.

6.3.3 INDV3 (Inter-)national Comparison: Content and Discourse Analysis

PISA

Table 12 shows the PISA results from Scotland for 2006 and 2009, as well as analysis garnered from the reports regarding trends over time. Scotland’s performance was consistently above the OECD average. Over time, however, there was a decrease in performance – but this was only between 2003 and 2006. Between 2006 and 2009 there was no significant change in performance.

Table 12 PISA Results Over Two Cycles

Subject/Country	Year		Difference over time
	2006	2009	
Mathematics			
OECD Average	498	496	Not analysed in reports
Scotland	506	499	Similar to 2006 but lower than 2003
Science			
OECD Average	500	501	Not analysed in reports
Scotland	515	514	Similar 2006-2009
Reading			
OECD Average	492	493	Not analysed in reports
Scotland	499	500	Similar to 2006 but lower than 2000 and 2003

Sources: The Scottish Government 2007; Cooke and Bejtka 2010.

Discourse Analysis

The manifesto of the Scottish National Party (SNP) from 2011 showed a different storyline. Little mention was made of national or international comparisons in the discourse, except to note that PISA 2009 showed the decline in standards in Scotland had been halted – not that it was “slipping down” the rank order. In addition, Scotland was performing as well or better than other parts of the UK (SNP 2011, 7, 23).

Interviews

PISA was mentioned in three out of four interviews. For example, Humes noted there is sensitivity around PISA as it suggests that performance in Scottish education has been static. Bryce noted that PISA is influential, but that it is acted

on in a way which is acceptable in Scotland. Scandinavian education was also mentioned frequently. One participant felt that “Scandinavian” education was “always being held up as better than Scottish education”, but the tone of the participant suggests that this was not a view he agreed with. Walker noted that they do also look to New Zealand and Australia.

6.4 Policy Stream Results

6.4.1 INDV4 Policy Community Held Idea: Discourse Analysis

Desk Research

Scottish think tank reports and websites were analysed for references to the policy. Scotland’s Futures Forum (SFF) is a think tank established by the Scottish Parliament (SFF n.d.). No recommendation to introduce the policy to Scotland was found in its publications, however some of the principles were present. For example, in one report in 2010 regarding funding for public services, the Forum argues that there should be more input from local communities and alternative providers of public services should be encouraged (SFF 2010, 3).

One common theme identified in recent reports from several Scotland-based think tanks is that of devolution and the question of Scotland’s possible independence from the United Kingdom. Reform Scotland, for example, has published a report with its preference for a “Devolution plus” option (Reform Scotland 2011). Perhaps other policy issues are currently less of a priority.

Interviews

The National Debate on education which took place in Scotland in 2002 was mentioned in three interviews. This was a “Scottish Executive consultation exercise open to pupils, parents, teachers and others with an interest in education” (Cassidy 2008, 23) which led to the creation of the CFE. All participants suggested that there is no desire for a free schools-type policy in Scotland. As Bryce stated “free schools are not on the agenda at all”. In addition, when asked, both Bryce and Humes noted that the involvement of think tanks in the policy community was rather limited. Humes noted the report by Scotland Futures Forum mentioned above, and another by the Commission on Educational Reform, but that they were not well-received. However, Humes did feel that the fact that these reports were produced is a reflection of unease about the reputation [of education] in Scotland. There was no consensus among the participants of whether education policy in Scotland is evidence based.

6.4.2 INDV5 Similar Schools Already Existed: Content Analysis

Existing Schools: Explanation

In Scotland, schools provided by the local authority were analysed according to the same criteria as English schools and New Zealand schools in parts 4.4.2 and 5.4.2 respectively. Around 95% of students attend such schools (Smith, I 2008, 12). The results are shown in Table 13. As for the England and New Zealand results, KIPP schools in the US were included in the analysis and the results are shown in the same table. Again, this international data is included at this point to aid readability, however, the international comparisons will be made in Part

6.4.3 (INDV6) which will analyse whether there may have been a transfer of policy ideas or if there is policy congruence between Scottish education and KIPP.

Analysis

Interestingly, state schools in Scotland already appear to have a large degree of freedom in terms of setting their curricula with the local authority, within national guidelines. Schools are not selective, are opened in a “top-down” way and hold “standard” school hours.

Table 13 Content Analysis of State Schools in Scotland and KIPP

	Scotland State Schools	KIPP Schools
Profit	No	No
Governance	School board – elected staff/parent/community members. Local authority is responsible.	Non-profit KIPP Foundation provides support. Managed locally.
Curriculum	Government provides advice but LAs and schools decide	Same state and federal curricula as other public schools
Secular	Some are faith-based	Yes
Longer day/term	No – usually 25-27 hours. Term dates set by the local authority.	Yes
Establishment – top-down or bottom-up	Top-down – partnership of local and Scottish government	Bottom-up
Enrolment	Not selective (with few exceptions)	Not selective

Sources: The Scottish Government 2011a; The Scottish Government 2011b; SEED 2007, 12-13; Education Scotland n.d.; The Scottish Government and COSLA 2009, 3,6.

Interviews

One participant felt that free schools are “totally” different from what exists in Scotland. It was indicated in the other interviews that the idea of parents or other groups establishing schools does not fit with the Scottish view of education – striving to give students the same start in life is highly important (although it was noted that there are problems in achieving this, the principle remains).

6.4.3 INDV6 Policy Transfer of the Idea: Content Analysis

Desk Research

No evidence was found of the policy community recommending the transfer of the policy to Scotland. The closest discussion was found in a 2013 report by the Reform Scotland think tank. The report discussed English academies and free schools, and recommended that Scotland increase school autonomy and thereby

increase diversity; encourage innovation and school specialisation; and for schools to work with other organisations (CSPP and Reform Scotland 2013 66, 71, 73). This, however, falls short of advocating for a free schools policy to be introduced in Scotland.

The content analysis of Scottish schools and KIPP schools shown in Table 13 indicates significant policy difference between the two, such as the involvement of the local authority in the Scottish system and the top-down nature of their establishment. The results in Table 13 do not indicate policy transfer or convergence between Scottish and KIPP schools.

Transnational Advocacy Networks

Interestingly, neither the Atlas membership list nor that of the Economic Freedom Network contains any members based in Scotland (Atlas 2013; The Fraser institute 2011). Scotland's apparent disconnection from these TANS may be related to the fact that no evidence was found of a think tank promoting this idea in that country.

Interviews

It was mentioned in the interview with Humes that the think tank community in Scotland is relatively small and not entirely independent from politics/government (as was shown in the establishment of the Scotland's Futures forum by the Scottish Parliament). When asked, there was a general consensus that English policy is not influential in Scotland. Humes and Bryce were most confident about this point. A common observation amongst the interviewees was that Scottish education is an extremely valuable part of its nationhood and identity, which is why policy makers look to England less.

6.5 Politics Stream Results

6.5.1 INDV7 National Mood

The content analysis in Scotland was carried out on education articles by Chris Marshall in the Scotsman on Sundays between 1 November 2011 and 31 October 2012. 54 articles were identified and coded, a summary is provided in Table 14. Again the mood was mostly negative – but by a smaller majority than in England and New Zealand. In addition, whilst in England and New Zealand articles coded as “positive” were the smallest group, in Scotland, more education articles were coded positive than neutral/mixed. The main concerns raised in the analysis were regarding the Scottish Government, the newly implemented Curriculum for Excellence and the new national examinations.

Table 14 Content Analysis of Newspaper Articles in Scotland

Code	Number of Articles	Percentage of Articles
Positive	15	28
Neutral/mixed	10	19
Negative	28	52
Schools/FE colleges	39	72
University	15	28
Scottish government	11	20
Curriculum for Excellence	6	11
New National Examinations	5	9

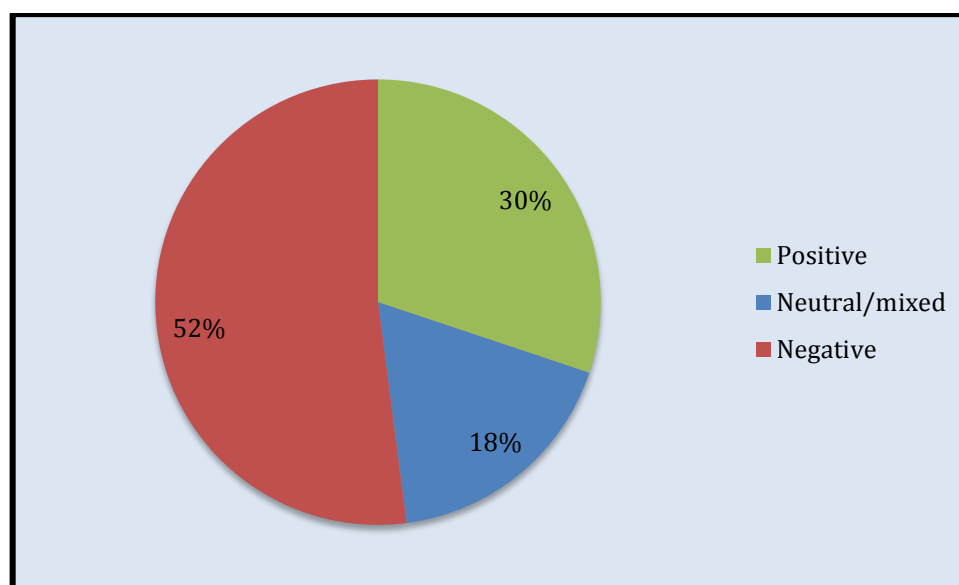
A similar picture can be seen in the summary of the blog analysis – Table 15. The Burdzeyevueview and Better Nation blogs were analysed for the same period as the newspaper above. Again, these are two of the most widely read blogs in Scotland (Total Politics 2011). Exactly half of the articles were coded as negative, but 35% were graded as positive. This is the highest of any of the analyses. Recurring themes included a sense of pride in the free higher education available in Scotland, as well as concern about privatisation and marketisation of the public sector. The upcoming referendum on independence from the United Kingdom and rule from London were also discussed on more than one occasion.

Table 15 Content Analysis of Blog Articles in Scotland

Code	Number of Articles	Percentage of Articles
Positive	7	35
Neutral/mixed	3	15
Negative	10	50
Schools	13	65
University	14	70
Free higher education	7	35
Privatisation/marketisation of the public sector	4	20
Scottish independence	2	15
Rule from Westminster	2	15

An Approximation of the National Mood in Scotland

Combining the content analyses of the three data sources for Scotland, it is interesting to note that while the mood was negative overall, the second-largest code was positive – see Figure 6.

Figure 6 An Approximation of the National Mood in Scotland

Interviews

One participant commented that “educationalists were not crying out for change but the Minister for Education and Life-Long Learning [Michael Russell] seemed determined to push changes through”. When asked, he suggested that the importance of the up-coming referendum on the national mood should not be over-emphasised, and that education comes up “from time-to-time”. He also commented that as a lot of the media are UK-wide, English education policy (including free schools) receives more coverage than Scottish education policy, even in Scotland. Humes and Bryce both mentioned that in general people in Scotland were satisfied with education – although there are problems that need to be addressed, as Bryce summarised “there is no mood to change things overall”.

6.5.2 INDV8 Change of Key Personnel: Content Analysis

Desk Research

The last election for the Scottish Parliament was in 2011. For the first time since its creation in 1999, one party had the majority of seats – the Scottish National Party. This is despite the fact that the proportional system used in the elections was designed to prevent such an occurrence happening. As Scott and Wright note, this situation increases the chance of policy divergence from the rest of the UK (2012, 440). However, the SNP was already the largest party in government, with its leader Alex Salmond being Scottish First Minister since 2007 (The Scottish Government 2012a) and Michael Russell holding the education brief since 2009 (The Scottish Government 2012b). In other words, the most recent election only served to increase the power of the SNP in government, and there was no change in personnel of either the leader of the government or the member of government responsible for education.

Interviews

The general consensus among the participants was that although there were key figures close to or in government, it was not possible to attribute policies such as

the CFE to a single individual. This is because CFE was developed over a long period of time, and was not significantly affected by changes in government due to an agreement on the policy across the political spectrum. Humes commented that such a level of agreement may not be good for policy development in general. One participant identified the Minister Russell as being the driving force behind recent changes in Scottish education policy – however the overall consensus from the primary research was that policy was determined in a more consensual manner. Walker described the tripartite system, which involves central and local government, Education Scotland and the teachers unions (which it was generally agreed are very strong). As such, Walker commented that there were “checks and balances” within the system.

6.5.3 INDV9 Policy Transfer by Political Actors: Content Analysis

Desk Research

In 2010 Michael Russell visited Sweden to learn about free schools there, extolling the free school model to the Times Educational Supplement (Seith 2010). However he has since apparently changed his mind on the policy, telling an Edinburgh book festival in 2012 that “KIPP would not work for us” (Benn 2012).

In a 2010 conference speech, Russell emphasised the amount of international travel he had done to share education knowledge with other leaders around the world (Russell 2010). It is noteworthy that Russell is actively encouraging policy transfer *out of*, as well as into, Scotland.

Interviews

Several interviewees commented on how Scottish politicians look to Scandinavia for policy ideas, as well as New Zealand and Australia. When asked whether Scottish politicians look to England for policy ideas, it was strongly felt by some that this would be an unwise decision and the implication was (by some) that this would instantly ruin the policy’s chance of being implemented in Scotland – particularly in education policy, which forms a significant part of the Scottish national identity. One interviewee commented that if policy ideas were transferred from England, they would acquire a “Scottish flavour”.

6.6 Policy Entrepreneur Results

6.6.1 MV1 Member(s) of Government: Content Analysis and Argumentative Discourse Analysis

Desk Research

As explained, Michael Russell is the member of the Scottish government responsible for education. In the conference speech he made in 2010 referred to in Part 6.5.3, he said he has the statutory duty to make Scottish education as good as possible (Russell 2010). In his speeches, however, he identifies that while he regards Scottish education as being good – it could be better (for example, *Ibid.*). An argumentative discourse analysis sees him stressing the good position that the status quo is, for example emphasising the underlined words in the following sentences:

"I believe that Scottish education is providing these firm foundations for the future lives of our young people in Scotland... There is a good deal of good achievement... I think that Scotland has already been brave and wise enough to embrace the reforms that will make our education system really fit for purpose in the 21st century." (Ibid.)

The way that he will continue to make the necessary improvements is by delivering the CFE in "the strongest and most professional way possible" (Ibid.), based on the knowledge that Scottish education is already "going in the right direction" (Ibid.).

In addition to focussing on the CFE, Russell has also been arguing for a "Yes" vote in the upcoming Scottish independence referendum. In fact, he has specifically linked education with the issue. In a speech at Glasgow University, he said:

"The equation is clear. Westminster controls tax, benefits and labour market policy. Scotland controls education policy. One is undermining the other." (Russell 27 March 2013)

Interestingly, Russell also refers to PISA while confirming his responsibility in government for education:

"In January, the OECD published a PISA in Focus document which stated in the clearest possible terms that 'education systems don't have to choose between equity and opportunity and high performance... I am certain that it is with independence - only with independence - that we will be able to realise our educational ambitions in full. Only independence will deliver real equality and equity in our society. And delivering such equality and equity within a great educational system is my responsibility, working in partnership with you all.'" (Russell 27 March 2013)

As such, a policy entrepreneur in government in Scotland may be Michael Russell. As stated above although being impressed with free schools in Sweden, he is mostly focused on the introduction of the CFE. In addition, the analysis revealed a declared link between education and potential Scottish independence.

Interviews

Michael Russell was identified by one participant and the SNP more broadly, which "[possibly] wanted to impose their thinking on education". Among the other participants, however, several different people were identified as particularly influential, including with the CFE. As such, it seems unsatisfactory to suggest that there was a single policy entrepreneur for CFE in government. Rather – the indication is that education policy in Scotland is made by collaboration.

6.6.2 MV2 Member(s) of Policy Networks or TANS: Content Analysis

Desk Research

As described above, no evidence was found of this policy being promoted in Scotland within the policy community.

Interviews

No policy networks were identified or referred to in the interviews.

6.7 Policy Window Results**6.7.1 MV3 Problem Event**

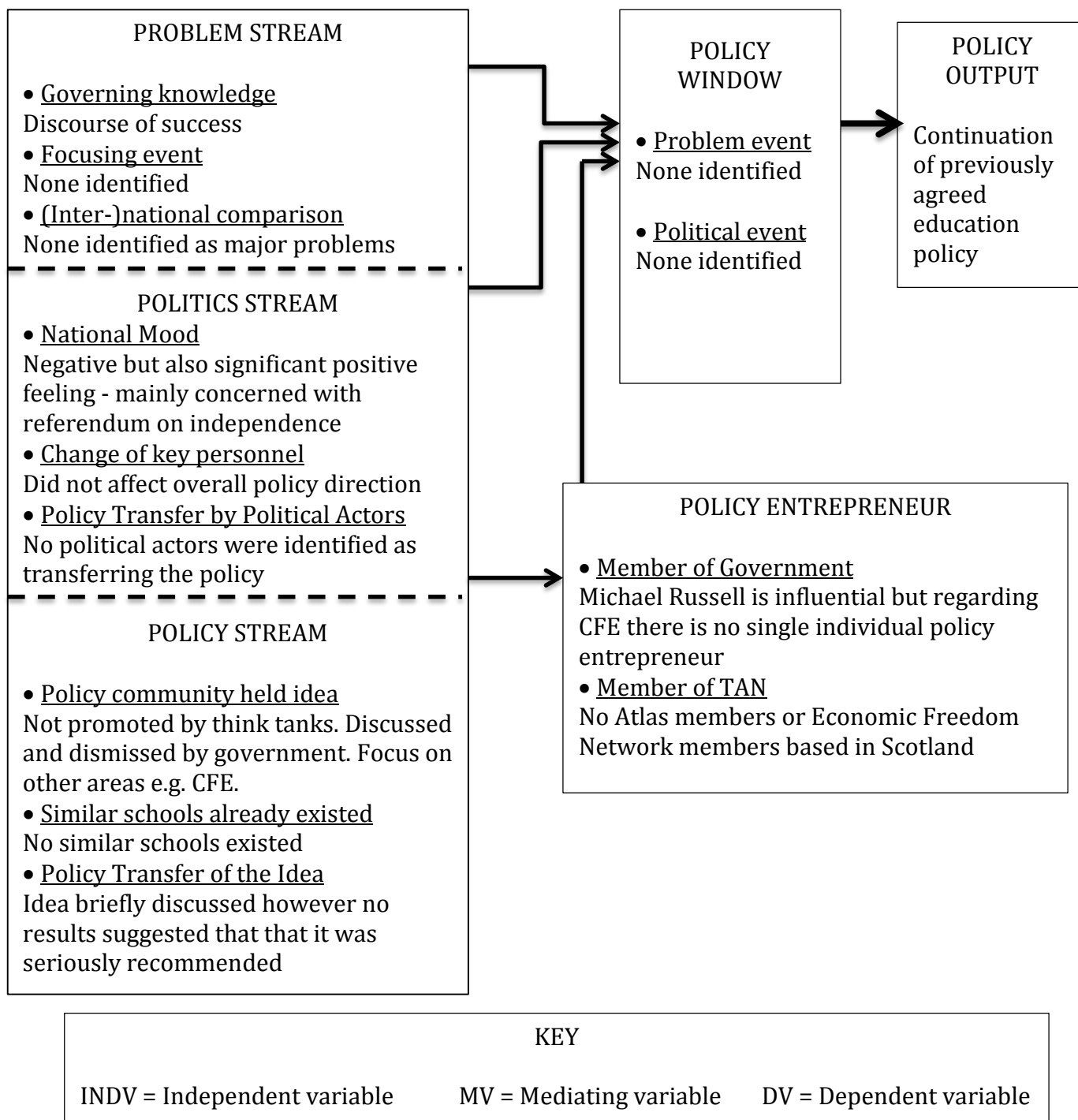
No single problem event was identified in Scotland. In fact, the discourse was less negative than the other two countries – as shown in the newspaper analysis. Of the three countries, Scotland is the only one where performance in PISA declined over time; however the discourse of the leading SNP is not that PISA highlights a problem, but that the most recent PISA report shows how the decline in standards has been halted. As such, the publication of PISA does not represent a problem event (rather, it was used as evidence to support the existing policy direction).

6.7.2 MV4 Political Event

In the 2011 election in Scotland, the SNP increased its power in parliament – and took full control of the government. As such, this event did not cause a significant change in education policy direction. The most significant change of the policy landscape in Scotland is the Curriculum for Excellence. The national mood in Scotland had the largest component of positive views of any country in this thesis. This may have facilitated a continued policy direction, rather than facilitated or demanded a change of course.

6.8 Scotland Results Summary

Figure 7 Scotland Results Synthesised into Conceptual Diagram



7 Cross-national Comparison

7.1 Chapter Introduction

Based on the results, this chapter contains a cross-national comparison of the similarities and differences between policy development in each country. The comparison is organised in a matrix – Table 16. As well as the similarities between the countries that were identified, the differences are explained. Following this, Table 17 uses the results of each country to show whether each hypothesis was confirmed and the chapter closes with a discussion of the findings.

7.2 Cross-national Comparison Findings

Table 16 Matrix of Similarities and Differences

	Similarities	Differences
Problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PISA highlighted the problem of disadvantaged children in all three countries. • The “long-tail” of underachievement was a concern in all three countries, although that particular phrase was only used in England and New Zealand. It was particularly interesting to identify this international discourse structuration between England and New Zealand. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In New Zealand Māori and Pasifika performance was a particular concern, whereas in England and Scotland “disadvantage” and those “missing out” is, at least sometimes, less clearly defined. • Governments focused on the underperformance of particular groups in England and New Zealand but in Scotland government discourse was more positive and, while underperformance is acknowledged, it is not the dominant part of the discourse. • In New Zealand PISA reports were generally regarded as showing that the country has an excellent education system overall. In England and Scotland, PISA reports were a concern, however: • In Scotland, on at least one occasion, the PISA ranking was framed as success that deterioration had been ceased. • Only New Zealand had a focusing event.

	Similarities	Differences
Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The policy was promoted by think tanks in both England and New Zealand. Evidence of international visits was clear in all three countries. Policy transfer (particularly of this policy) by the policy community was clearest in the England and New Zealand results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Think tanks in general were far less influential in Scotland, which may be linked with the fact that think tank networks with members in England and New Zealand do not have members in Scotland. Recent education policy in Scotland, namely CFE, was developed over approximately a decade in a process not significantly affected by changes in government and ministers. In England and New Zealand the policies came to experts' attention much closer to introduction. The existence of the policy in England was a positive part of the discourse in New Zealand but would never be part of the discourse in Scotland.
Politics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General elections facilitated the introduction of the policy in England and New Zealand as they enabled particular individuals to implement the policy from within government. The national mood in all three registered concern about underperformance of certain groups of students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The most recent general election in Scotland did not facilitate a change in policy direction because the incumbent SNP went from being in a minority government to taking full control. The Minister of Education and Lifelong Learning did not change. In any case, there is cross-party support for the general direction of education policy in Scotland. The national mood is considerably different in Scotland than England and New Zealand. There was real concern about disadvantaged students, however the overwhelming government discourse was that things were going in the right direction.
Policy Entrepreneur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In England and New Zealand the policy entrepreneur is an elected member of government. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Scotland it was not possible to identify a single policy entrepreneur for CFE because it was developed over a long time, and led by the government (formerly, the Executive). This policy development process contrasts with England and New Zealand, where a policy entrepreneur was involved in developing the policy before joining the government.
Policy Window	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elections opened the policy window in England and New Zealand. Focusing events did not occur in England or Scotland. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The election in Scotland did not result in a significant change in policy direction regarding CFE, as there was already a consensus on the policy among the parties and, more so, because the election increased the power of the incumbent SNP. The 2011 earthquake in New Zealand opened the window further in that country, as it created the need for a large amount of rebuilding to be done.

	Similarities	Differences
Policy Transfer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> England and New Zealand both have think tanks connected to international TANS. The results suggest that these networks may have been involved in the transfer of the policy to those countries. Political actors in England and New Zealand transferred the policy to those countries. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Politicians in Scotland are also engaged in policy transfer – but this was the only country where evidence was found which indicates that this is a two-way process. Education policy transfer to Scotland is limited by the fact that this policy area must retain a Scottish flavour in order to have value acceptability.

Table 17 Hypotheses Results per Country

Hypothesis	England	New Zealand	Scotland
H1 Governing knowledge identified a problem in the school system which led to the introduction of the policy.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed
H2 A focusing event defined a problem in the school system which led to the introduction of the policy.	Not confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed
H3 A national or international comparison identified a problem in the school system which led to the introduction of the policy.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed
H4 The policy idea already existed within the policy community and this led to its introduction.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed
H5 The policy is not new; it resembles pre-existing policy in the country.	Partially confirmed	Not confirmed	Not confirmed
H6 Policy transfer of the idea took place which led to the introduction of the policy.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed
H7 The national mood facilitated the introduction of the policy.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed – the opposite was found to be the case.
H8 A change of key personnel facilitated the introduction of the policy.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed – the opposite was found to be the case.
H9 Policy transfer by political actors facilitated the introduction of the policy.	Confirmed	Confirmed	Not confirmed

7.3 Cross-national Comparison and Hypotheses Findings Discussion

Similarities and differences between the results explain the convergence and divergence of policy on this issue. No country is immune from international pressures and the transfer of ideas. However, it was only in England and New Zealand that politicians, as well as elements of the policy community more widely, were found to have been in favour of the policy. The policy idea was found to be incompatible with the policy environment in Scotland due to its content (which contradicts the Scottish approach to education) and also, after it had been introduced in England, *because* it had been introduced in England.

A clear difference between England and New Zealand when compared with Scotland, is that in the former two countries, the free school and partnership school policies appear to have been developed over shorter time than the CFE in Scotland. In addition, these policies were developed partly by think tanks, outside of government. In Scotland, the process of developing CFE was more collaborative, with support across the political spectrum, and led by the government. This meant that policy development in Scotland was slower and perhaps less divisive than in England and New Zealand. The power of voters to affect education policy is strong in England and New Zealand – recent elections in those countries did impact on policy direction – but weaker in Scotland, due to the cross-party agreement. The fact that a focusing event was only found to have occurred in New Zealand indicates that such an event in itself may not be enough to change education policy.

As was noted in several interviews in Scotland, education is a key pillar of the national identity in that country. This need to retain the system's Scottish character means that ideas from elsewhere may be more difficult to transfer than in England and New Zealand. In those countries, no similar link between national identity and style of education was found. In summary, there are political and non-political mechanisms at work in policy transfer, but the degree to which policies will be transferred depends on national elements.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Chapter Introduction

This chapter builds on the results chapters and cross-national comparison in the previous chapter to draw conclusions which explain how the similarities and differences between England, New Zealand and Scotland caused or prevented policy transfer, which resulted in similar or divergent education policies. The sub-questions will be answered in Part 8.2. Following this, the main conclusions are provided in Part 8.3. Final conclusions can be found in Part 8.4, recommendations in Part 8.5 and reflections on the research project in Part 8.6.

8.2 Answers to Sub-questions

1. *What were the problems that the policy was said to address?*

The problems in England were about disadvantage and lack of parental choice. In New Zealand, the problem was also about particular groups of children routinely underperforming, as well as the need to rebuild following the earthquake. Disadvantage is also a problem in Scotland, however CFE was designed to solve problems on continuity between different levels of schooling. While CFE may be said to be expected to challenge disadvantage, as was noted in one interview, this may be unrealistic due to the complex nature of many societal problems. This concern may also be raised with policy makers in England and New Zealand – to what extent can the shape of the schools system (alone) be expected to overcome complex problems of disadvantage?

2. *Where did the policy idea come from?*

The idea came from Sweden and the US to England, and then from those three countries to New Zealand. However in England and New Zealand, it was introduced differently. Neoliberal networks of think tanks connect the policy communities of England and New Zealand. Although members of these networks in England and New Zealand promoted the policy, causality between these networks and the introduction of the policy was not proven. There is evidence of international visits by policy makers but the results do not allow a full genealogy of the policy to be described. In Scotland, the free schools idea was briefly praised by Michael Russell following a visit to Sweden, however it was quickly discarded as a possibility. CFE was developed in Scotland over a period of several years.

3. *Which actors were most influential in the formulation of the policy?*

In all three countries a minister responsible for education could be identified as the most influential individual with regards to this (or recent) policy. However, in England and New Zealand the work of Michael Gove and John Banks, respectively, with regards to this policy began before they took office. In Scotland, Michael Russell was recently particularly influential in introducing CFE,

however this policy has been nurtured by several different ministers throughout its development.

4. What was the role of policy networks?

As suggested in the answer to sub-question two, it is very difficult to measure the impact of policy networks based on the primary and secondary data collected. Certainly, policy networks connect key think tanks of England and New Zealand with others (and ideas) elsewhere. In particular, this was found to be the case with the Atlas network. However, whether it was through these networks that the policy transferred is not possible to be ascertained from the results. Despite this, the fact that Scotland has no members of the Atlas network, and does not have the policy, suggests that the policy may have transferred through such networks to England and New Zealand.

5. Why was the policy introduced at that specific time?

In England and New Zealand the policy was introduced at that specific time because of the general elections that took place immediately prior. The policy was softened up for a longer period of time in England than New Zealand. However, none of the interviewees in England were aware that it had in fact been suggested by a different member of the Conservative party (in collaboration with a different think tank) several years prior to Policy Exchange and Michael Gove driving the policy. The fact that experts became aware of the policy only a short time before it was introduced is in line with Olsen's observation, described in Part 2.4, that "processes are not understood even by the organisation's own members" (Cohen, March and Olsen 1972, 1), but is explained by the fact that their participation in education policy may have changed over time, another of Olsen's observations (Ibid.).

In Scotland CFE development took place over a long period of time. It was not identified in this research why the process began when it did, however, the policy continued along a similar path despite changes in administrations due to a broad consensus about the policy across the political spectrum. Unlike in England and New Zealand, a change in government did not significantly affect education policy in Scotland.

8.3 Main Conclusions

8.3.1 The Role of Evidence and of Values

The results of this research project, and indeed the research design, do not allow conclusions to be drawn regarding the effectiveness of free schools-type policies. This was never the intention of the research, as several international studies have already been conducted, which it would have been unfeasible to build on in the time available. Also, the policies are too recently introduced in England and New Zealand for their performance to be assessed. However, the debate about the performance of free schools in Sweden and charter schools in the US was described in the Introduction chapter.

The results from this research project reveal that "evidence-based policy" is certainly a politically acceptable way in which to describe policy, and referring to

(but not necessarily citing) international evidence is even more appealing. In some cases, the evidence was clearly there – for example, in each country, too many children in identifiable groups are routinely and predictably performing poorly at school. That this problem exists was not controversial. The solutions, however, were more disputed, which raises a serious question about what constitutes “evidence-based policy”.

The results showed that value acceptability was a particular concern in Scotland, where interviewees emphasised the “Scottish” nature of education in that country. At face value, there is a contradiction between evidence-based policy, and value-based policy (such as a “Scottish” education). Policy recommendations based on evidence may create a friction with such norms. Despite this, the influence of values does not necessarily negate the impact of evidence – rather, it shapes how evidence is perceived (or possibly removed from the garbage can). The fact that nationally held values prevented a free schools-type policy arriving on Scottish shores indicates that different values may have permitted it to land in England and New Zealand, which may be an uneasy conclusion for those against the policies in those countries.

8.3.2 Global Influences on National Policies

Global influences on national policies were identified throughout this research project. Of course, PISA is highly influential in defining problems, however there was also evidence of the connections around the world formed by think tanks, education businesses and travel by members of the policy community, including politicians. Interestingly, England and New Zealand were found to be more connected to these networks than Scotland. In Scotland, there was evidence that policy is determined closer to government, although Scottish policy makers also look overseas for policy ideas and are certainly not immune from being questioned about Scotland’s performance globally.

Evidence of globalised policy making, however, should not lead to the role of national politics being overlooked. In all three countries, national political processes were fundamental to the policies that were introduced. While the globally connected think tanks in England and New Zealand had promoted the policies prior to their introduction, the introduction only occurred due to the results of general elections. In Scotland, the policy making system works in a more consensual manner – a system which is affected by international pressures but not controlled by them.

8.3.3 The Confluence of the Streams

While Kingdon’s Multiple Streams framework suggests that the essential parts of the policy decision come together in the policy window, the streams were clearly highly connected throughout the process. This is most clearly seen in the results from England, in the work of Policy Exchange, its connections with Michael Gove, and multiple reports that link problems and solutions. In New Zealand it is seen in the ACT New Zealand party foregrounding the “long tail” of underachievement and providing a Minister to implement its desired solution. In Scotland it is seen in the consensual way in which the Curriculum for Excellence was developed, with cross-party support.

8.3.4 The Importance of the Policy Entrepreneur

This cross-national comparison clearly showed the significance of a politician policy entrepreneur in introducing the free schools policy in England and the partnership schools policy in New Zealand. Others, particularly at think tanks, ensured that the policy was ready, but in each case a politician was the policy entrepreneur. In Scotland, Michael Russell was for a short time impressed with the free schools policy in Sweden, however later rejected the idea, without much reference to evidence. A possible reason for this is that it was considered to lack value acceptability (for example, because it moves away from aiming to provide all children with the same education, or because it was then being introduced in England). However, the consensual policy process in Scotland reduces the impact of any one person, at least relative to the other countries of this research project.

8.3.5 Policy Transfer

The introduction of the policy in England and New Zealand was found to be at least partly due to policy transfer. Although think tanks were involved in this process, causality was most clearly seen between political actors transferring the policy and its introduction. However, connections between them (particularly seen in England) suggest that politicians and think tanks worked together to transfer the policy idea and then formally introduce it.

An interesting difference with regards to policy transfer is that the results only showed efforts by a political actor in Scotland to engage in a two-way transfer process. However, as this thesis focuses on England and New Zealand receiving a policy, this may explain why policy lending did not feature in their results. Despite this caveat, it is still interesting to note because it fits well with other results showing that Scottish people have a pride and general satisfaction with their education system.

8.4 Final Conclusions – Answering the Main Research Question

Main Research Question: What factors caused or prevented the introduction of a policy to create a new type of school in three countries?

The key reasons for the free schools and partnership schools policies being introduced all came together with a highly driven MP who gained the power to introduce the policy following a general election. Softening up took place over a long period of time in England but not New Zealand. The national moods in England and New Zealand were more similar with each other than with those in Scotland, which may have facilitated the introduction of the policy. The lack of fit of this policy with the dominant educational values in Scotland mean that this policy is unlikely to be introduced there.

8.5 Recommendations

The direction in which education policy should proceed has been seen to be a site of contention, but there is common ground. In several interviews in all three countries, there was genuine concern about children who underperform. That should be the starting point. The focus should be on tackling this and other

problems in a way which is consistent with the country's own values. It should not be on international ranking systems that are not comparable from cycle to cycle, although this does not detract from what can be learnt from careful reading of such studies.

For further research, it is recommended that the recently introduced policies in all three countries are studied and assessed. They must be tested against the various promises that have been made, as well as according to the values of the country.

Politicians and governments should specifically refer to the evidence on which their policies are based – as, if this is not done, it is impossible to challenge them to improve the evidence or revise their policies if the evidence is found to be lacking. Policy makers (and publics) in all countries hold values, so while it may continue to be insisted that policies are evidence-based, the most appropriate should also be in accordance with the values of the people.

8.6 Reflections on the Research Project

As the research project was able to answer the main research question well, in that objective it was successful. Using Kingdon's Multiple Streams framework was at times very useful and in other instances somewhat restrictive or inappropriate. The useful parts of the framework were that it directed attention towards problem identification and ensured that the policy entrepreneur could be identified. These two parts of the theoretical framework provided particularly insightful understanding of the policy processes in the three countries of this study. However, the division of the policy and political streams was awkward at times, as the overlap between the two was very frequent. This means that in the results sections of the thesis the same reports were referred to in different parts of the framework. Perhaps the popularity of the framework itself, as well as the study of public administration more broadly, partly explains why the two streams overlap so much. It may be that theories such as Kingdon's have actually changed, as well as described, the policy process, by highlighting the ways in which those wishing to influence policy can do so more effectively.

A framework structured more around the actors involved may have produced more "fluid" results. For example, if the involvement of think tanks or politicians was analysed from the beginning of their involvement to the point of policy's introduction. This, however, would still lead to the slight complication of individuals being involved in more than one institution – and frequently moving between them. In addition, it is felt that the policy window is essentially little more than a filter of the problem and political stream results – it simply allows the researcher to neatly describe the most salient results as having opened a window. In this respect, if it were not part of the framework, the same conclusions would still be able to be drawn.

Incorporating policy transfer theory into the research project was very useful – as it identified not only that the policy idea had existed in all three countries (but to different degrees), but also indicated in what way it was transferred. It was

particularly exciting to identify policy transfer directly between two countries in this study.

A strength of the research design is that it was broad enough to consider many different variables to be studied and measured, as well as for results to be triangulated. This allowed for connections between the variables to be seen, for example by the discourse structuration of “long-tail of underachievement”. A weakness in the research design is that it did not rigorously test the respective governments’ claims that their policies are based on (valid) evidence. Rather, it focused on the policy decision process as well as policy transfer. As the research was conducted, it became apparent that the term “evidence-based policy” is often used without reference to any evidence. It began to seem as though the act of referring to evidence was in itself intended to convince. A stronger research design would include a test of the extent to which policy is in fact based on rigorous evidence. Certainly the suggestion in several interviews was that this is not always believed to be the case.

The ability to access experts in each of the countries was in some cases easier than expected and in some cases much more difficult. It was disappointing that some experts were unable to participate after initially indicating that they would be able to, however the process of collecting primary data inevitably brings such challenges. Involving more experts in the primary data collection would have increased the strength of the results, however as many were involved as was feasible in the time available. It was pleasing that sufficient primary data were collected to allow valid and interesting conclusions to be drawn based on them.

The cross-national comparison has been proven useful and revealing. It identified the continuing significance of national politics and values in a world of global education policy transfers.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 Interview Questions

Appendix 1.1 England Interview Questions

Problem stream

1. What were the key items or problems on the national education agenda around 2008-2010?
2. Why do you think these problems were on the (national) agenda?
3. Are there any national or international comparisons or publications which you feel are particularly influential in English education? ...Why is that?

Policy Window

4. Do you feel that free schools are a response to any particular problem or problems?

Policy Stream

5. Free schools were officially announced by the Coalition in 2010 but do you remember when you first began hearing about free schools? (Was it a short time before it was introduced, or had it been discussed for a while). Was it discussed widely or do you remember a particular speech or document more specifically that brought the idea to people's attention?
6. In your opinion, how different from other types of schools in England are free schools?

Politics Stream

7. The next question might seem a little vague but I'm just interested in people's perspectives so feel free to answer however you wish. How would you describe the general feeling or mood of the policy community around education policy around 2008-2010? For example, was anything inevitable, or impossible? Was there a widely held feeling about the general direction of policy? ... Why do you think that?
8. In your opinion did any changes in personnel in government have a significant impact on the introduction of the free schools policy? ... Who would that be? ... Why do you think that?

Policy Window

9. Do you think that any political events in particular led to the introduction of free schools? ... Which event is that? ... Why do you choose that?

Policy Entrepreneur

10. Aside from changes in personnel, do you think that any person or people in particular caused this policy to be introduced? This could be someone inside or outside of government. Who would that be? ... Why do you choose this person/these people?

Anything else?

Is there anything else that we haven't covered that you would like to add?

Appendix 1.2 New Zealand Interview Questions**Problem stream**

1. What were the key items or problems on the national education agenda around 2010-2012?
2. Why do you think these problems were on the (national) agenda?
3. Are there any national or international comparisons or publications which you feel are particularly influential in New Zealand education? ...Why is that?

Policy Window

4. Do you feel that partnership schools are a response to any particular problem or problems?

Policy Stream

5. Partnership schools were officially announced by the Government in 2012, but do you remember when you first began hearing about partnership schools or charter schools? (Was it a short time before it was introduced, or had it been discussed for a while). Was it discussed widely or do you remember a particular speech or document more specifically that brought the idea to people's attention?
6. In your opinion, how different from other types of schools in New Zealand are Partnership schools on a scale of 1-5, with 5 being very different from other schools and 1 being similar to other schools.

Politics Stream

7. The next question might seem a little vague but I'm just interested in people's perspectives so feel free to answer however you wish. How would you describe the general feeling or mood of the policy community around education policy around 2010-2012? For example, was anything inevitable, or impossible? Was there a widely held feeling about the general direction of policy? ... Why do you think that?
8. In your opinion did any changes in personnel in government have a significant impact on the introduction of the partnership schools policy? ... Who would that be? ... Why do you think that?

Policy Window

9. Do you think that any political events in particular led to the introduction of partnership schools? ... Which event is that? ... Why do you choose that?

Policy Entrepreneur

10. Aside from changes in personnel, do you think that any person or people in particular caused this policy to be introduced? This could be someone inside or outside of government. Who would that be? ... Why do you choose this person/these people?

Anything else?

Is there anything else that we haven't covered that you would like to add?

Appendix 1.3 Scotland Interview Questions**Problem stream**

1. What were the key items or problems on the national education agenda around 2010-2012?
2. Why do you think these problems were on the (national) agenda?
3. Are there any national or international comparisons or publications which you feel are particularly influential in Scottish education? ...Why is that?

Policy Window

4. Do you feel that any recent problem or problems have led to specific policies in education?

Policy Stream

5. Have you heard any or much discussion of a free school-type policy being introduced in Scotland?
6. In your opinion, how different are free schools in England from the types of school that exist in Scotland?

Politics Stream

7. The next question might seem a little vague but I'm just interested in people's perspectives so feel free to answer however you wish. How would you describe the general feeling or mood of the policy community around education policy in Scotland around 2010-2012? For example, was anything inevitable, or impossible? Was there a widely held feeling about the general direction of policy? ... Why do you think that?
8. In your opinion did any changes in personnel in government have a significant impact on education policy? ... Who would that be? ... Why do you think that?

Policy Window

9. Do you think that any political events in particular have affected recent education policy in Scotland? ... Which event is that? ... Why do you choose that?

Policy Entrepreneur

10. Aside from changes in personnel, do you think that any person or people in particular is particularly shaping education policy in Scotland? This could be someone inside or outside of government. Who would that be? ... Why do you choose this person/these people?

Anything else?

Is there anything else that we haven't covered that you would like to add?

Appendix 2 Newspaper and Blog Content Analysis

England – Newspaper Analysis

Education Articles by Jack Grimston in The Sunday Times 1/11/09 - 31/10/10																
Article	Themes	Positive	Neutral/ Mixed	Negative	School	University	Low standards	League tables	High cost	Private schools	Profit in education	Under-funded	Unions obstructive	Inefficiency	Maladministration	Class sizes
1	Mothers biggest influence on girls' education	1			1											
2	Disillusion in local education leading people to open free schools		1		1		1									
3	Huge rise in university fees			1		1			1							

4	Private companies can run schools for profit		1		1					1						
5	Universities biased against underperforming schools			1	1	1	1									
6	Private boarding schools too expensive			1	1				1	1						
7	Unions and Whitehall inefficiency prevent schools benefiting from academies policy			1	1								1	1		
8	Gove will increase rigor of A-Levels	1			1		1									
9	Schools fail obligations to educate on Christianity			1	1											
10	Private schools to set up elite university		1			1	1			1						
11	More students with good A-Levels choose not to go to university			1		1			1							
12	OFSTED: Schools need bad teachers so children get used to poor leaders			1	1		1									

13	Unlimited fees for universities? Market will decide	1			1			1							
14	Technology graduates worst hit by recession			1		1									
15	Gove helps private schools remain charities	1			1				1						
16	Universities over charge government for students who dropped out			1		1			1						1
17	Under 50% degree students have (academic) A-Levels			1		1	1								
18	Medical students face 100k debt			1		1			1						
19	University fees may increase to 10k			1		1			1						
20	Primary school class size crisis			1	1										1
21	Universities "grade aid" for students from poorly performing schools		1		1	1	1								

22	Scottish universities pro-Scot bias may breach race laws		1			1										
23	Job insecurity at Cambridge University			1		1						1				
24	Cambridge may become a private university to charge higher fees		1			1						1				
25	Universities prioritise poorly performing schools.		1		1	1	1									
26	Study regarding innovative teaching methods in schools (positive)	1			1											
27	Schools push vocational subjects due to league tables.			1	1		1	1								
28	Middle class students lose financial help.			1		1			1							
29	Change of planning laws for academies - unions quick to object.		1		1								1			
30	Students go to the Netherlands to avoid high fees.			1		1			1							

31	University wastes money on staff trip.			1		1								1		
32	Exam board admits GCSE/A-Level grades inflated, risks their credibility.			1	1		1									
33	University reduces courses due to spending cuts.			1		1						1				
34	Grading errors affects best school students.			1	1										1	
35	Government: University fees may increase, teaching should improve.		1			1	1		1							
36	Labour faces revolt over university fees.			1		1			1							
37	Pupils pushed to take GCSEs early - due to pushy parents, easy exams, school league tables.			1	1		1	1								
38	Plan to charge high earning graduates more for their (already finished) education.		1			1			1							
39	School leavers choose work over university.		1			1			1							

40	Easy subjects taken to improve ranking in school league tables.			1	1		1	1								
41	Universities raise entry requirements.		1			1										
42	Some universities charge more than teaching costs.			1		1			1							
43	"Student charters" to improve university teaching.	1				1	1									
44	GCSEs too easy.			1	1		1									
45	Cheap flights attract international students to specific locations.		1			1										
46	Students revolt over 150 in tutorial			1		1										1
47	New A* A-Level grade increases public-private school inequality.			1	1				1							
48	Protest over cut of academics.		1			1					1					

49	Secret GCSE downgrading to avoid inflation.			1	1		1										
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Total	6	14	29	23	29	16	3	14	4	1	4	2	2	2	2
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England - Blogs Analysis

Article	Themes	School	University	Positive	Neutral/mixed	Negative	Private schools	Politicians' credibility	Academies	Free Schools	Higher education funding	Michael Gove	Selective schools	Easy Examination	Conflict of interest	University fees	"Leftist" education system
Guido Fawkes "education" articles 11/11/09-31/10/10																	
1	Ed Balls' education	1				1	1										
2	Conservatives' only policy offering radical change is education	1			1			1									

3	Ed Balls' MP expenses scandal	1				1	1										
4	Michael Gove attends Liberal Democrat conference	1			1				1	1							
5	Gordon Brown MP did not vote on Education Bill	1				1			1	1							
6	Liberal Democrat conference		1			1					1						
7	Spending review	1		1								1					
8	Nick Clegg's children go to selective Catholic school	1		1									1				
	Totals	7	1	2	2	4	2	1	2	2	1	1	1				
	Dizzy Thinks "education" articles 11/11/09-31/10/10																
1	Ed Balls' (MP) GCSE mathematics challenge to Opposition	1				1								1			

2	Privately educated Cabinet	1				1	1										
3	Under Secretary of State's outside interests	1				1								1			
4	Private education for military children	1			1		1										
5	Post-university earnings		1		1											1	
6	Head teacher suspended for making anti-"leftist" comments	1				1											1
Totals		5	1	0	2	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
Totals of both blogs		12	2	2	4	8	4	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

New Zealand – Newspaper Analysis

Education Editorials in the New Zealand Herald (Sunday) for 15/10/2011-14/10/2012																			
Article	Themes	School	University	Positive	Neutral/ mixed	Negative	Low Graduate Earnings	Manipulation of data	More public investment needed	League tables	Boys struggling	Pacific children left behind	Underfunding	Cuts	Too expensive	Lack of faith in government	Inequality	OECD	Māori Language Needs Protecting
1	NZ Degrees not paying		1			1	1		1										
2	National education data published - concern re usefulness	1				1		1		1	1	1							
3	Government spinning bad news	1				1							1	1					
4	Loan debt too much		1			1									1				
5	School uniforms	1				1									1				

6	Māori and Pacific participation	1			1										1				
7	Disability discrimination	1			1							1				1	1		
8	Māori Language	1		1														1	
9	New Zealand 5th in World for Education	1		1															
Totals		7	2	1	1	7	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1

New Zealand - Blogs Analysis

Article	Themes	School	University	Positive	Neutral/ mixed	Negative	National Standard	League tables	Lack of trust in Gov't	Unreliable data	Evidence from Britain: NS cause problems	Christchurch school reorganisation	Charter schools	School Zoning	Media bias	Tablet computers	Class sizes	Grammar	Number of teachers
Hard News Blog "Education" articles 15/10/2011-14/10/2012																			
1	National standards will make teachers teach a test not children.	1				1	1	1											
2	National standards	1				1	1	1	1	1	1								

3	National standards information request	1				1	1												
4	Media	1				1	1			1									
5	Media bias	1				1				1		1							
	Total	5	0	0	0	5	4	2	1	3	1	1							
Kiwiblog "Education" articles 28/5/2012-27/6/2012																			
1	Charter schools trial	1		1				1					1						
2	Abolish school zoning	1				1								1					
3	Government targets	1		1			1												
4	National standards	1			1		1	1							1				
5	School league tables inevitable in an open country	1		1				1											
6	Parliamentary questions regarding education spending				1														
7	Technology in school	1		1												1			

8	Media polling results	1			1												1		
9	Freedom of speech at university		1			1													
10	Need for focus on quality of education					1												1	
11	Education high priority				1														
12	Government mistake regarding education policy calculations	1			1												1		1
Total		8	1	4	5	3	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	2	1	1

Totals for both blogs	13	1	4	5	8	6	5	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
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Scotland - Newspaper Analysis

Education Articles in the Scotsman by Chris Marshall from 1/11/2011 - 31/10/2012

Article	Themes	School/ F.E. Colleges	University	Positive	Neutral/mixed	Negative	Curriculum for Excellence	New National Examinations	Class sizes	Too few teachers	Pay/benefits	Underemployed teachers	Scottish government	Teachers overworked	Too expensive	Free education
1	Scotland's universities down in world rankings		1			1										
2	Scottish government has no education policy overview	1				1	1									
3	Scottish teachers work very long hours compared with other countries	1				1								1		
4	Slow progress in schools	1				1			1	1						
5	Private school head: Scottish education is in flux	1				1	1									
6	Controversial new national examinations	1				1		1								
7	University pay				1						1					
8	Scottish texts in examinations	1			1											

9	Controversial Curriculum for Excellence on target	1			1											
10	Curriculum for Excellence is a failure	1				1	1									
11	Teachers not ready for new examinations	1				1		1								
12	Teachers vote regarding strike action	1				1										
13	New National Examinations grades unfair.	1				1		1								
14	New National Examinations - disagreement regarding preparedness	1				1		1								
15	Teachers strike regarding pensions	1				1				1						
16	Only 1/4 of new teachers have full-time position.	1				1					1					
17	Union: Michael Russell sinister	1	1			1							1			
18	Far right teachers may be banned	1			1											
19	ICT assessment	1		1									1			
20	Stress payout for teacher	1			1										1	
21	University graduates leave Scotland		1			1										
22	Scottish students lose out in university applications.		1			1										
23	4million spent on exit packages	1				1	1									

24	Teachers strike	1			1										
25	Teacher anxiety	1				1	1								
26	New college	1		1									1		
27	Graduates lowly paid		1									1			
28	Modern universities outperform "elite" universities		1	1											
29	New website for Scottish studies	1		1											
30	Fees for non-Scottish UK students		1			1								1	
31	Fees for non-Scottish UK students		1			1								1	
32	Sex education	1				1									
33	Food education	1		1											
34	College chief quits due to government policy.	1				1						1			
35	Price of English students' Scottish education worth paying for independence.		1		1							1			
36	Further education college mergers	1		1											
37	SNP vindicated on free education		1	1								1			1

38	Governance changes		1	1											
39	Further education cuts	1				1									
40	School receives awards	1		1											
41	Underachieving students to get army training	1		1											
42	Scottish universities avoid application slump due to fees		1	1											1
43	Teaching regulator gets more powers	1			1							1			
44	More students go abroad		1			1									
45	Scottish universities avoid worst cuts		1	1											1
46	New Curriculum for Excellence purpose-built school	1		1			1								
47	Truancy	1			1										
48	UK university application changes: Scots may lose out		1			1									
49	New college breaks budget	1				1									1
50	30 new schools	1		1								1			
51	3 Colleges get more funding	1		1								1			
52	New National Examinations - Minister tries to calm fears	1			1			1							

53	80,000 students protest government regarding FE cuts	1				1						1			
54	Union: Secretary to the Treasury attempted to bully government regarding teachers' pension reforms	1				1				1		1			

Totals		39	15	15	10	28	6	5	1	1	3	1	11	3	3	3
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Scotland - Blogs Analysis

Article	Main topic	School	University	Positive	Neutral/ mixed	Negative	Free Higher Education	Marketisation/privatisation	Scottish Independence	English Rule	Austerity	Poverty	Inequality	Economy	Fuel Poverty	Housing	Tax	Mortality	Resources	Welfare State	Poor quality	Underfunding	College reorganisation	Curriculum for Excellence	School Meals	Education devolved	Renewables	College reorganisation	Tuition fees for other UK stud's
	Burdzeyeview "education" articles 1/11/2011-1/11/2012																												
1	Yes Scotland Chief lecture		1		1		1	1	1																				

