

Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities
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The Politics of Teacher Professionalism and Education Reform in Macao

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This talk aims to study holistically and reflectively the nature and development of teacher professionalism in Macao from political and policy perspectives. Teacher professionalism was generally ignored during the Portuguese colonial period, but it has become more important during the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) era since the December 1999 resumption of Chinese rule. This is mainly because of the need to improve educational quality and buttress educational competitiveness in face of globalization. However, the development of teacher professionalism is hampered by the absence of a collective and representative force from the teachers, the hegemony of the educational bureaucracy and pro-regime educational associations, and the rapid growth of Macao's casino industry. With reference to Hong Kong's experience, Macao is punctuated by an acute absence of professional autonomy that has significantly undermined teacher professionalism in the MSAR. With the introduction to a 10-year plan for non-higher education development (2011-20), it is timely and desirable to examine whether teacher professionalism can be redefined with the encouragement of teacher engagement in a post-colonial polity blessed with unprecedented double-digit economic growth, an emergence of youth civic activism and Beijing's new emphasis on the need to nurture and train MSAR manpower with talents and skills.