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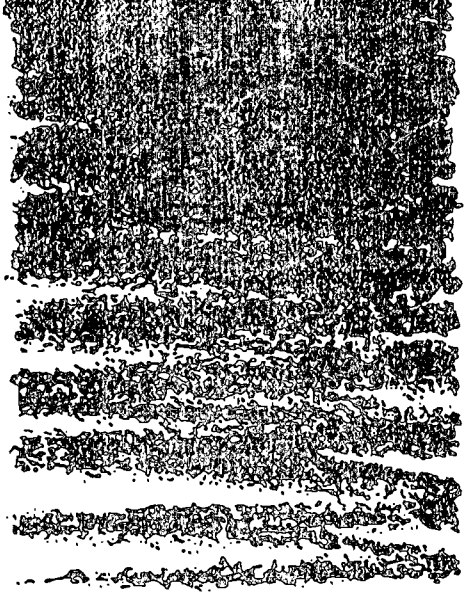
ABSTRACT

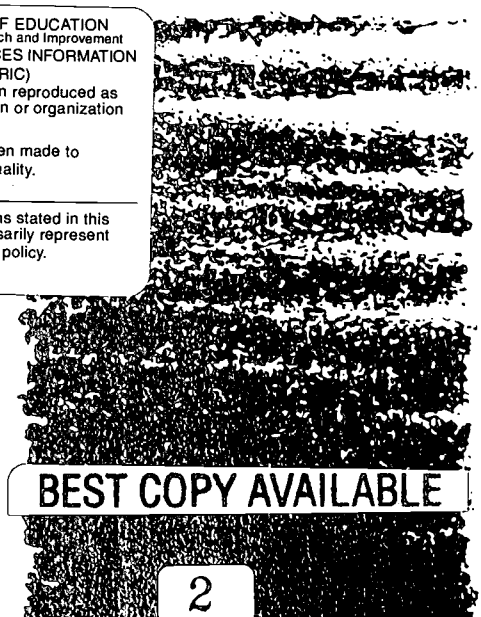
This bulletin contains information about important educational strategies that have had an impact in South America. In "Current Trends in Educational Reforms," Juan Carlos Tedesco examines the major lessons that educational reforms have produced. "Education and Changes in the Latin America's Social Structure" (German Rama) starts out by recognizing that education in South America has been acknowledged as a process of political sociability of paramount importance in the shaping of the Republic and of its citizens since the Revolutionary Wars. Luis Ratinoff points out in "Educational Rhetoric in Latin America: The Experience of this Century," that proper individual performance rests on a common foundation of knowledge and shared cultural traditions. Bernadette Nwafor reports on class examination an assessment of academic achievement. Rita Dyer examines instructional developments in home economics. Equal educational opportunities for women are reviewed by Maria Luisa Jauregui. In "Educating towards Tolerance, Misconceptions, Requirements and Prospects," Pablo Latapi expresses the belief that tolerance is at the very core of education for peace and human rights. The bulletin concludes with lists identifying activities and publications. (JAG)



BULLETIN

THE MAJOR PROJECT OF EDUCATION

In Latin America and the Caribbean



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In order that this bulletin
may reflect in as complete and timely manner as possible
the initiatives and activities carried out
by each and all the countries of the region
in relation to the Major Project of
Education in Latin America and the Caribbean,
pertinent official bodies are invited
to send to
the UNESCO Regional Office for Education in
Latin America and the Caribbean
all information they wish
to have published in this bulletin

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Descriptors: educational reforms; modernization; policy, school systems; changes; educational model; education quality; woman; home economics; achievement; basic education, teaching writing, peace education; tolerance; innovation; Latin America; Uruguay; Trinidad and Tobago; Mexico.

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THE MAJOR PROJECT OF EDUCATION

in Latin America and the Caribbean

Summary

BULLETIN 35

Santiago, Chile, December 1994

Presentation

There is an increasing awareness of the urgent need to adapt educational processes and systems to present and future social demands; however, deeper reflection on ways to effectively meet the challenge may be required. The urgency, has been transmitted to all sectors of society in every country of the region, but the numerous efforts towards implementing the required reforms have, thus far, fallen short of the mark.

At this point in time, education is enjoying an unprecedented protagonism, with an increasing number of actors embarking on crusades aimed at improving the quality and equity of the educational process. Today, improving the living conditions of all members of society is essential, not just as a moral mandate, but as a launching pad for economic take off. We are living a period of intense activity in the field of educational policy design, which requires progressing together from a first stage of good intentions and suggestions, to a second stage of formulas for effectively turning education into an axis of economic and social development for all. This new cycle of reforms must have sufficient support and strength to ensure the formulation of effective educational policies.

This issue of the Bulletin, contains valuable contributions to the design of pertinent educational strategies. Discussion of three earlier efforts provide an excellent starting point for developing new strategies. Juan Carlos Tedesco presents us with a synthesis of the lessons to be learned from the educational reforms implemented in the last decades. In his estimation, the numerous reform proposals –despite their altruistic intentions– rather than contributing to reinforce the capacity to respond to the new demands, strengthened rigidity and immobility giving rise to skepticism. Germán Rama, in turn, portrays education from the historical perspective of Latin American development, linking each reality to the structural changes undergone in the region. Luis Ratinoff invites us to reflect on the political role of educational rhetoric, observing that praxis alone leads to a distinction between intellectual concern for educational ideals, and the priority assigned to educational activities by social forces.

Two educators from the english-speaking caribbean examine specific innovations to their educational systems. Bernadette E. Nwafer comments on testing and academic achievement evaluation, while Rita Dyer highlights the importance of home economics and examines some of the models which have received favourable evaluations.

Equal opportunity and tolerance, emerge as landmarks on the road to a better society. María Luisa Jáuregui, shares with us the joint UNESCO/ECLAC experience on myth and reality of regional women active in the educational field, and Pablo Latapí touches on tolerance as a pivotal element of educating towards peace, human rights, and democracy.

As is customary, sections containing activities of the four regional networks and the latest OREALC publications, are included in the present issue.

CURRENT TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

Juan Carlos Tedesco*

This paper attempts to synthesize the major lessons educational reforms have produced. It contains a series of reflections based on information and experience gathered in recent decades through international cooperation efforts.
In this regard, the fact that these reflections have been largely inspired by experiences carried out in Latin America, Europe, as well as in the United States of America, should be duly noted. The Asian countries deserve special treatment, given the significant weight of cultural components in general, and family roles in particular.
In the case of African countries, besides the equally significant influence of cultural components, educational reforms must be intimately linked to the more general problem of living conditions, which have a direct bearing on the potential for success of any learning strategy.
The Arabian countries share some of these situations, except in those countries where islamic integrism is preponderant, in which case educational change is associated with the power struggle between traditionalism and modernization.

Perverse effects of permanent educational changes

For the past thirty years, and in the wake of the new challenges posed by social evolution, the educational system has undergone successive and shifting reforms which, paradoxically, have strengthened its rigidity and immobility.

This is why some political and social sectors are strongly skeptical about the odds of implementing change in the way the educational system operates. A quick glance at the historical events of recent decades will reveal that in the field of education everything has been tried, albeit, with scant results.

This skepticism seems particularly evident when change is envisioned as coming from within the system and spearheaded by its own actors. Teachers and members of the educational staff are regarded more and more as part of the problem, not as part of the solution. The reasons that explain this phenomenon are manifold and well-known: permanent changes carried out without prior consultation or evaluation of results, deprofessionalization of the teaching staff –felt more severely in the last decade particularly in developing countries, as a result of salary cutbacks and adjustment policies– and strengthening of corporative behaviour.

Consequently, one of the first obstacles encountered on the road to educational reform, is the need to overcome the skepticism that surrounds any attempt to modify the performance of educational institutions. Strategies that coming from without are predicated on radical change, tend to be resisted by actors from within. On the other hand, strategies based exclusively

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This document is more in the nature of a "position paper". The opinions contained herein, are the exclusive responsibility of the author, and do not commit to UNESCO or the BIE.

on internal capabilities for self-transformation, are for the most part too slow, and generally end up yielding to the pressure exerted by corporative demands.

Hence, there is a tendency to place the brunt of educational change in the institutional dimension. The idea is to open institutions to society's requirements, and to make internal educational management mechanisms more dynamic. In short, an arrangement that makes for increased responsiveness in terms of demands and results.

National consensus and the long term as prerequisites for success

One of the axioms bequeathed to us by the aforementioned "permanent reformism", is that educational policies are neither short-term measures nor are the exclusive domain of a single sector. Educational strategies, if they are to be successful, depend largely on their continuity. Continuity, however, rests fundamentally on the unconditional consensus and commitment of all the actors involved, towards reform implementation.

Along these lines, current international debate reveals a favourable climate to enter new alliances in terms of educational strategies. Sectors that in the past had diverging interests, now tend to share viewpoints regarding basic educational objectives which could well become objectives of national consensus. Making society as a whole accountable for educational actions, is tantamount to granting it the authority to define policy. Within this context, educational policy no longer regarded as the brainchild of a specific administration, tends to become part of a broader plan conceived by the State.

Paradoxically, in actual practice this trend has resurrected certain educational management formulas that were in use at the dawn of our system: national educational councils –plurally represented and subject to national consensuses– local educational councils, autonomous schools, and so forth. In short, the obliteration of parties in educational management.

Acknowledging that the educational policy is a long term policy, also implies admitting the need for a strong capacity to anticipate future requirements and problems, as a condition to define strategy.

From a political standpoint, the capacity to anticipate demands the existence of agreements which can direct the actions of individual actors towards the attainment of national goals. Political agreements, however, are a necessary although not sufficient condition. The capacity to anticipate also relies on accurate assessments of the current situation, a sophisticated information system to keep abreast of world trends, and mechanisms to evaluate the outcome of actions undertaken, which would allow implementing changes before results become consolidated and, consequently, too difficult and costly to modify. Hence, the reinforcement of information systems (measurement of results, monitoring international trends) is currently one of the fastest changing areas in educational management.

Financial resources: necessary but not sufficient condition for educational change

The paucity of financial resources has traditionally been one of the most often used arguments to explain away the poor results of educational actions.

Clearly, in most countries the resources earmarked for education are scant, besides being subject to the permanent swings brought about by political instability or inflation. However, countries where financial resources have proven adequate, show equally poor results. In this regard, the United States probably constitutes the most illustrative example. The following quotation makes any further comments unnecessary:

"For over three decades, since the soviets launched the first satellite ever, the Sputnik, successive United States governments have worked (very strenuously at times) to improve their country's lot. Real expenditure per student reached a 3.75% annual rate, nearly trebling between 1960 and 1988. This additional investment yielded precisely what advocates of the

increased outlays wanted: smaller classes, better educated and more experienced teachers. In the last twenty-five years, the average teacher/student ratio for public schools, went from over 25 to less than 18, a 30% reduction. More than half of today's teachers have at least a Master Degree. Back in 1986, 50% of teachers had a minimum teaching experience of fifteen years. These data, taken as a whole, convey the real extent of the problem. Expenditures trebled and performance plummeted. These additional resources have visibly increased educational expenses beyond traditional levels, but, yet, have failed to provide better education. The United States cannot hope to revert this trend in education by simply investing more. In our opinion, a reform is needed that completely overhauls spending policy. This nation must take a closer look at the organization of education".[1]

The funding of education is an issue that deserves being treated all by itself. In this paper, funding will be mentioned only as an additional supporting element of the hypothesis that holds that what is needed, rather than pouring more money into the existing system, is a global educational reform.

Educational reforms: from increased coverage to reform and enhanced quality

The idea that more years of study are directly proportional to increased productivity and social interaction, has fallen by the wayside.

The work that has gone into expanding the coverage provided by the educational system has been enormous. Those countries where quantitative expansion has been successful, today acknowledge that the results obtained have not been consistent with the efforts displayed by both governments and families: extremely high repetition rates or extremely low academic achievement levels, would seem to indicate that even solving the coverage problem requires enhancing the quality of the educational supply.

The emphasis on quality seen today, is the result of an evolution in the social demand for education. Organizational and technological changes at the workplace, and the strengthening of political democracy, demand from the citizens a behaviour that reflects the mastery of certain skills which traditional educational systems have failed to deliver systematically: knowledge of information codes, data processing and problem solving skills, the ability to work in teams and to express demands.

The problem is to define *how* are these capabilities to be taught or developed. Curricular and pedagogical reforms thus far undertaken, point to two major questions:

First, the issue of defining policy on learning methodology. In this regard, international experience reveals that there is a great diversity in terms of procedures, and that even in the presence of stringent regulations and exhaustive guidelines, the methods are defined by the teachers themselves. Reinforcing teachers' professionalism through pre-service and in-service education, constitutes an alternative to defining policy on learning methodology.

The second question is technically more complex. So far, learning theories have been fairly successful in describing the mechanism responsible for apprehending scientific concepts or information. The problem posed by the new challenges, however, deals with how one learns or develops skills, values, and attitudes. In this domain, answers are markedly less categorical both from the standpoint of learning theory and school implementation.

The emphasis on quality is currently expressed through concern for learning outcomes. One of the main aspects of modern trends in educational reform is, precisely, the design of efficient mechanisms for result evaluation.

Educational demand as a reform factor

One of the more salient features of educational reform is its newfound focus on a changing

[1] Chubb, John E.; Hanushek, Eric A. in: "Setting National Priorities: Policy for the Nineties"; The Brookings Institution, Washington D.C.

supply. The role played by demand was either underestimated or only considered at the initial stages of reform. Conversely, current educational reform trends, are characterized by the protagonist role given to social demand. This trend is expressed though two different types of actions:

- policies and programmes intended to provide greater decision making power to users of the educational system (parents or students), through specific mechanisms (vouchers, institutional autonomy, privatization), and
- programmes designed to improve the quality of educational demand, through better informed users.

Educational reform strategies are systemic in nature

Another important feature of past reform strategies, has been their focus on the evolution of a single aspect deemed a key factor in educational change: a raise in teachers' salaries, contents reform, administrative changes (decentralization), equipment, infrastructure, etc.

Evaluation of these changes reveal that their modest gains can be explained as a consequence of operating in relative isolation from the other components. Educational reform is the result of the interaction of multiple factors acting systemically.

On the other hand, acknowledging the systemic nature of change does not mean that it is necessary, or possible, to modify everything at once. What it does mean, however, is that the consequences on the rest of the factors, of changing a specific aspect, will eventually have to be dealt with.

A measure involving institutional change –for instance, decentralization– which does not take into account when to carry out staff training activities or which direction should they take, contents reform, salary restructuring, or changes in the mechanisms for providing equipment and didactic material, is likely to have a weak impact on educational outcome.

Therefore, the main stumbling block confronted by reforms, is determining the sequence and the weight that should be given to each aspect. Experience shows that these elements (sequence and weight) are more easily defined at the local rather than at the central level. Defining a similar sequence of educational change for dissimilar social, geographic and cultural contexts, is practically impossible. This explains the existence of a strong trend towards prioritizing institutional change which grants schools more freedom to define their own improvement strategies ("one school one project", institutional autonomy, etc.).

Institutional change: the priority

The pivotal point of the debate on institutional change is, obviously, the role of the State.

In this connection, international comparative studies also reveal that there are no "quick and dirty" solutions, such as statism or privatization, centralization or decentralization. Furthermore, international experience has shown that successful decentralization efforts are always backed by a strong central organization, as is the case with successful privatization moves, which are also associated with solid state-based administrations.

Ultimately, the issue boils down to clearly defining the role of the central-state administration. Along these lines, current debate focuses on three major areas of responsibility:

- first, the assignation of priorities through democratic debate mechanisms.
- second, the design and operation of mechanisms for evaluating the results derived from enforcing said priorities, granting increased autonomy to local institutions and educational units to define the processes through which these results are obtained.
- third, and particularly important in socially unstable countries, the implementation of efficient trade-off mechanisms to counter the antidemocratic risks attending decentralization strategies.

In short, changing the type of institutional organization through which educational serv-

ices are provided, has become a priority from a strategic standpoint. Increased autonomy for educational institutions, tighter control over results, along with off-setting devices that guarantee equitable treatment, are looming as the axes of transformation that show the greatest promise in the field of education.

Reform or institutional innovation?

The trend towards greater institutional autonomy, presupposes replacing the traditional "system reform" scheme with an approach based on institutional or inter-institutional innovations.

In centrally-oriented educational systems, innovation was limited to the private sector or to "trial programmes" in the public sector. In the best of cases, successful experiences provided the foundation for the implementation of general policies, not always entirely successful.

At present, there is a growing awareness that successful innovations will be successful inasmuch as they adapt to local conditions. Hence, generalizing the capacity to innovate is seen as being more important than generalizing the innovations themselves.

Successful innovations play a significant role from a perspective of innovating capacity, provided they are used as demonstration centers for personnel training. This view also acknowledges that this innovating capacity is directly linked to the concept of professionalism.

On privatization

In recent years, the subject of privatization as a strategy for educational change, has been in the limelight of public debate. Although discussion has centered on the more global aspects of privatization, namely, those involving public firms and services, the specificity of the educational action and its social impact, warrants a closer look at this topic. Based on available information, three conclusions may be drawn:

- no univocal associations between privatization of education, economic development, and modernization, may be invoked. Countries exhibiting a high percentage of private education are as successful as countries where education is predominantly state-oriented and, conversely, greater coverage of private education is not linked to satisfactory outcomes neither from the economic nor the social point of view. In fact, taken as a whole, private education is more important in developing countries than in those that have already attained the "developed" status.
- favourable educational results are usually linked to institutional factors: the existence of a pedagogical programme, leadership, team work, accountability for results. All these factors and opportunities are usually associated with the operation of private education institutions. Nevertheless, whenever the public sector provides these same advantages to its institutions, results are equally satisfactory. The problem then, is how to transfer the dynamic nature of the private sector into public education, without compromising the latter's democratic characteristics. This challenge returns us to the issues of institutional autonomy, supervision of results, and off-setting mechanisms.

Innovating capacity and institutional autonomy: birthright of the rich?

Educational reforms based on greater autonomy and accountability of local actors, presuppose accepting a need for increased personalization of services.

In this regard, there is a tendency to ascribe these opportunities exclusively to developed nations or to the higher social strata of developing countries.

Supporting this position, is the fact that developing countries harbor parallel processes of differentiation and inequality. The attending risk of accepting that personalized education is associated with availability of resources, is the creation of parallel systems; the one, meeting the educational demands of the poorer sectors through massive programmes, and, the other, catering to the middle and high social levels,

through personalized actions. However, nobody can claim –brandishing the need to meet massive needs as an argument– that the personalized service provided to lower income sectors is not as necessary as the service given the higher income groups. In the case of education, for example, evidence of the peculiarities with which children of economically deprived families face the demands inherent to the learning process, is plentiful and varied.

Therefore, the application of differential education strategies in order to homogenize results, constitutes a necessary criterion for the attainment of democratic objectives. In this regard, it should be noted that the orientation given to educational change in developing countries, is closely linked to the role of international cooperation. As is well known, national resources –scant as they are– for the most part go to paying salaries.

Whatever margin is left, for investing in personnel training, pedagogical innovations, equipment, information systems, and so forth, is very small indeed. Hence, from a strategic standpoint, the role of international cooperation is vital. The definition of appropriate guidelines in this field is, therefore, a tremendous responsibility.

Information systems and electronic mail

As part of networks' interconnection (REPLAD, REDALF, PICPEMCE, SIRI) they may be connected at OREALC, Santiago, Chile through two electronic mail boxes. The first is connected to the BITNET network, with headquarters in UNESCO/Paris. The address is:

uhstg@frunes21

A gateway may also be used, that is a connection between two networks, in this case INTERNET and BITNET. Their address is:

uhstg%frunes21@cunyvm.cuny.edu

The second electronic mail box connects through the INTERNET network, with headquarters in Universidad Católica de Chile. The address is:

unesco@lascar.puc.cl

Through these mail boxes communications as well as documents in diskettes may be forwarded. Up to this date the following are interconnected: the CFI in Argentina; The University of Campinas, Sao Paulo and the University of Brasilia, Brazil; CIDE and REDUC in Chile and the University of Monterrey, in Mexico.

EDUCATION AND CHANGES IN THE LATIN AMERICA'S SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Germán W. Rama*

Since the notion of independence first showed signs of materializing back in the 19th century, the historic evolution of education and social transformation in Latin America, have followed parallel paths.
Thus, as early as the Revolutionary Wars through which the colonies won their independence from the spanish crown, education had been acknowledged as a process of political sociability of paramount importance in the shaping of the Republic and of its citizens.
This central idea evolved along with the historical vicissitudes of the region. However, what is remarkable is that every type of process designed to lead to the formation of a nation-state, has given the development of education, a tremendous importance.
Hence, in some instances, the marginal-urban issue was regarded as a threat for social order, and all efforts focused on either creating a new income distribution structure, or a type of scheme that would generate employment through the educational system and the assignation of social services. In others, the goal was to mobilize the social masses and to incorporate them, albeit symbolically, into a new power alliance, while educating children and training adults, for potential and full participation as citizens.

Be that as it were, social change accomplished through the modification of existing productive structures or mobilization of the masses, handed to politics the reigns of educational expansion, and created a service supply that was directly proportional to the social power of those demanding them. This effort focused on the quantitative dimension.

During the first half of the 20th century, education as a social right, was advocated mainly by grassroots organizations, agrarian and student movements, and by reform projects advanced by organizations with a strong middle class backing, and heavily supported by organized labour groups.

The projects that considered spurring social mobility through education, had a common feature; namely, that all actions were directed towards primary education, and that cultural transformation was understood to be a long term process. In most of the countries in the region, the great enrollment expansion cycle, flew the colours of populism, at least in terms of equal opportunities. However, in social practice, in order for egalitarian principles to be effective,

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The first chapter of this article has been summarized by space reasons.

access to wealth would have required a radical transformation. This, was neither compatible with an alliance that enlisted industrialists, nor with an economic policy which funneled income from the rural owners to the industry and encouraged consumption in the cities, but never considered the possibility of affecting private property, let alone, socialize it.

The sights were set on achieving universal access to the various educational levels, and lowering the prerequisites for approving the different grades and levels, which are normally part of every educational system.

Institutionalized education, was not the culmination of a prior cultural integration process manifested through literacy activities. Rather, schools set up shop amidst a socially illiterate universe, using a conventional educational model –patterned after those used in pre-war Europe– which takes for granted that the learner has the cultural attributes of intellectually middle class children. Two solutions to the impasse were attempted: in most cases, it meant lowering the educational level to that of the social medium; the few countries that had teaching institutions as such, and applied stern evaluation criteria, punished under-achievers with repetition, and encouraged those who did not meet the cultural standards established by the school, to simply drop out. Obviously those chastised came from the lower income sectors.

One way or another, social, cultural and racial, discriminations persisted, being perhaps most conspicuous against those who could not complete primary education, while middle and higher income levels accessed secondary and college education, in massive numbers.

Nevertheless, equal educational opportunities were relatively high in the fifties and the eighties. When comparing education –as a social ladder– to income distribution and access to power, it must be concluded that education was the driving force behind mobility and social change in Latin American society, because its expansion took place within the great cycle of structural change that affected these social groups. Educational and structural mobility, were the two processes that in a few years, accounted for historical breakthroughs: from illiteracy to massive education; from predominantly manual unskilled labour to myriad occupations, many of them skilled and in many countries, with a predominance of the non-manual variety. Occupation, income, and education formerly shaped like a mastaba with an overimposed obelisk, now took on a rhomboidal form.

Educational expansion had an enormous effect on expectations and in the capacity of the socially subordinated groups to claim, via the political route, a more equitable distribution of the social structure. So much so, that the political pressure exerted by the educated masses soon led, in terms of equal opportunities, to the greatest progress ever. Education created a political democracy climate that, in time, could beget a social democracy.

Equality trends in societies with high concentrations of income and power

Income and education distribution in developed countries and in Latin America

Conceptual and empirical analysis on the issue of equality, have suggested that income distribution is the most relevant of variables, and unless its distribution pattern is modified, that is, the range of income is reduced, efforts aimed at improving equal opportunity via education, will play a considerably less significant role (See C. Jenk's empirical contribution and the book *Democracy and Capitalism*).[1]

Today's literature seems to disagree sharply on the incidence education has in society, as compared against the family environment, tested IQ, economic competitiveness, segmentation of the labour market, and the role of capital in income distribution.

It is not within the scope of this paper to expound on this debate, however, the impor-

[1] Samuel Bowles and Herbert Gintis, *Democracy and Capitalism*, Basic Book, New York, 1986.

tance of the family cultural component and, particularly, the impact of the mother's educational level on the academic performance of their children measured in terms of acquired knowledge, cannot be overemphasized. Research on learning in junior high school students conducted in Montevideo by this author and an ECLAC technical team, revealed that the educational level of the parents is a determining factor in the achievement of the children. Education is closely tied to family income, but whenever these variables appear to be at odds with one another, the education of the mother emerges as the redeeming factor that explains knowledge acquisition by school age children.

It should be noted that Uruguay's case is atypical for Latin America. On the one hand, income distribution is more mesocratic, and the percentage of households below the poverty line is markedly lower than that for the rest of the region.[2] On the other, despite the qualitative deterioration undergone by the educational system in the early nineties, Uruguay's does not exhibit the segmentation that typifies most of the countries in the region, that is, a private education designed for elite groups, and an official system turned into poor education for the poor.

Before proceeding to a specific analysis of the region, it would be pertinent to introduce a few facts on income distribution in developed countries and in Latin America, as a backdrop to educational democracy.

In the former countries, as a result of manifold reasons –organization capacity, vindication of the popular sectors, conflict-solving social policies, technical and labour differentiation, consumer-driven capitalism, and so forth– economic growth went hand in hand with a greater share of working income in the total income, and a distribution that narrowed the gap between the upper and lower ends of the scale. As a result, particularly in european countries, through monetary income mechanisms, income redistribution mediated by social policy (health, maternity, housing allocations, etc.), and graduated income tax, a fairer distribution was materialized.[3]

Roughly speaking, in the more developed european countries, equality was attained largely through distribution of income strategies, and socially inspired redistribution, rather than through expanding educational opportunities particularly those that go beyond basic education, and specially those associated with access to higher education.

Educational expansion in these countries, was more attuned to ensuring the basic education required at each development stage –increasingly complex social interaction, better qualified human resources, etc.– and that required to prevent that a portion of society fell below the average cultural level. Thus, participation at the various educational levels by the stratified social groups, was the result of the changes introduced by technical and social differentiation (which modified the occupational structure and its qualifications), and changes in cultural consumption (and consequently in educational demands), rather than those brought about by a social mobilization spurred by participation in the educational process.

Furthermore, the examination system, guidance councils, and the creation of educational "filieres" within diversified secondary education systems, operated as the cultural brakes of a social demand for education, that could have otherwise been indiscriminate, as is currently the case in Latin America.

For its part, the educational system behaved

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2 Ruben Kaztman, "La Heterogeneidad de la pobreza: una aproximación bidimensional, *Pobreza y necesidades básicas en el Uruguay*, Ed. Arca, 1989. Rafael Diez de Medina, *Estructura socio-ocupacional y distribución del ingreso en el Uruguay*, ECLAC, Montevideo Bureau, 1989. *Hogares con necesidades básicas insatisfechas en Uruguay. Análisis por departamentos y barrios de Montevideo*, ECLAC, Montevideo Bureau, 1989.

3 In France's case, see "Centre d'étude des revenues et des couts", *Les revenues des francais. Troisieme rapport de synthese*, Document No. 58, second quarter, 1981.

with the rationale inherent to a differentiated system which has specialized in transmitting knowledge. Although it did become massive and lowered its requirements, it continued to screen on the basis of knowledge and to stratify the educational "filieres", yielding to massification in the universities, for example, while preserving the elitist nature in "les grandes écoles"[4] or in the higher status careers.[5] On the whole, the strategy could be defined as a "controlled" social democratization of education.

Conversely, at about the same post-war period, Latin America experienced a higher leveling of educational opportunities for the integrated urban sectors (industrial proletariat and middle classes) in terms of access to secondary and higher education, than that attained in relation to income distribution. Peasant groups were practically by-passed entirely, while benefits for marginal-urban sectors, were mediocre or low.

ECLAC's income distribution studies[6] reveal that, during the post-war years and up until the 1980 crisis, population income rises as a reflection of the growth of per capita Gross Domestic Product, although skewed income distribution patterns remain basically unchanged, except in countries like Argentina, Costa Rica and Uruguay which exhibit historical mesocratic patterns and where basic education is universal, or that recently adopted such a pattern, as was Mexico's case in the seventies, in the wake of an exceptional rise in the GDP due to unprecedented oil-derived profits.

Swift economic growth did expand the gains of the middle and high socio-economic strata although it did not ostensibly diminish the gap between the average income of the poorer 20% and the richer 10% (in Brazil, this ratio is 1:40). Moreover, the percentage reduction of people living below the poverty line was proportionally very modest when compared against national income growth figures.

Obviously, these trends took a turn for the worse in the 80's, when the effects of the external debt and subsequent adjustments policies began to be felt. As income plummeted and social services –formerly available to households just above the poverty line– became scarce, the number of households below the poverty line increased at alarming rates.[7]

The lack of monetary distribution was compounded by the lack of universalized social policies in terms of availability of health services, mother-child care, retirement pensions, etc.

Despite skewed income and capital distributions, and the actual differences in lifestyle evident among the Latin America social strata, popular sectors do not feel that their depressed social condition constitutes a formidable enough obstacle to keep their children from pursuing drawn-out studies and aspiring to the highest university degrees. Education is not seen as linked to social classes; in the collective eye, learning and knowledge are detached from any impediment that may result from the family having little or no culture.

This view finds a toehold in the perceived weakness of education both as an institution and as a professional body. Automatic promotion schemes, radical changes of study programmes and plans from one year to the next, and the barely sufficient training of educators, all seem to convey to the population, that knowledge

4 Ezra N. Suleiman, *Les élites en France. Grand corps et grandes écoles*. Ed. du Seuil, Paris, 1979.

5 Henri Janne and Torsten Husen, *Egalité des Chances d'Acces a l'enseignement: Deux Points de Vue*. Ed. Fondation Européene de la Culture, Amsterdam 1981. Ministere de l'Education Nationale, *Le Baccalaureat. L'Evolution du Nombre des Bacheliers (1851-1979) et ses Consequences sur le Niveau d'Instruction de la Population Totale*. Etudes et Documents No. 81.2. Hence, the increased probability, for example, that a labourer's son passes baccalaureate, which rose from 2.5% in 1962 to 10.9% in 1976, could be the result of the emergence of a new class of technical worker rather than to workers climbing in social category.

6 ECLAC, *La pobreza en América Latina: dimensiones y políticas*, Estudios e Informes N° 54, Santiago de Chile, 1985; Oscar Altimir, *La dimensión de la pobreza de América Latina*, Cuadernos ECLAC No. 27, Santiago, Chile, 1979; J. Graciarena, *Tipos de concentración del ingreso y estilos políticos en América Latina*, ECLAC Review No. 2, Santiago, second semester, 1976.

7 ECLAC, *Panorama social de América Latina*, LC/G. 1688, Santiago, Chile, October, 1991.

acquisition is not necessarily the outcome of hard work or mastering technical skills. In fact, there is a sort of magic belief in the metamorphosing power of educational institutions. All an individual would have to do is attend classes and perfunctorily perform some rituals, for a magic transformation of his/her skills to take place. This notion was reinforced by the painless transition to highly paid positions enjoyed by these first and massive waves of degree-toting professionals.

The income distribution pattern of salaried professionals is closely associated with education. Ascertaining whether the rate of return of education is genuine or spurious, is hard to do. However, what is clear is that the income polarization seen among educated individuals employed by modern productive sectors (and by the State) and rural manual labour, informal urban work, and even traditional industrial activities, is tightly linked to social segmentation and not so much to production and productivity. (For example, in 1970 while a Brazilian janitor earned the equivalent of 1, a university graduate technician in the same state firm, made the equivalent of 30).

Unequal incomes and the direct relationship observed between the higher salaries and university degrees which prevailed until the seventies –when a number of changes prompted by an underrating of university studies brought about by a massification of degrees and the parallel drop in income at the level of public officials (where most university graduates concentrate)– exerted a tremendous pressure on education.

Briefly, the paradox behind equal access to secondary and higher education in Latin America, lies in the fact that it took place amidst societies which continued to be deeply non-egalitarian. Income distribution remained essentially unequal, poverty, a characteristic of wide societal sectors was not eradicated,[8] nor was a common educational base created that could provide all primary school children, with standardized knowledge and similar instruments.

Social control of educational democratization

Educational democratization was, in actual fact, restricted through two major mechanisms:

Development of segmented educational systems

In a nut shell, it could be argued that a populist educational system was under way. Massive student groups, ranging from primary school to university levels, received an education with limited cognitive contents, at the hands of teachers who either had no previous training or very little of it, who settled for passing on a curriculum that emulated that of the Traditional Educational System (SET),[9] characteristic of the humanist cycle that preceded massification. SET's distinguishing features are the weak development of linguistic and mathematical codes, and the modest amount of scientific and contemporary social structure contents. From a pedagogical standpoint, it has not been devised for massive education (least of all, for this first generation of "new learners"), while grades and levels are passed automatically, either through expressly established provisions or mere persistence.

Investing in facilities and equipment has been severely curtailed, and teachers earn salaries which, for the most part, are considered inconsistent with those commanded by professionals.

On the other hand, an elitist educational system was being sanctioned and promoted. As a rule, it begins as a private pre-school –official pre-schools were severely limited in the region–

[8] *ECLAC, Desarrollo y transformación: estrategias para superar la pobreza*, Col. Estudios e Informes No. 69, Santiago, Chile, 1988.

[9] Juan C. Tedesco, "Elementos para un diagnóstico del sistema educativo tradicional en América Latina" in Ricardo Nassif et al, *El sistema educativo en América Latina*, UNESCO-ECLAC-UNDP/ Kapelusz, B. Aires, 1984.

develops into a socially and academically selective secondary private or public school, coming to a full cycle at modern private universities, or officially subsidized by the State. These institutions, which are strict in terms of initial student selection and knowledge updating procedures, will crank out top technical personnel and future echelons of CEO's.[10]

This is not the typical academic and social stratification present in any mass-oriented educational system. Rather, it is representative of segmented systems since, in the one, teaching takes place while in the other ritualistic steps take on a symbolical meaning of knowledge transference.

Market-based selection

Since certificates and degrees were no longer comparable, job selection was transferred to the social power concealed in the market. Entrepreneurs and the State became judges of educational qualifications deciding what is valid and what is not.

As the elements on which to base such a selection were, and still are, quite primitive and since employers' evaluations are much more "racist" and "classist" than those of educational courts, indicators tended to reflect the social rather than the academic status of the institution under scrutiny. Once earned, these prestige images become ingrained and persisted regardless of the educational reforms that –despite everything– continue to take place.

During a first stage, when the transformation of production and employment structures caused human resources to be in great demand, and educational institutions still carried academic prestige, market-based selection was socially less adamant.

Then came the "educational devaluation" of certificates and degrees granted by populist education which, however, did not include higher education. This should be emphasized when discussing "diploma inflation", and unemployment among university graduates. There is a general phenomenon that stems from the fact that the rate of growth of middle and upper positions in the labour structure, and the rate of growth of secondary and higher education diplomas, is not proportional. Diplomas issued by high status institutions, however, have not suffered any devaluation. In fact, several indicators show that not only is unemployment absent in these circles, but that the salaries being paid, drawing away from the median for the respective professions, are reaching international levels.[11]

University degrees, depending on the granting institution, are valid for certain segments of the labour market. In a way, the mushrooming of universities (over 150 in Colombia; better than 2.000 in Brazil, including the "isolated faculties"), responded to a market need, since every university has ties with a specific portion of the labour market and, in turn, it funnels stratified social demands to academic centres as socially and academically stratified, as educational demands.

The future of social mobility and education

Economic panorama and qualification requirements for human resources

One of the outcomes of the external debt crisis, is that the region is fast becoming part of the international trade competition. In order to service the debt, it encourages export activities while generating critical imbalances in terms of ex-

[10] For a more sophisticated and detailed study of educational segmentation see G.W. Rama's "Condiciones sociales de la expansión y segmentación de los sistemas universitarios" in G.W. Rama (compiler), *Universidad, Clases Sociales y Poder*, Ed. Ateneo de Caracas/ CENDES, Caracas, 1982.

[11] Market transnationalization has been accompanied by the parallel development of highly paid working cliques that, considering they are inserted in developing societies, provide their members with unrealistic purchasing power.

change which, in turn, force traditional businesses to streamline their operations, and the economy to add new production alternatives to the exporting portfolio. On the other hand, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, compel us –through agreements– to lower import tariffs, arguing that lower customs duties will result in increased competitivity. Lastly, these very same agreements call for curtailment of the fiscal deficit and, consequently, the State is gradually abandoning its role of "grand employer" and beginning to face its own modernization.

As a result, the period marked by import substitution, protectionism, and inefficient production of goods and services, is drawing to an end.

These times characterized by tough competition, have had an impact on the labour force:

- Some export industries demand highly qualified and specialized labour.
- The State is also hiring specialized personnel in an effort to reorganize and modernize its operation.
- Unskilled labour salaries are plummeting while unemployment soars among this category. The State's clerical, social service and community personnel (secondary school and university graduates and drop-outs), saw their incomes sharply reduced.
- Informal sector income, expands or contracts depending on favourable or unfavourable competition against national or international products.
- Working income is becoming polarized based on type of activity and the economic value ascribed to a particular skill. Social redistribution policies, have little or no effect on the unemployed or on the groups that have less attractive qualifications.

Cocoon societies

The great cycle that advocated mobility through reforms in social structures, is dying out. Rural populations now comprise a relatively low percentage of the total which can no longer make a significant contribution to rural-urban migratory flows; workers represent stable masses in numerous countries while in others their participation has decreased percentage-wise, as well as in absolute numbers. State civil service and community jobs, are not likely to pick up in the next few years.

The new generations have been born to the cities, and face a rigid social structure; in the 90's, towards the end of this "lost decade", the recovery of the per capita income of ten years ago, represented a major accomplishment.

The region, after being hailed as the society of mobility and mobilization, begins to turn into a society of structured social classes, ruled by the "social reproduction" of the socio-cultural system.[12] (These statements are not necessarily true for the future, since the tensions being generated by the structural adjustment may give rise to anything from the political resurgence of the Armed Forces shepherding social unrest, to new political mass-mobilization processes advocating reforms to social stratification structures). Social mobility currently depends on the family context, the quality of educational and technical skills, as well as individual proficiency in the labour market and within the enterprise.

The protection of acquired social positions, and the opportunity for upward mobility, depend largely on the social strata the individual belongs to, and on personal trajectory, rather than on social reform processes.

However, not every status-fulfilled group has their children's future assured. The trend that guaranteed occupations on the strength of a recommendation, is beginning to crumble before the demands posed by competition. This would explain some cases of downward mobility among traditional middle or residual poorly educated classes, that still chose their sons' education dazzled by the status, or their daugh-

[12] On inter-generation reproduction in the 80's, see G.W. Rama's *Latin American youth between development and crisis, ECLAC Review*, No. 29, Santiago, Chile, August, 1986.

ters formation with total disregard for study or work projections.[13]

New demands on education

The economic order, formerly content with the cultural socialization of manpower, and with increasing the number of years of study before any perceived drops in quality, now demands for its modern and competitive sectors, technical knowledge and skills consistent with its technological development.

For their part, families and students who regarded education practically as a "sacrosanct" institution, where the learner merely witnessed the rituals officiated by minister-teachers, began to claim their share of results from an institution now seen as secular and, hence, subject to evaluation.

The process is still in its early stages, since social demand has been hobbled by an exceedingly rigid supply, and by a bureaucratic apparatus quite indifferent to social demands.

In the region, social demand has expressed itself through private educational systems which, in contrast to the past, no longer vie with the regular system, but have resorted to offering secondary or higher level specializations in the new professional fields opened by productive modernization, or make available full time service, foreign languages, mathematics for the new era, computer science, etc.

Modern private education has emerged from the ashes of yesteryear's private institutions –branded with the seal of the church or the elitists– as an expedient and practical answer to the social needs of the labour market.

At the same time, the concept of a "militant university" has fallen by the wayside, except in those countries still facing radical society-state dissensions. Despite the current economic moment, which casts an ominous labour perspective for education professionals, and threatens educational cutbacks, political mobilization by students has been scant. Students are participating in unions or university councils in decreasing numbers.[14]

This points to a role differentiation trend: politics on one side, educational institutions on the other. Professionalization begins to align with an orientation diametrically opposed to that of "intellectuals" –in the sense of Schumpeter's "antiestablishment" political actors– characteristic of the Latin American university student of past decades.

The social panorama awaiting education

As in the developed countries –as well as in centrally planned economies– the future of education in the countries of the region, is confronted with two major panoramas.

First, a gradual splitting of two educational circles, whose boundaries would be represented by the quality of knowledge imparted, their freshness and instrumentality, the capacity for transferring attitudes and generating aptitudes for acquisition of permanent knowledge and, based on solid scientific and cultural components, the creation of an innovating capacity in students.

The higher circle, less given to ascription and more to instrumentality, should have the aforementioned characteristics, while the lower circle would consist of an accumulation of obsolete contents, more dogmatic than experimental, whose results could only be measured through the inadequate development of skills and instruments exhibited by those graduating at the various levels.

This trend is no different from that recognized in developed countries –particularly in the United States– and is linked to a strong segmentation of the labour market. This market is split into a

[13] Cecilia Braslavsky, comments on the high proportion of non-working, non-studying youths in Argentina, *La juventud argentina: Informe de situación*, Ed. CEAL, Buenos Aires, 1987.

[14] In Uruguay, for example, within a classical militant university with student government, only one sixth of the student body voted for unions in 1988. The previous year, one third had abstained from voting –attendance being compulsory– at the election for student representatives to the administrative councils.

superior branch associated with the "technological society", and an inferior one manifested through "minor services" (retail businesses, personal and temporary services, etc. which expand fueled by recession, and perhaps as an adaptation mechanism before the forces of social polarization), and through the production of goods that require unskilled labour. This schism has been magnified in the United States, by a concentration of income among those who demand private welfare services, and by a reduction of public spending in education and social services,[15] whereas in most European Community countries, the factor that triggered social polarization is a high unemployment rate, characteristic feature of the technologic and production transformation.

In Latin America, this trend would find that fertile soil produced by a previous social segmentation, income concentration, and a non-reduction of poverty levels, and in educational matters, the segmentation between the "populist" and the "elitist" circles.

It could be argued, however, that this scenario does not have to necessarily occur. First, it is not a universal trend. The smaller european countries, particularly the EFTA (European Free Trade Association) members, have not experienced high unemployment rates or a reduction in public spending for the benefit of private consumption. In some of these countries, basic educational actions along with services designed to protect the biological and social reproduction of families –which have run parallel to active adult training and "recycling" programmes– have provided a mechanism to deal with technological restructuring without socially segregating some sectors of the population.

A second Latin American scenario, would arise from an effort for simultaneously improving the global quality of the educational system –particularly its "populist" sector– and training at the basic level, thus increasing genuine equality of opportunity.

The region's burgeoning social system has some characteristics that may prove useful to this scenario; among them:

Decrease in birth rates

Within a short period of time, a great change in reproductive behaviour has taken place. Countries that had yet to undergo the demographic transition (for example, Brazil and Colombia), now exhibit a significant reduction of birth rates. This demographic shift, will alleviate the pressures withstood by the educational system (as was the case in Chile) and, for the very first time in forty years, will allow allocating resources towards enhancing the quantity of time and the quality of education, devoted to children.

Consolidation of a democratic political culture

Democratic coexistence is becoming a "blue-chip" among societies. Despite the seriousness of the social crises of the 80's, neither the authoritarian state nor "fundamentalism" has reared its head; governments are cognizant of the alternative that political parties represent or know, to their chagrin, that voters prefer it.

Furthermore, governments must win the support of a population that behaves more rationally and expects more in terms of solutions to development problems and specific social deficiencies. Politics, no longer a formula for symbolic identity and mobilization, is compelled to offer alternatives to employment, salary, community services, and other problems. This clears a path –yet untrodden– for vindicating the efficiency and quality of collective educational services; a newcomer to the region.[16]

[15] See Emma Rothschild's "The Real Reagan Economy" and "The Reagan Economic Legacy" in *The New York Review of Books*, June 30 and July 21, 1988.

[16] In Portuguese, the idiomatic expression SE represents an impersonal entity, and therefore departs from its Spanish meaning. Recently, the expression "a gente" which describes a collective "we" (the nation, the people, mankind), has developed parallel to Brazil's integration and urbanization processes. Its remarkable dissemination has followed a path similar to that of the social rights concept, as revealed in expressions such as "a gente" need schools, "a gente" have to work, "a gente" want elections, etc.

The emergence of a politically differentiated domain

Unions, opinion groups, social and technical associations now governing alongside political parties and the State, are becoming critical of the operation of educational systems, in the light of criteria that are not those of political gratification or educational liturgy.

Greater social power of relegated groups and emergence of intermediate social entities

Peasants, traditionally relegated groups, are beginning to acquire bargaining power as a result of labour shortages, and a need to incorporate technology into the production process, a resolve that calls for a better educational level. Sectors of "capitalized peasants", "protofarmers" as it were, advocating services and, specially, education, are also becoming evident.

In the urban market, reforms are no less dramatic. There is a new type of worker in peak production sectors, one who is more readily identified with a technician, and who vindicates the quality of education being imparted to their children. The obsoleteness of educational systems has been made clearly evident by the occupational and knowledge differentiation that have emerged in sectors involved in production support, and consumption services. Thus, middle level individuals are encouraged to improve their occupational skills –albeit, with no clear effects on income distribution thus far.

"School culture" and "family culture" draw closer

Educational progress and integration via the mass media (particularly television), is bringing together these two erstwhile separated domains. In the future, illiteracy will not be the schools' "bete noire" a fact that should facilitate –even in the absence of change– learning and socializing.

Building professional teachers

Following many decades of a steady downpour of teachers, dramatic turn-over rates, train-as-you-go schemes, politization and polarization (for or against the establishment), as well as newcomers who endured teaching as part of a mandatory prerequisite –who suffered so excruciatingly through it, that perhaps wished its destruction–, teachers are finally beginning to coalesce into a stable organization, and professionalization –despite all its foibles– struggles on in several countries. Concurrently, research centres on education, specialized publications, and the Latin American network for professional exchange and research, have been expanded and reinforced.

As a whole, a transition from political discourse on education, to the analysis of problems and identification of deficiencies in the operation of educational systems, could be said to be under way. Whatever room for irresponsibility remained between the political management of education and its local execution, is being squeezed out.

However, this scenario –within the context of the so called structural economic adjustment, and the new role played by the State, spurred by the financial support to the region pledged by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Baker Plan– would point to potential, long-term social and educational development factors, which may be at odds with the effective short-term policies being currently implemented.

Reduction of public spending, has brought along a number of mediate and immediate consequences to the teaching profession. Salaries have dropped so low, that the old expression "poor as a teacher" has regained popularity. A segment of trained educators, leave teaching in search of better paying positions; another, combines teaching and non-teaching occupations in an attempt to supplement income, while teacher training institutions evaluate the dregs of the academic world, after all competent youths have chosen to reject a life or poverty. The overall result is that the quality of teaching has plummeted in public institutions, the very same institutions that receive an increasing number of students which happen to come from the most socially and culturally deprived sectors.

The external debt crisis and the implementation of adjustment measures, are taking place amidst the "maturation" of the globalization of basic education, and a strong expansion of secondary and higher education, both as a result of the social process unfolding since the seventies, and the new features of the labour market. Young people have a terrible time landing jobs –the less than 25 age group accounts for fifty per cent of unemployment in the region– specially those which offer social benefits and on-the-job training.

Consequently, in order to surmount these difficulties, the stratified households –in proportion to their income and perceived labour market competititvity– boost their institutionalized education and training demands.[17]

This growing mass of learners, encounters an educational infrastructure, equipment, libraries, etc., in run down conditions, and increasingly less suited to handle current student flows (numerous countries have adopted three hour shifts in public schools, and in some extreme cases – for example, in the Buenos Aires province– two hour shifts, so as to process four different groups of students per day), and which are progressively running out of teaching manuals. Whereas in developed countries computer science is making strides as a teaching tool, Latin America – which failed to embark on the "textbook revolution"– is witnessing a falling away from traditional schooling, caused by a lack of essential didactic instruments.

Throughout the 80's, and parallel to the resource crisis, there was no record of educational reform programmes or systematic actions to raise the quality of the knowledge imparted, profoundly affected by a prior expansion of enrollment levels, and lacking an appropriate pedagogical project designed to handle the incorporation problems of a population that, for the first time in their lives, had massive access to a wide range of education, from primary school to the university campus.

That decentralization comprises the new educational proposal, is symptomatic indeed. To the neoliberal arguments that advocate economic deregulation, privatization, and unrestricted national and international competition in Latin American markets, one might add the well known –and shared– observations on the rigidity and bureaucratization of state-managed education, the vindication of the role of local communities or a group of school teachers –who innately know what educational or cultural issues should be addressed or what modernization strategies should be utilized– to freely choose a curriculum, or a teacher recruiting mechanism, or proclaim the greater versatility of the state or government authorities to manage education.

Educational decentralization, it is being claimed, is the grand instrument that will transform education, bring into its fold the modern version of science, prepare individuals connected with the scientific and technological realms, and open the floodgates to universal knowledge. These proposals, implemented in developed countries throughout the 20 century, were based on a national development programme sponsored by a cultural elite with ties to the political project, which used a variety of educational intervention devices, such as De Gaulle's or Adenauer's ambitious plans in France and Germany respectively, or J.F. Kennedy's educational and research space programme.

Beyond the theoretical domain, what is being done in some countries of the region is simply, transferring primary and secondary education to the provincial governments. The funding that goes along with this transference is so modest,

[17] ECLAC's recent publication (Montevideo Bureau) *Los jóvenes de Uruguay. Esos desconocidos*, 1991, discusses the findings of the "National Youth Survey", the only one of its kind to cover an entire urban population between the ages of 15 and 29, corroborates the aforementioned, and points to the growing social segmentation between those who abandon primary education to get unskilled occupations, devoid of social benefits – which are prime targets for unemployment– and those who "invest" in advanced training, seek further education in private centres, and postpone plans for raising a family, as part of the necessary strategy in the race for obtaining medium or high paying jobs, in expanding niches of the economic sector.

however, –Argentina towards late 1991, constitutes a case in point– that all indications seem to point to tremendous educational inequalities, similar to those that prevail in rich and poor provinces or states, a phenomenon that Brazil has experienced for many decades between the poor Northeastern and the prosperous Southern States.

Today's panorama, does not afford us an optimistic view, since to achieve national integration, equal opportunities, and universal building of skills, the priority should go to fiscal adjustments rather than to social development.

However, a historic perspective of the social changes that affected the region, and the social groups that have emerged patterned after the structures that have been typical of the last decades, herald a reversal of the trend, given some time. The priority assigned to education by middle class society and organized groups of popular origin, has been Latin America's contribution –in an international context– to the teaching profession. It is likely that following this "crisis administration" period, social movements will emerge harbouring a societal programme wherein educational transformation, is one of the key elements.

A question for computer-savvy latin americanists

In order to provide world-wide computer access to information relevant to Latin America, the Program in Comparative and International Development in the Department of Sociology at Johns Hopkins University in setting up the LATIN AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT ARCHIVE (LADARK). This computer archive will contain data sets based on empirical studies conducted by researches at Johns Hopkins University and their colleagues elsewhere. The archive will continually expand as researchers from different countries submit their own data sets, working papers, etc. All of this information will be freely avaible to scholars from all countries through the Internet. However, in the course of setting up the archive we have been posed with the following question:

LADARK will definitely have its own gopher hole within the Johns Hopkins University computer system, which means that all researchers who have access to gopher or telnet software will be able retrieve data from the archive.

We need advise from Latin Americanists who are familiar with the current nature of computer network access throughout Latin America, in order to determine whether it would be worthwhile for us to invest the time and effort in setting up duplicate directories for LADARK. Any other observations regarding access issues are also welcome.

So, if you have some general idea of how widespread access to gopher and telnet is throughout Latin America, please let us know. And, most importantly, please notify us if you believe that many Latin Americanists only have ftp capabilities and would therefore need a separate access system.

Please direct your comments to:

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EDUCATIONAL RHETORIC IN LATIN AMERICA: THE EXPERIENCE OF THIS CENTURY

Luis Ratinoff*

Every epoch has rationalized the need to assign resources and devote time to education, spurred by the major concerns and issues of that particular period. But, not all these rationales have granted education the same social priority.
For centuries, teaching as a formal activity was associated with specialized disciplines such as religion, war, craftsmanship, trade and navigation. The concept of a general education for living, was long in translating philosophical reflections into specific objectives, institutions, and processes.
It all started when the complexities of leadership and management made essential the forging of common education ideals that suited the elites, while materializing socializing practices consistent with these purposes. Then, the gradual filtering down of education as a "civilizing influence" to other social strata which were beginning to acquire a modicum of economic and political preeminence, became a significant factor in the globalization of general education objectives.
The path that changed the nature of educational accreditation from implicit to explicit, was helped along by the technological progress and the high degree of differentiation characteristic of the burgeoning human organizations. These factors contributed to disseminate the notion that proper individual performance rested on a common foundation of knowledge, and shared cultural traditions.
It is only logical that the priority ascribed to pedagogical actions, as themes of public debate, increases in societies where teaching is no longer considered a privilege. Huge amounts of resources and powerful interests are involved in such places, along with a realization –by the cultured elites– that schooling somehow plays a role in reproducing order.

This being the case, a distinction should be made between intellectual concern for topics relating to socialization ideals, and defining what priority do the social forces assign to teaching activities. The contemporary notion that every individual should have unrestrained access to knowledge codes, is fairly recent, although even in the more progressive nations is still viewed as an objective rather than a reality, since the swift tempo of social and economic evolution has caused educational training to become increasingly more complex. Furthermore, it is evident that the socializing influence of schools has not kept pace with these challenges, as is the emergence of social factors that discourage schooling and limit its success.

During the course of the 20th century, the issue dealing with the strategic role education plays in society's progress, has been reiterated and conceptualized from various perspectives,

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but independent of the analytical quality of the arguments advanced, only some of this rhetoric seems to have had an impact on the decisions made. This seems to have occurred where prevailing circumstances favoured taking new paths, and where there was a meeting of the minds between these ideas and the objectives sought by a sector of dynamic social forces. Although this justification of the school system was validated every step of the way by complex abstractions made possible by the state of the arts in some areas of social knowledge, it would be difficult to ascertain whether there was any significant progress made in terms of validating the arguments advanced.

This should not be taken to mean that the analytical understanding of the role of schools will not improve during this century; in fact, there was an important accumulation of specialized knowledge which originated in pedagogical studies and experiments; so much so, that our comprehension of these problems became richer thanks to the dynamic counterpoint between their evolution, the various rhetorics, and the progress evidenced in research and analysis techniques.

However, it would be a bad mistake to identify the synthetic view implied in each piece of rhetoric with a greater understanding of the multiple intervening factors and interactions. So far, the successive educational macrovisions formulated during this century, chose and weighed variables selectively, highlighting those which were consistent with the objectives pursued, and ignoring data and criteria that seemed to counter the assumptions made.

Two major trends may thus be visualized: (i) as the political objectives underlying these macrovisions evolved from pluri-dimensionality to uni-dimensionality, the assumptions and criteria also became further specialized, and (ii) simultaneously, the styles for submitting ideas changed. During the first half of the century, persuasions followed broad ideological principles which crystallized into recipes of "political appropriateness" or "moral appropriateness"; since then, the arguments employed have increasingly used utilitarian philosophical assumptions, whose logic is expressed through "technical appropriateness" criteria.

It is wrong to evaluate rhetoric in terms of rules of scientific demonstration; its analytical and factual shortcomings are obvious, and the consistency of its proposals and assumptions is markedly simplistic. Perhaps the greatest virtue exhibited by these public arguments is that they have the ability to agglutinate dispositions and provide organizational concepts which soon become organizational factors. Besides, it would be practically impossible to demonstrate that the changes they induce are, in fact, the best possible solutions. Their value is tested through the ability to beget action.

Along these lines, rhetoric has three major functions. First, it "coordinates", that is, it helps bring together a number of diverging interests through shared values and goals. Second, it "mobilizes", facilitating the incorporation of new groups committed through special ends and rationales. Third, it "legitimizes", by building an image of appropriateness criteria, acceptable to the rest of the community.

Evolution of educational rhetoric: the growing internationalization of formal education macrovisions

Twentieth century educational rhetoric, reflects the gradual internationalization of ideas and interests.

Seen from a historical, Latin American perspective, it would be tremendously difficult to abstract the arguments utilized each time international policies confronted a crisis: building nations and nationalism prior to World War II; the fight against totalitarianism through the assertion of democracy during and in early-post World War II; the problems posed by the ideological confrontations of the Cold War years; and, finally, the period characterized by attempts to institutionalize a global society in the total absence of a state, which in recent years has been dubbed the "end of history". It would appear that modern educational rhetorics responded to an international dimension of the problems, and were disseminated keyed to world crises and adjustments.

World War I, the protracted and profound effects of the Great Depression of 1929-1930, and the measures improvised to dampen its repercussions, showed the strategic importance of national integration and nationalism in fostering security in a climate of collective uncertainty.

World War II demonstrated the effects of runaway nationalism on world stability and how efficient an antidote democracy was when it came to crushing the tumultuous uprisings that ended in political and ideological nihilism.

Curbing ideological subversion during the Cold War years posed the problem of preserving order, by means of modern systems designed to select and control local elites.

Finally, in today's world, lacking the ideological antagonisms that decades earlier hobbled the globalization process, collective security tends to identify itself with the set of advantageous features that stem from participating in global markets.

The above mentioned events caused the rhetoric of educational nationalism to flourish between 1910 and 1940, that of pluralism between 1940 and 1950, followed by merit-cracy through the mid 70's, and culminating in arguments advocating human capital programming as a factor of global competitiveness, as of the late 80's.

These macrovisions have had their share of success, to the extent that they mobilize internal forces and furnish a rational structure for the search of solutions consistent with local educational development problems.

From the region's standpoint, receiving and turning this rhetoric into local reform proposals, was and will continue to be, a rather complex process. The mechanisms responsible for creating external macrovisions, occurred largely in countries with greater social differentiation. The adopted models, however, gradually disseminated to countries where social differentiation was not as marked and where, perhaps, social structures were not in tune with the newfound solutions.

Lastly, it would be a mistake to think that these technical and political discourses –and their macrovisions– had a direct and lineal impact on the evolution of Latin American educational systems.

Data show that the abstract and general meaning of rhetoric was swayed by local problems, and by the social actors committed to education, every single time. Clearly, and although these unifying concepts were part of the process and endowed it with meaning and direction, each country used them in ways that reflected their local circumstances and the individuals behind them.

Foundation discourse: the rhetoric of educational nationalism

Between 1919 and 1940, amidst a world dominated by nationalism, public discourse defined schools as an instrument at the service of national integration; its main role, was to contribute to the nation's uninterrupted construction, modernization, and integration.

Nationalism left a profound imprint in the organization of Latin American school systems, as a result of the significant convergence between local political demands, and the institutional models some european nationalisms projected beyond their borders.

Just as the noblemen of yesteryear benefitted politically from the halo of prestige conferred by patronage culture, modern european nationalisms had adopted cultural policies designed to integrate and foster national values, and enrich their creations. This intention was reflected in institutions, programmes, rules and processes. The "national culture" systems, included from basic schools to the higher expressions of arts and sciences; they rebuilt and recreated the past in an attempt to define collective identity and motivate the individual to accept the sacrifices the cult of the nation demanded, but simultaneously created devices that allowed for permanent cultural growth and enrichment. Public education was part of a more comprehensive nationalistic project, but not being included in the greater collective system, it became a private advantage to be enjoyed by but a few.

However, these cultural successes firmly anchored in european reality, exerted universal attraction. Since the latter part of the 19th century, those countries which harboured dreams of sovereignty, had been quick to adopt them.

Latin American was a latecomer to this modernization stage, but no exception in terms of incorporating the typical objectives and institutions of educational nationalism. The influence these cultural models had on the region becomes evident upon examining the specific models that served as inspiration, the manner in which the political opening movements of the early part of the century interpreted the modernization of educational systems, and, finally, the institutional and social structures which resulted from these efforts.[1]

The manner in which educational nationalism was received in the region is best understood through a brief examination of the impact external models had on the formation of local paradigms, the role assigned to education by middle class inspired anti-oligarchic movements, and the institutional strategy adopted at the time, to make the paternalistic centralism that characterized the State in the educational field, compatible with academic freedom.

External influences in the creation of a local institutional paradigm

The prestige of european nationalistic models, shaped by the problems and challenges of social structures which had arrived to cultism through a particular historic evolution, caused their values and objectives to be transferred directly.[2]

Latin American countries tended to ignore these special circumstances and to perceive educational nationalism generically, rather as an indication of the success attained by modern nations; they turned the product of a combination of specific circumstances and challenges into the centerpiece of cultural policy. Education historians, note the extraordinary impact of the french school model on the basic institutional arrangement of the region's systems.

Clearly, other factors played a part, but these were confined to specific fields and issues (or affected some sectors of private education), such as scientific higher education, and occasionally, trades or technical career training.

In pre-industrial societies, these special emphasis had little immediate impact; according to available information, the first accumulative consequences brought about by the introduction of science and technical training into the curriculum, surfaced after many decades of trial and error, but not before economic and social transformations had set the stage for developing such activities.

Historical data reveal that the educational challenge confronted by Latin America during the first half of the century had to do more with the institutional design of educational systems, than with the resolution of specific problems or

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1 The assumptions made by educational nationalism were simple and seemingly self-evident: potential citizens had to be committed to a rational projection of the social, legal, and ethical order, so that this voluntary compliance that bound people to their community, would facilitate individual autonomy, reflection and freedom of choice, which could only be achieved if each and every person made the nation his foremost object of respect and devotion.
This concept of nation was not without ambiguities. On the one hand, society was conceived as an operational reality, perhaps the most general conditioner of rules and behaviour and, therefore, of educational processes; on the other hand, however, it was also the product of the behaviour of its members, and in this sense it was seen as an ideal.

2 According to historians, three aspects contributed to the consolidation of modern nationalism in the european states: a stratified system of urban interests based on industrial production, and the bureaucratization of services; a bureaucratic public structure capable of executing the mandates of a fairly consolidated political apparatus; and, participation in a system based on international competitivity which accorded hierarchies and created areas of influence for the so called "powers".
At the beginning of the century, the european powers had also assumed a "civilizing" role through the creation of colonial empires both within and without the european domain. These were the economic and social conditions that had nurtured the creation of cultural systems which sought to systematically foster and disseminate secular values.

the attainment of goals. Public education was still uncharted territory for institutions or local interests. In effect, the reform of precarious pre-existing school structures represented a political and ideological problem –in terms of secularization and openness– which affected systems with limited scopes. Undoubtedly, this facilitated the internal replication of external models whose structural rationale was consistent with the idea of a State devoted to building the nation.

The operational and conceptual oversimplifications of the french school system, which emphasized the centralism and homogeneity of broad national categories, made for an attractive and pliable institutional scheme that could cope with diversity and assign responsibility, that is, define and organize the means keyed to abstract purposes derived from a civic morale of secular values. In short, three factors converged to facilitate the transfer: the availability of a formal educational rationale adaptable to different realities; institutional packages and pre-fabricated experiences; and, lastly, local interests whose self-promotion was predicated on the establishment of universal values.

Political groundwork of the "Teaching State"

The affinity between the educational policy models patterned after the european nationalistic states, and the economic and social conditions that prevailed in the region, have not been sufficiently studied.

The strong european orientation displayed by the local oligarchies is, in all likelihood, the major factor that contributed to the acceptance of the educational models. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to overlook the decisive influence of local actors and circumstances which shaped the early manifestations of modern Latin American nationalism.

Along these lines, middle-class reform movements which, as of 1910, gradually increased their presence in public life until coming to a head as a result of the economic crisis of 1929-30, are critically important. These political movements interpreted the educational problem as a historical commitment between the State and the Nation. The regulatory concept of the "Teaching State" consisted of two parallel objectives which reflected the views and commitments of the new middle class: the use of compulsory primary education as a vehicle for consolidating the electoral bases of political society, and opening middle and higher educational levels as a way of ensuring training for a broad elite committed to the secular values of the nation.

Clearly, public education constituted one of the strategic fields where this early rebellion of the Latin American middle classes against the traditional oligarchic sectors unfolded, and, in turn, had a decisive effect on the political orientation of the systems and interests that played a part in its institutionalization.

The association between nationalist rhetoric and the expansion of electoral policies, helped break the traditional barriers and the typical loyalties of agrarian Latin American societies.

The introduction of State-controlled massive popular education systems, was contingent on the public acceptance of two basic political principles whose influence persisted for most of this century: the current validity of the imagined national community under planning, which was not the result of historical events, but the product of a vague commitment with progress, and the ill-defined goal of building a national culture capable of assimilating the inherited heterogeneity, and turning it into unitarian values and shared ideals.

Educational centralism and academic freedom

These ambitious educational goals of Latin American anti-oligarchic nationalism, demanded a centralized base organization which ensured the dissemination of primary and secondary public education and secular values, in the more socially deprived areas, with army-like precision. They also required, however, decentralized higher education institutions, whose autonomic nature would ensure the academic and ideological freedom needed to topple the traditional authoritarian culture.

The paradoxical blend of paternalism for some and autonomy for others, facilitated the creation of political coalitions and social consensuses which underpinned the budding national education systems in the region.

History shows how vitally important this blend became in the political evolution of Latin American countries. Universities provided the niche for liberal ideas, whereas schools contributed to the gradual build-up of a citizenry which made the updating of political institutions feasible.

To the extent that nationalism provided the vehicle for this modernizing transition, education was one of the main channels that facilitated the expansion of the new middle class power base.

Renewing the dialogue: the role of pluralist rhetoric

The horrors of two consecutive wars gave way to a brief historical interlude marked by hope and generosity, which spurred those school traditions that had flourished under the aegis of political pluralism. Thus, towards mid-century, educational rhetoric had shifted its course. Schools became social hatcheries which produced individuals committed to a democratic lifestyle. In public discourse, nationalistic objectives were replaced by pluralistic objectives and the cult of nations by the cult of democracy.

Undoubtedly, the success of countries that emerged victorious from the armed conflict and identified themselves with political pluralism as the historical alternative to the excesses of totalitarian nationalism, predisposed Latin America to consider reforms inspired in the liberal experiences of the United States.

The new concepts rested on four major tenets: in non-authoritarian scenarios, social integration and the new order were pre-requisites for material progress and freedom, while they laid the foundations for potential sustainable progress in matters of social equity; pluralistic values had to be disseminated massively, that is, the objective was to produce a civic culture which resulted from vying for power according to rules of fair play and balanced political influences; within a polyarchy, schools had an unescapable social and political role, and were expected to vulgarize the underlying values of democratic government, and, in order to fulfill this requirement, had to adopt a pluralistic pedagogy and exchange academic formalism and cultural homogeneity, for a training that prepared the individual to face life, from a perspective of acceptance of diversity.

Pluralism, stressed the role of individualism in maintaining stability, the rational gradualism of progress, and the higher value of pragmatic solutions.

The idea was to create a veritable umbilical chord between school and democracy through which to exchange the corporate elements inherent to the cult of a nation, for a concept of community based on freely acquired and individual commitments; blind and sometimes irrational loyalties were also to be substituted for interest calculations and adamant traditional obedience, for the flexible obligations characteristic of representative governments.

In the wake of World War II, pluralistic rhetoric re-opened the debate on education, challenging pedagogical orthodoxies and the establishment. Its main topics –greater participation through dynamic social classes, the educational mobility of the family group, the up-grading of teaching contents in terms of the vicissitudes of social interaction, the new symbolic languages, and the requirements of the labour world– contributed to educational renewal rather than to promote system reforms.

The influence exerted by pluralism was felt more strongly in industrialized nations where science and technology were beginning to become a factor in human relations and basic social institutions. In Latin America, these preoccupations affected mostly educational thinking rather than pedagogical practice. There were a few practical ramifications of significance, but these were limited to the introduction of innovations and to experimental work. Even today, the concept of educational innovation and experimentation is closely linked to the acceptance of pluralist thought.

The circulating elites: the rhetoric of meritcracy

The liberal educational proposal reflected by pluralism, could not withstand the hard nosed and aggressive climate of the Cold War. In the fifties, education was evaluated in terms of ideological confrontation and the problems and ramifications the early massification of educational systems had brought about. These perspectives placed arguments that advanced modern differentiation and stratification systems –embraced by market economy countries– in the limelight of public concern. A dynamic vision was adopted, based on a theoretical social model that allowed for various degrees of programming and public regulation, which received the generic name of "social market economy".

In the context of "open companies", schools were responsible for facilitating the process that would produce properly trained management personnel. Promoting merit, or merit-cracy, came to be regarded as an ethical extension of the concept of competitiveness, since it reconciled – at least in theory– existing inequalities with equity criteria, sowed at the onset of intellectual life.

The projecting techniques utilized by human resources, endowed this ideological vision with an apparent application, and clad it in technical trappings. Although the outcome of these projections proved debatably valid, the assumptions used in these exercises and the objectives themselves, tended to stress the importance of training specialized teams, particularly at the middle and higher levels. Furthermore, international comparisons between education and income, had led to similar conclusions.

Towards the mid-sixties, these statistical correlations –whatever their test value– suggested that significance improved when educational specialties were taken into account. In turn, social mobility research conducted between 1950 and 1965, concluded that vertical mobility comprised an important stability factor, since it was greater in the mid-sector and decreased as it moved towards the ends of the scale. The available data also suggested that education was a general mobility factor, although it had a lesser impact on the selective and exceptional promotion of some individuals. This new emphasis on educational macrovisions, can best be explained in terms of the economic approach to the problem, the conclusions derived from macrosocial analysis, and the motivations produced by the Cold War.

In addition, this period witnessed a tremendous growth of middle and higher education that called for some sort of justification. The main arguments utilized by this economic and social rhetoric, revealed a preferential concern for broadening and advancing specialized personnel and educated elites, as well as a growing disregard for the furthering of the common folk through expanded basic education opportunities.

Between 1955 and 1980, labour structure in industrialized countries evolved as a factor that contributed to cement these priorities. In Latin America, employment trends –although to a lesser extent– were also favourable; however, the import of these contentions was tightly connected to the gradual expansion and consolidation of a new middle strata committed to the aforementioned objectives of educational policy.

The globalization discourse: the human capital rhetoric

The end of the Cold War, once again, shifted the focal point. The "end of history" discourse, defined the world in terms of a regime of global economic integration governed by an international market rationale.

Within this hypothetical setting, where ideological conflict and transcendental political objectives were absent, and strengths and skills were devoted to fighting for material gains through market competitivity, schools were given the responsibility to prepare individuals to generate incomes compatible with a "civilized" lifestyle, so that the sum total of this behaviour translated into domestically and internationally sustainable economies.

The globalization discourse, rekindled an old and fertile concept, or perhaps more accurately put, it reformulated it in terms of a more efficient formal use of resources.

Actually, the old notion of human capital as defined by classic economists in the 18th century, had had a sluggish evolution. Towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, in the light of conflicts between capital and labour, and early automatization experiences, an attempt was made to associate productivity with educational expense.

However, the concepts and relationships that constitute what we currently know as "education economics", were set forth between 1950 and 1970, and merely as hypothetical interpretations of the residual factors that account for growth and justify the rationale behind assigning resources to education.

Research based on these hypotheses produced increasingly more complex techniques –which turned out to be quite unreliable– for forecasting future human capital demand, in addition to horizontal and longitudinal international comparisons that attempted to illustrate the positive effects of education on the rate of growth.

Although this causal relationship was never conclusively demonstrated, in the mid eighties these hypotheses were curiously turned into basic principles of educational policy. Notably, the transition from hypothesis to prescription implied a radical formalization of the concept of "human capital", and limiting concern for the substantive aspects of education and for the organization of the teaching processes, to a simple question of efficiency in the utilization of resources: content was lost to rhetorical elegance.

"Globalization", along with pushing the concept of a borderless economy to the forefront of public interest, attempted to soften the uncertainty provoked by the existence of an unregulated global community, within the boundaries of this hypothetical scenario, through "technically correct" political decisions. The allegory of globalization as a trans-national, self-regulated, and impersonal transaction system, not circumscribed by geographical or cultural frontiers, became the ultimate criterion to define the rationality of any behaviour. This, in turn, gave rise to a novel social philosophy that portrayed human beings as culturally interchangeable resources, trapped in a neutral web of interactions which, nevertheless, defined the values of each component and factor.

It should come as no surprise, that the adjustment to globalization requirements undergone by national groups –which made necessary the shrinking of centralized hierarchies, and the fostering of fluid networks of autonomous interests– favoured the transformation of centralized school systems into adaptive networks, devoid of a vocation of their own.

The idea of a school culture where individuals of different social origin could share a common experience –key concept of nationalism, pluralism, and merit-cracy– was, from this perspective, technically wrong since it promoted monopolistic interests and disseminated its problems. Conversely, supporters of globalism claimed that services reached optimum levels when they could tap a rich reservoir of skills inspired in the diversification of supply. This, in turn, demanded the adoption of standardization parameters consistent with the social segmentation of the learning experience.

From a formal standpoint, the hypothesis of causal relationship between education and income was the key, since it redefined the valid product of education, as the outcome of a purely utilitarian operation measurable in training input, designed to generate future calculable income. This view likens individuals to adaptive machines that may be programmed to participate in economic activities at the various production levels. The types and years of schooling, became the social and institutional elements of such programming.

Educational coalitions

A succession of government coalitions and interests stood behind these rhetorics. Although public commitment to education varied from country to country, it is evident that certain

aspects of the regional experience led to similar alliances and orientations.[3]

Educational nationalism coalitions

By mid-century, public education had become a unifying political cause in most of the countries of the region. Religious objection to the dissemination of lay teaching was still a topic of debate, although actual opposition had gradually faded out as confessional parties lost their share of power, and the separation of Church and State became fait accompli in a large majority of countries.

Between 1910 and 1940, the newly consolidated power centre adopted a substantial portion of the new middle class anti-oligarchic programme; this shift from centre to moderate left generated pressure as well as commitments which were to increase after the 1929-30 crisis, when several of these groups became directly involved in public decisions. Ideologies tended to coalesce in the centre of the political spectrum.

The process floundered along, affected by the tidal wave that resulted from the international triumph of european fascism, the only authoritarian, non-revolutionary alternative to moderate reforms. Despite the emergence of pro-fascist groups in several countries of the region, the nationalistic movements that were successful in Latin America gradually drifted towards a policy committed to the old interests and the electorate. Extreme political movements challenged the legitimacy of the established institutions, some accessing power to set up excluding regimes.

However, despite the unusual instability, and the ideological shifts from the centre to the poles –which grew stronger in the process– that characterized this period, the political dust finally settled in a fairly mesocratic fashion.

This may best be explained in terms of the new actors and realities that emerged from these political realignments. Although the traditional agrarian world preserved its share of influence, the weight of urban groups –and to a lesser extent that of industrial interests– became more solid.

This modification of the power relationship between country and city had two major repercussions: the validation of new urban voices in public decisions, and the presence of the agrarian world through institutions, laws, information, and opinions, that expressed the concern of the interests and ideologies that had germinated among the crowds.

More precisely, this first political transformation proceeded from the larger centres, usually the capital cities, to smaller urban localities. Rural interests could not counter the cities' electoral policy, nor the gradual –and at times almost invisible– radiation produced by that culture. Schools, communications, and information were some of the strategic elements of this penetration, but these instruments fed off the forcefulness with which the new political values materialized in the highly populated areas.

The city atmosphere validated a public scenario that welcomed into the power spheres, groups who were tremendously interested in the ideals of educational nationalism, and represented a strong stabilizing influence.

As of 1920, the number of individuals whose status was determined by the high level of education received, rose steadily. Sectors of organized workers and white collar labour unions who sought upward mobility through the education of their sons, had also experienced a similar occurrence. The expansion of teaching systems also contributed two actors of paramount importance to electoral politics: teacher unions and student movements.

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[3] Along these lines, the pioneer essay by Juan Casassus: "Concertación y Alianzas en Educación" in *La concertación de políticas educativas en Argentina y América Latina*, Fundación Concretar, Ford Foundation-OREALC/UNESCO, 1994, deserves special mention.
This chapter expounds on the points of view contained in L. Ratinoff's "Desarrollo Educativo y Democratización: Notas para una Discusión" published in *Educación*, Año XXX, No. 100, OAS, Washington D.C., 1986. Reprinted in *Serie de Reimpresiones* No. 169, Interamerican Development Bank.

The coalitions that supported educational nationalism aspired to a radical redefinition of the concept of people; they were intent on undermining the social structures of oligarchic power –which relied on networks of primary loyalty and the clout of social corporations– so that they could be replaced for impersonal communities bound to one another by a fabric of reciprocal rights and obligations.

This programme required a great deal of mobilization and the indoctrination of those sectors that were subordinated to the oligarchic establishment, however, the newly formed coalitions lacked the power and the skills this gargantuan task called for. Faced with this reality, compromises were inevitable.

The influence conservative groups still held, spurred the new centre coalitions into creating alternative corporative interests, and thus gain some maneuvering room. Public education was no exception. The gradual alignment of non-confessional interest groups, teacher organizations, and student unions, constituted basic elements in passing legislation, setting up institutions, defining processes, objectives, and programmes that would pave the way for massive teaching a few years later.

Pluralist coalitions

By the mid-forties, social mobility aspirations had defined the profile of educational priorities. Small wonder secondary education became a strategic move: it was the only road that led to a university education.

These aspirations defined a climate that would prevail throughout the century: continuous, and at times, intense pressures to make room at the top and, at the same time, ensure the necessary secondary education needed to make that transition successfully. The middle classes that sought mobility, regarded access to the universities as the main bottleneck in their quest for status, a necessary condition for potential economic security.

The access issue, was first formulated in relation to the quality of second grade public teaching which, because it was free, facilitated the educational mobility of sectors who aspired to a better education but had limited resources.

The intense and growing utilization of public education by these families, accounts for the sharp expansion of second grade enrollments between 1930 and 1950.

The experience, however, was fraught with frustrations. Ill-prepared for handling a large scale operation, as well as social and cultural heterogeneity, the quality of the educational service provided deteriorated swiftly.

For the very first time, education was severely criticized. It was argued that the pinnacle of education represented by the university, demanded that the early education received, was compatible with the higher admission requirements and competitive in the private sector. Bringing openness and quality into harmony, is the key to understanding the origin of the secondary education reform proposals advanced in the mid-forties, even when these first reforms inspired in pluralism, did tend to remove some of the factors that prevented a smooth transition into higher education.

Pluralist rhetoric helped conceptualize the adjustment secondary education had to make before the new social order. Concern for democracy, where the primary school challenge was still at a quantitative stage, could only point to issues that typified secondary education, so that pluralist proposals aimed at democratizing teaching institutions, preferentially addressed this level of education.

The objective of these reforms was to improve continuity and access to the third level by adapting these schools to the challenge posed by massification; the strategy entailed cutting back on those contents which were the result of an elitist tradition of academic formalism, and promoting early specialization based on the students' preferences and inclinations. The idea was to concentrate on subject matters that would facilitate admission into universities, either through the "scientific" or the "academic" entrance.

Although by 1950 massification at the middle level had just begun, vying for public resources

was well under way. The interests that backed the pluralist programme, also furnished the additional resources its expansion and reform would demand. The fulcrum of the educational coalition shifted ostensibly, along with that of individuals who shared these concerns.

In thirty years, education had gone from a global project structured in terms of ideological goals, to solving pragmatic problems which hindered the upper mobility of the middle strata.

Although opponents of national education had lost their clout, the national project coalition remained together, glued by the various common objectives that sanctioned its role; however, the white collar sector rallying under the motto "Democracy and Education" gained predominance, and attention focused on clearing the road that led to the third educational level.

Merit-cracy coalitions

The privatization of educational opportunities became significant shortly after the advent of pluralist reforms.

It came as an unescapable consequence of the forces at play, the factors that characterized the new schooling scenarios, the evolution of interests, and the struggle for resources.

School massification, was the direct result of nationalistic rhetoric, perhaps the prove itself that it had been successful; however, the pressure the new operating scales exerted on funding and on the institutions, weaken the unifying resolve of the project. The private use of educational opportunities was inevitable, and rather constituted an incentive for expanded schooling. Latin America failed to strike a reasonable balance, giving rise to a situation that privileging some, at the expense of reducing opportunities for the majority.

By mid-century, the image projected by education was one of hopelessness as the frustration generated by the massification of the educational process, continued to spiral. Public actions had to focus on repairing and clearing the tracks along which education would run to take its precious cargo to the social groups that demanded it. The price to pay was steep, however, as it meant the gradual loss of a major goal: globalizing education.

The expansion of middle education during the 40's and 50's had two direct consequences:

- new enrollees flooded schools diminishing the quality of supply in the public sector. Consequently, those who had the means to acquire an education that would guarantee access to the third level, began a gradual shift towards the private sector.
- the expansion of middle education, intensified demands for accessing the higher levels; the impact of this accelerating effect posed the complex problem of harmonizing the rising volumes with teaching excellence, with updating traditional academic contents, and with diversifying supply.

The reform and modernization of university education was the major issue of the sixties. Material gains translated into the creation of departments and specialized campuses intended to make facilities and human resources more easily available.

The preeminence of the university issue, cast a shadow on secondary education and left primary education practically in total darkness. In the interest of truth, some governments did engage in sporadic attempts to revert this situation, through expansion of coverage or resolution of problems that affected the collective functioning of the systems. This evolution, based on the sector's social dynamism, portrayed quite accurately the profile of mobility aspirations and skills characteristic of the highly stratified Latin American societies. At the close of the sixties, education flourished at its apex, languished at its base.

The idea behind replacing the traditional elites for individuals made worthy by academic merit, found in middle class families with mobility aspirations, fertile ground.

This rhetoric reformulated the equity distribution problem, in a manner consistent with the social and economic realities of effective demand; the idea was to secure a fairer treatment at the higher levels.

From this perspective, preparation for social competitivity focused mainly on curbing the power and influence of established groups; the new educated strata comprised the main instrument this rhetoric used, to create a more modern and dynamic order.

The political coalitions that supported this evolution were heavily influenced by the professional echelons that emerged from two decades of sustained emphasis on higher education, and by student movements, which despite having entered a radicalization phase, clearly appreciated the promise of potential opportunities implicit in the adoption of merit-cracy's public values.

By 1965, the output of universities had taken over strategic posts, and students now rallied under the banners of equity; several continual generations had spun a power web which reasserted itself through the vital experiences of each contributor.

Merit-cracy was, in fact, the rhetoric that typified Latin American populism. The utilization of schools in order to increase the volume of middle strata, constituted a social reconciliation strategy, albeit, not without pitfalls, particularly when highly paid positions did not keep pace with the demand, and traditional primary influence and power networks persisted as self-replicating remnants.

Given this state of affairs, the meteoric expansion of secondary and higher education, culminated in a sudden accumulation of generations which expected to cash in, the prestige of the credentials earned.

Networks, clienteles, and other systems designed to monopolize opportunities, as well as pressures devised to expand these opportunities beyond their economic possibilities, were the inevitable consequences.

At the end of this ideological confrontation period the coalitions which had given support to national systems and massification strategies, foundered losing their grassroots nature. Official educational discourse had nothing to offer. The national project and subsequent adjustment strategies aimed at meeting effective demand, were riddled with operational problems. To make things worse, it had crystallized through processes contrary to equity principles. Although the traditional foes of the "teaching state" could no longer sway opinion, new criticisms arose, for the first time, in progressive political circles.

This challenge of establishment dogma, had an international dimension, and produced direct and long lasting effects that were intensely felt and have not entirely abated.

Among others: student protests in Paris against "spurious" establishment values, the bureaucratic apparatus, and the complex accreditation and merit evaluation systems; Vietnam war dissenters in the United States; the crisis undergone by peripheral social and political equilibria, spurred by an ideological confrontation that contributed to undermine the value of many legitimate objectives; the explosion of counter-modernizing fundamentalism; the increasing manifestations of violence as vehicles for liberation. These were some of the signs heralding the exhaustion of the Cold War. The criticisms traditional establishments were subjected to, perhaps affected educational thinking much more critically in certain developing countries, and in general, where profound ethnic and social tensions still prevailed.

These left wing-inspired criticisms to schooling, gave rise to a new scenario where the microvisions of the educational process tended to come into their own, severing the ties that bound them to educational macrovisions.

The new criticisms held two factors accountable for the current situation: the satisfaction of effective social demands led teaching systems to abandon the modernization of the cultural bases, to become instruments that legitimized existing segregationist trends; and, simultaneously, massification and the insatiable thirst for credentials, had seemingly overestimated the importance of the ritualistic component, voiding education of value content and cultural objectives.

Alternative thinking chose the educational counter-rhetoric that typified the latter phases of the Cold War, as a vehicle for expression. These

radical macrovisions relied on a deeper analysis of the social assumptions of pedagogical practice, and on the understanding of the distortive effects current trends had on teaching.

Thus viewed, and since the autism which had pervaded the expansion of schooling seemed to have contributed to its own demise, many got to thinking that its renewal implied recovering the formative value of learning, as an objective of the shaping of an individual.

All these proposals shared the same assessment: in the modern world, educational needs transcended schools as institutions, and formal systems as organizational devices. True learning was a life-long process, interactive and congenial when successful.

It was a permanent experience which taught the art of being, through participating in the daily communion derived from the act of sharing cultural enrichment, in the awareness that opens the floodgates of cultural codes, and in the rewards to creative answers. Cultural policy had the obligation to foster institutional systems that propelled these processes, thus linking culture to the life of individuals and communities.

The purpose of these visions, is to soften the impact of schooling-generated alienations, inasmuch as schools had become repressive institutions that reproduced segregation and dependency relationships. These realities had to be countered through the promotion of an education capable of "freeing" those oppressed. The concept of being, educational informality, and the practice of a liberalizing pedagogy, were essential in the elucidation of the real function of schooling.[4]

The implicit ambivalences characteristic of Cold War populism resulted in a profound crisis of the coalitions that had promoted the massification of education throughout the century.

The cult of merit, devoid of the globalization counter-balance, led inevitably to schooling systems dominated by social demands which tended to consolidate existing segregationist attitudes.

The delicate balance between the cooling effect on aspirations produced by the selection, and the reproduction of a system that leaned increasingly more towards greater equity than that envisaged by merit-cracy, demanded internal and external conditions fully capable of sustaining those processes.

As long as there were no economic booms able to significantly multiply employment levels and top-notch positions, educational populism remained an untenable proposition.

For its part, insomuch as there were insufficient resources to gradually expand the school system's social bases of advancement, the ethical meaning of selection lost all credence, and the cooling effect became one with the attitudes that justified social inequality.

Towards the end of the Cold War, the symptoms were clear: radicalization of student movements; predominance of practices unfavourable to the public objectives of education; breakdown of political coalitions that had supported school globalization; and counter-rhetorics which questioned the equity and effectiveness of the educational process.

Efficiency-minded human capital coalitions

The symptoms of this crisis began multiplying during the seventies.

Coverage gaps, inefficient schools, high repetition and drop-out rates, characteristic of Latin American educational systems, were living proof that these institutions had encountered internal and external obstacles hard to cope with.

The real task of the most efficient sector of middle education, was to help students move on to universities, however, most of them found themselves trapped in dead-end, sub-standard systems, that fulfilled their task of preparing youths to succeed in life in an extremely poor fashion.

[4] The work of Paulo Freire, and Iván Illich, the guiding principles of the Peruvian Educational Reform inspired in the philosopher Augusto Salazar Bondy, and the view portrayed by the International Commission responsible for drafting the UNESCO-sponsored report "Aprendiendo a Ser", constitute the main expressions of this movement.

The problems plaguing universities, although of a different nature, were just as critical. Despite selective admission procedures, higher education showed signs of having endured the slings and arrows of massification.

In effect, attempts at reducing the adamant professional orientation given the curriculum, failed to change the nature of social demand and the prestige of conventional credentials; departmentalization proved to be but a formal solution, and pre-university trials also met with failure.

These frustrated efforts before a swelling demand, resulted in a substantial increase in the number of universities and careers, which were to be stratified again shortly thereafter.

In actual practice, this contributed to increased access to low paying, low prestige careers, while allowing fields of higher social and economic reputation, to maintain strict rates of attrition. This device for regulating access to and the output of higher education, made evident the declining value of university accreditations, the inefficient use of resources, and the structural difficulties to stimulate academic excellence.

The crisis of educational systems took the form of a systemic disfunction affecting three levels. This time the policy proposals attempted, based on the acceptance and legitimization of the existing situation, propounded the adoption of institutional changes that would permit a rational adjustment to these new realities.

That the expansion of enrollment had led to two parallel systems, one for the economically deprived groups, and the other for families who had some saving capacity and could acquire education, could no longer be ignored.

The reforms inspired by the efficiency-minded human capital rhetoric, tended to institutionalize these two realities. The channel that optimized educational mobility opportunities was privatized, and public resources were used to subsidize that sector catering to families who could not afford to purchase their children's education.

This segmentation of institutions predicated on purchasing power, also conditioned the structure of the more nimble channel of a system which had strengthened and instrumented the status aspirations within a selection system. Its function, to cool those aspirations and find cultural justification for economic and social differences.

The human capital rhetoric of the early eighties, which emphasized the private benefits of education, helped explain the economic function of inequality, and rationalized the virtues of this scheme. Once the role of public education had been reduced to one of subsidy rather than guidance or leadership, the transmission of educational contents boiled down to a problem of optimizing the use of the means for vying in a market of educational products, wherein success was tied to income expectations. This definition of the educational panorama, clearly favoured the private channel. High growth rates sustained over a long period of time, seemed the only offsetting mechanism between schools for the poor and schools for the rich.

The educational coalitions that have supported human capital rhetoric, regard the attainment of intermediate efficiency objectives in the public sector, as the main goal of education. This has the twofold purpose of reducing expenditure, and endorsing the privatization of education.

A number of events led to this status quo. First, popular sectors that backed the globalization of the educational project were eliminated from the coalition and, in fact, neutralized as decision-making agents. In contrast, there was a marked increase in the influence of large corporative interests tied to the economy, of technical groups who sought to adapt the institutional framework of the various countries to globalization requirements, and of private education entrepreneurs. These actors, became the new driving force of an organization where the cost of the service provided, defined the quality of the supply.

Macrovisions and educational practice

The macrovision rhetoric attended the gradual shift from the left to the right, from progress

utopians to order and efficiency ideologists.

In effect, they represent four markedly different discourses, namely: the building-of-a-nation discourse, aimed at balancing the clout of corporative interests through a strengthening of the popular bases of political institutions; the building-of-a- democratic-system discourse, envisioned as a strategy designed to absorb the disruptive effects of clashes of interest, and avoid authoritarianism; the building-of-a-new-social-order discourse, based on achievement values and technological dynamism; the building-of-economic-efficiency discourse, through optimizing resource utilization pursuant to the rationale implicit in the ideologies of a global market.

We are not absolutely sure how these abstract views, periodically conceptualized and transmitted by educational rhetoric, influence educational practice.

During the first half of this century, the emphasis on globalism exhibited by political nationalism and pluralism, helped to widen school coverage, and consolidate massive schooling systems. This stage was dominated by inclusion criteria. The same cannot be said of the social arguments non-communist countries used during the Cold War, which favoured exclusion criteria.

When highlighting the selective social function of schools as institutions responsible for bureaucratizing the vertical mobility process keyed to academic merit, the emphasis fell largely on "cooling" the pressures and aspirations that resulted from massive education.

It is difficult to anticipate accurately the effect current economic arguments would have on this rhetoric, however, two of its elements are quite interesting: eliminating social mobility as an objective; and, subordinating the educational process to economic needs. At first glance, this recommendation suggests a tougher implementation of the "cooling" of aspirations strategy. Perhaps this reflects a more realistic approach to current labour market trends.

Educational rhetoric may have also influenced the selection and orientation of some educational contents. Nationalism stressed the significance of the collective identification and loyalty, the cult of the nation demanded; in turn, pluralism attempted to encourage the dissemination of more abstract political commitments, so that individuals would be better prepared to coexist in an atmosphere where constitutional rights are respected. In both cases, the selected themes and emphasis promoted character building, that is, an inner space nestling convictions and commitments.

The sudden massification of educational systems helped erode a project whose viability presupposed a fairly homogeneous contingent. Merit-cracy and the economic side of education, were better suited to the realities of heterogeneity, inasmuch as they reduced the inner space and fostered the external adaptability of individuals; but, replacing character virtues for expeditious skills implied curtailing the formative role of schools. Clearly, this situation has a bearing on some of the contemporary problems posed by learning and on the social product of educational processes.

Whatever the influence of rhetoric on educational practice, Latin American experience suggest that social and educational interests make use of macrovisions to achieve their purposes.

Nationalism succeeded in building-up a middle class rather than a citizenry; pluralism contributed to mobility; merit-cracy sanctioned the need to respond to the status requirements of the new well-to-do sectors, and economic efficiency ideologies provided the framework for rationalizing educational segregation.

Current macrovisions evidently facilitate the adoption of more efficient policies to manage educational crises, preventing systems from deteriorating beyond economic adjustment problems.

The challenge is how to achieve educational goals under current conditions. As a bare minimum, this implies defining social, priorities and identifying the substantive aspects of teaching that could contribute to this attainment. However, this demands transcending the formal boundaries of human capital.

CLASS EXAMINATION AN ASSESSMENT OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

B. E. Nwafor

The major function of a classroom test is to measure student's achievement and thus contribute to the evaluation of their educational progress and attainment. Classroom tests are also known as Teacher Achievement Tests. Tests help teachers to assign more valid and reliable grades. Grades serve very important and useful functions. For example, they summarize concisely, a comprehensive evaluation of student's achievement, report to the students and their parents the effectiveness of their efforts, are permanent records which help teachers and other school authorities to determine which students receive honours or gain opportunities for further education or future employment, and are the means through which the instructional programmes of institutions are evaluated. It is therefore important that teachers take seriously their responsibilities for assigning accurate and meaningful grades. In this article, classroom tests will be used interchangeably with class examinations and achievement test.

Assessment, evaluation, measurement and testing are some of the important concepts that are often used when reporting student's achievements. Gage & Berliner (1991, p. 568) defined assessment as "the process of collecting, interpreting and synthesizing information in order to make decisions. "Evaluation was defined by Ebel (1977, p. 554) as "a judgement of merit, sometimes based solely on measurement such as those provided by test scores but more frequently involving the synthesis of various measurements, critical incidents, subjective impressions, and other kinds of evidence". The same author also made a distinction between measurement and testing. Measurement, according to Ebel, is "a process of assigning numbers to the individual members of a set of objects or persons for the purpose of indicating differences among them in the degree to which they possess the characteristic being measured (p. 557). On the other hand, a test is "a general term used to designate any kind of device or procedure for measuring ability, achievements, interest, and other traits". A test was also defined as "any systematic procedure for comparing the behaviour of two or more persons". (p. 566).

Whether we are assessing, evaluating, measuring or testing, we have similar aims and objectives. Some of these aims and objectives are: they indicate the extent of factual knowledge among students; diagnose students' abilities; serve as feedback for the students, their parents and educators; used for selection and placement purposes.

If class examinations are to serve these important functions, they should be valid and reliable. Validity is the extent to which a test measures

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what it is supposed to measure. Two kinds of validity are concerned here, namely, content validity and criterion related validity. Content validity refers to the degree to which the test content is drawn from the specific curriculum being tested (Good & Brophy, 1990, p. 689). Criterios related validity is defined by these authors as "the degree to which scores on a test predict or correlate with performance on other criteria, particularly a behavioural one" (p. 690). Validity can be threatened, therefore, when the time given to the test influences test scores, when test-taking skills influence performance, or other extraneous factors which could affect test results.

Reliability is "the degree to which a test or other measurement device yields consistent, dependable, stable measure across time, test administration, forms of the test, judges or raters" (Good & Brophy, 1990). Certain factors are known to influence the reliability of a test, procedure for establishing reliability, item homogeneity, item difficulty, and speed.

Due to certain limitations on the article, no attempt will be made to explain specifically how all these factors influence validity and reliability. Rather, interest is chanelled towards some teacher-student based factors which affect the validity and reliability of a test and thus lead to poor performance on the part of the students. Again, because of the nature of the article, these teacher-student factors affecting validity and reliability are not dealt with in detail.

Factors influencing validity and reliability

If class examination is to be a valid and a reliable instrument for assessment of student's learning, teachers must make sure that they perform their functions well.

The learning environment should be conducive for maximum learning to take place. The teacher should therefore, do everything possible to establish and maintain a good learning environment. The classroom should not be overcrowded. It should be well ventilated and lighting should be good. The seats should not only be enough for students but also comfortable. Students should feel generally secure and comfortable.

There is the need to take into account individual differences of our students. This is because the level of maturation, readiness, mental capacity, learning style, motivation and personality traits are variables associated with the individual learner which affect the outcome of learning and subsequently, test performance.

There is also the need for the content validity of the course to be examined. In other words, the teacher should make sure that the students are taught all they need to know about the subject based on the syllabus. The best way to accomplish this is by going through the behavioural objectives, making sure that each of these objectives is taught thoroughly.

In constructing the test items, teachers should make sure that the questions are representative samples of the content of the syllabus. In other words, they should ensure that the questions cover a wide cross-section and not limited to a few objectives for the test to be high in content validity. It was reported in the "Weekly Telegraph" of September 1992, on page 8, columns 3 to 6, that the validity of the GCSE examinations was in serious doubt by School Inspectors in England. Among the factors affecting the validity of the results was that the test items did not represent a cross-section of the coursework.

Students need encouragement at all levels, moreso, during a test-taking behaviour. It is the function of teachers to prepare the students emotionally for the test. Students will perform better if they approach the testing experience with a positive attitude. It, therefore, becomes necesary for teachers to establish a positive mental attitude in students being tested. However, care should be taken not to arouse their anxiety level unduly. Nwafor's (1990) investigation, confirmed other previous studies which established that test anxiety was related to poor performance in a test. Among the interesting findings. Nwafor also found the lack of organization of learning materials and structuring of lectures affected student's performance nega-

tively in a Psychology test. She further observed that the high anxious students performed poorest when compared with the moderate and low anxious students.

The implications of these studies are that teachers should examine the learning situation of high-anxiety learners. For example, they should examine student's learning styles and structure learning tasks to meet the needs of anxiety-ridden individuals. Teachers should administer many short tests in the form of continuous assessment, which arouse less anxiety than a single examination. It is important also that teachers identify and reduce those factors that arouse anxiety among students. They should focus on those that lessen anxiety. Memory aids, well planned instructions, and constant rehearsal, enhance learning and help remove the pressures experienced by high-anxiety students.

Apart from these psychological factors which affect the validity and the reliability of student's test scores, there are other personality factors that affect students' scores too. Such factors include the level of students' motivation, preparedness, test-taking skills and many others.

A group of students taking a test should be exposed to the same physical testing conditions. This means that during the administration of the test, the seating arrangements, the ventilation, the heat, the lighting as well as other physical conditions should be considered. The reason is that an individual's test scores can be somewhat influenced by the physical conditions under which the test is taken. (Mehrens & Lehmann, 1975).

The examination time-table should be skillfully scheduled. Efforts should be made so that subjects are not only spaced out but are sheduled in such a way that a subject, such as Mathematics, that needs mental concentration should be followed by a less strenuous one, for example, History. The performance of a student who has to sit for chemistry at 8.00 a.m. to 10.00 a.m. Mathematics at 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and Physics at 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. on the same day will be negatively affected. He will be mentally and physically, affected, his thinking will be affected. This means that whatever scores he will be earning will not be reliable because they will not be his true scores. Given the same tests under different conditions, he will perhaps do much better.

Before scoring the test, a marking sheme should be prepared. The provision of a marking scheme helps the teachers to be more objective in the grading of papers. The scores should be recorded and interpreted in order for them to yield a more useful and meaningful information. As teachers, we should always remember that the grades we assign remain a permanent record for students. We should be very careful, therefore, in assigning accurate and meaningful grades.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the validity of a test should be ensured by teachers making sure that the contents of the test and the time allotted to it are appropriate. The test contents should cover a wide cross-section of the syllabus and the scoring should be objective. Care should be taken so that other extraneous variables do not influence the score, thereby affecting the validity.

To ensure reliability, teachers should identify and reduce anxiety-causing agents among students and focus on those that lessen anxiety. Students should be taught or advised on how to approach test-taking behaviour with positive attitude and confidence. The test itself should not be too difficult or too easy in order not to influence the reliability. All the students involved in the test-taking experience, should be exposed to similar physical testing conditions and should be given similar instructions. If therefore, teachers should consider all these suggestions, class tests will become meaningful and valuable.

INSTRUCTIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN HOME ECONOMICS

Rita Dyer*

The ultimate aim of Home Economics is to improve the quality of home and family life. The Caribbean family represents our greatest strength and it is up to us home economists to maintain that strength and to help others achieve it, so that in the end we are still playing our part in improving the quality of home and family life.
Families are by far the most economical system known for marking and keeping human beings human, yet we are affected by the global community in which we live (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). We are bombarded everyday with problems with which we cannot deal. The influence of the foreign television poses more problems since we cannot afford to upkeep the standards we view, most of which are negative anyway. However, all is not lost.
From time immemorial home economics has answered to the problems of society. During and after World War 1 and 2, home economists were teaching how to can and preserve food, and how to sew and make cheap clothing (AHWA, 1959).
Marjoric Brown and Beatrice Pallucci are two great American home economists who are renowned for their work in home economics. Their mission statement for home economics includes enabling families to build and maintain systems of action which lead to maturing in self formation. Brown especially states that home economics must make students morally defensible and critical in their thinking (Brown & Pallucci, 1978).

Since then there have been moves to make home economics instruction more meaningful and reflect the mission statements. Home economics curriculum is drawn from various disciplines including the social sciences, physical and biological sciences, economics, philosophy, psychology and the arts. It is structured in relationship to the home and family environment which normally constitutes practical and perennial problems that we are trying to solve.

One of our popular Caribbean songs states that no man is an island, no man stands alone..., truly reflective of relationships, interdependence and working together for a common good. The essence of a functioning society is the negotiation of problems and problem solving. Cooperative instruction or the instructional use of small groups, where students work together for mastery learning and the development of social skills, is a relatively new instructional development in home economics. In cooperative instruction students work together to maximize their own and each other's learning. Cooperation is essential and is recognized as the basic element and key concept of cooperative instruction.

Some elements of cooperative instruction are positive interdependence, individual accountability, face to face interaction, cooperative skills,

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and group processing (Johnson & Johnson, 1988).

Positive interdependence includes goal interdependence where random sections of groups are selected and a minimum criterion set for group members. It also includes task interdependence where the work load is shared, and resource and role interdependence where individual members are assigned different roles and materials are shared. Students must feel that they need each other to complete the task for the group. This can be achieved if they all share the same aims and objectives of the group, and if they view the whole grouping process as a "we" project instead of a "me" project.

In cooperative instruction students are assigned different roles. Some of these roles are checker, praiser, recorder and reader. In so-doing, teachers are trying to avoid "gatekeepers" and develop interpersonal skills needed in families and work settings. "Gatekeepers" are those persons in a group who usually sway the group and attempt to monopolize the group's actions. Throughout, group members are supposed to provide love and encouragement to each other and also ensure that all members do their assigned duties. In the end the awards are well distributed among all members. This supportive atmosphere helps maintain good working relationships among members.

Some people may think that with cooperative instruction the teacher's role is diminished or lessened. But this is not so. On the contrary, the teacher has to be more vigilant and constantly monitor the students as they work.

Well defined activities

Besides, the objectives must be clearly written for each activity so that the teacher knows which point to stress while monitoring the group. The teacher must also clearly explain the cooperative goal structure and evaluate student performance.

Another instructional development thats can be used in home economics is Concept attaintment (Joyce & Weil, 1986). This model is designed to lead students to a concept by asking them to compare and contrast examples that contain the characteristics of the concept with examples that do not contain those characteristics. This model helps students organize their thinking skills, since they must describe how they attain these concepts. In other words they must explain what was going through their minds when they were trying to define/identify the concepts. These thinking skills relate to the theory of metacognition which emphasizes thinking about your thinking. They must also learn to be more efficient by changing their strategies and learning to use new ones. The key idea here is to understand and develop the thinking strategies students use to attain these concepts. The process is more important than the result (Joyce & Weil, 1986).

One may be wondering why both positive and negative examples are used, and why not provide only the positive ones. The negative examples have their function as they help students establish boundaries of the concept. Students must be able to see examples which do not apply to the concept. This helps them to categorize and limit their ideas as they try to attain the concept.

The concept attainment model can accomplish several instructional goals, depending on the emphasis of the particular lesson. It helps develop concepts, improves on concept building strategies, and gives practice with inductive thinking and reasoning. In inductive thinking, one has a number of different ideas which one uses to arrive at a generalization. The nuturant effects or those effects that are not strictly academic include tolerance of ambiguity, awareness of different perspectives since different students will have different ways of arriving at their concepts, and sensitivity to logical reasoning during communication.

David Ausubel's (Joyce & Weil, 1986) "advance organizer" is another relatively new instructional model that can be very effective in home economics teaching, learning and curriculum. It deals with how curriculum content is organized, how the mind works to process new information, and how teachers can apply these

ideas about curriculum and learning when they present new information. This theory, unlike others, helps teach and organize curriculum which is to be learned more than learning itself.

Ausubel's primary objective is to help teachers convey large amounts of materials in a meaningful manner. According to Ausubel, the method of presenting information is important and that connecting new learning material with existing ideas in the learner's mind is essential.

In other words, the learner must be ready to comprehend the new material with no hindrance from the old. He must be able to comprehend what is being presented rather than memorize it.

Advance organizers can be likened to introductory statements presented ahead of the learning task and at a higher level of abstraction. The idea es to explain, integrate, and interrelate the material in the learning task with previously learned material and also to help the learner discriminate the new material from previously learned material. However, they must not be confused with the introductory statement like what we use in our classes every day. They must always be at a higher level of abstraction and at a much broader level.

The teachers's role is that of clarification throughout the presentation, so that at the end the learners should gain a proper perspective on the entire area to be studied. The teacher must maintain control over the intellectual structure by relating the new learning material to the organizers and making connections to the old material. An example of an advanced organizer would be a chart with home economics related occupations, if you were planning on teaching a unit on small business related to home economics. The handout you will receive at the end will explain the steps to follow.

Glasser's "classroom meeting" model is another recent model which can be used successfully in home economics teaching. This model emphasizes periods when students and teachers set aside their ongoing classroom material to engage in open minded, non-judgmental discussion of problems in an effort to find collective solutions.

Glasser believes that to learn, children must fulfill two basic needs of love and self worth, and that most schools fail to supply these. He also claimed that loneliness is a failure of most schools and that children need to feel wanted. Children also need to have a sense of belonging to develop totally. The classroom meeting model can help with these factors which affect learning.

In this model, the teacher begins by establishing a climate of involvement by encouraging everyone to speak and share opinions without blaming or evaluating anyone. The problem will be exposed and discussion will follow on the consequences. Students will next voice their values and make personal judgements. They then discuss specific behaviour alternatives and make a public commitment. After a period of time, they will assess effectiveness of commitment and new behaviours.

For his instructional strategy to succeed, the teacher must develop a warm personality. He/ She must be sensitive and interested and show a genuine concern for the students and their problems.

The teacher must develop the skill of prodding students to accept responsibility for diagnosing their own behaviour, and to reject irresponsible behaviour in themselves and their classmates. The teacher has the freedom to reject class attitudes, but this must be done sparingly. He/ she must confess that the teachers, opinions are not law. Several social problems can be attacked with this method, e.g. the problem of keeping school yards clean is an issue that can be discussed using this model.

There may have been several other problems that one would have felt like talking about with one's students, but did not know how; well now one may use this model and have a good heart to heart talk and together try to solve them.

Conclusion

The foregoing are just a few of the new models that can be used to teach home economics. They all stress learning, because as students acquire

new information, skills, values, ways of thinking and expressing themselves, they are also learning. They are also learning how to learn. This theory of metacognition is very important as it stresses thinking about the way we think. These models are especially useful in home economics where we help students to deal with the everyday practical and perennial problems in everyday life.

You may be wondering if these models really work. They do. Several pieces of research have been done to prove their success. In cooperative instruction alone over 600 studies have been done to prove that it is a useful method of teaching which really improves performance both academically and socially. All you need to do as home economics teachers is to become acquainted with these models and try to adapt them to your particular situation, and can assure that very little adaptation if any is necessary. Another important factor is that some models are more suitable to certain leassons, and after becoming acquainted with them you will know which one is best for a particular situation. So let's embrace these new models and make sense with home economics. Remember our motto "home economics for a better Caribbean community" and let's try out these models as we help our students become morally defensive of their actions and become more critical in their thinking for better family life and ultimately a better Caribbean community.

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EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: MYTH AND REALITY*

María Luisa Jáuregui**

Evaluation of the current educational status of Latin American and Caribbean women, leads us to seemingly contradictory conclusions: on the one hand, during the last ten years women have been protagonists of important advances in terms of access to education and academic achievements, outperforming men in several countries. Where equality has yet to be attained, the notion has gathered momentum and is bound to continue growing.

On the other hand, and despite the overall positive outcome of the region's educational process, critical structural problems prevail, notably the existing differences between and within nations in terms of expansion of educational coverage; and, the persistence of high rates of illiteracy among rural, indigenous, and older women groups.

Although equal access to education seems to be a reality for male and female youths under 25, in terms of the qualitative dimension of education, women still bear the brunt of discriminatory practices; "the problem is not just knowing how many women study, but what is it they study, what is the quality of the education being imparted to them, and what is their study environment like" (Bonilla Castro, 1991).

Since the eighties, women's integration into the echelons of higher education, has been restricted to traditional female-oriented areas such as teaching, the social sciences, art, and certain branches of medicine. Furthermore, sexual stereotypes have permeated textbooks and biased vocational counselling with the attending consequences for women's life projects.

This article synthesizes the major findings contained in the ECLAC-UNESCO jointly elaborated paper, which advances educational strategy proposals aimed at materializing equal educational opportunities for regional women, based on the current situation and on contributions from the gender perspective.

These national and regional action strategies, seek to reinforce the momentum that has prompted the region to offer genuine equal educational opportunities for women, despite the inconsistency of available statistical data. Home surveys and estimates prepared by UNESCO (1992b), being representative of the area's reality, contribute to a better understanding of the social, political, and cultural impact these actions may bring about.

Reference framework

ECLAC and UNESCO's proposal for improve-

* Paper presented at the VI Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean (Mar del Plata, Argentina, September 26-30, 1994). *Towards an educational strategy for Latin American and Caribbean women*, by Diane Almeras, ECLAC, and María Luisa Jáuregui, UNESCO, contained in Document DDR/6 July 29, 1994, published by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean.

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ment of the educational system (1992), and recent contributions from a gender perspective, constitute the reference framework for this paper.

The recognition that education and knowledge are the main transformation axes of productive structures, and of an openness that will contribute to formulate a different social and cultural programme for the countries of the region, is the departing point of this coordinated ECLAC-UNESCO effort aimed at systematizing the existing interrelation between the educational system and development processes.

In fact, the strategy proposal intended to improve the effectiveness of the educational system reiterates that "the dissemination of values, the ethical dimension, the behaviour inherent to a modern citizenry, and the production of skills and abilities essential to international competitivity (which relies increasingly on technical progress), receive a decisive boost from education and the production of knowledge" (ECLAC/UNESCO, 1992, p.17).

The need arises then, to deliver a type of education that prepares individuals –both men and women– to perform as social agents, that is, as persons with a strong sense of self-esteem, educated in an atmosphere of respect for others, and one which will provide them with varied vocational opportunities from which to carve out their own destinies.

This entails, not only revamping the basic concepts of formal education, but also enlisting the participation of its various levels such as the educational authorities, and those responsible for curricular contents and rationalization of labour market demands, markedly biased against women.

The new policies, would thus be proposed from an integrated perspective which encourages the formulation of "policies that harness and reinforce complementary elements, while weakening opposing ones, so that the objectives of growth and equity are perceived simultaneously, rather than sequentially, as a single task". (ECLAC, 1992a, p. 16).

Concretely, ECLAC and UNESCO recommend sensitizing the educational, training, and scientific and technological acquisition systems, before social demands with a view to "ensuring universal access to modernity codes, fostering creative access, and encouraging scientific and technological dissemination and innovation".

This action will allow the incorporation of lineaments and actions "that lead to changes in the social and cultural spheres, and in the rationale of social relationships, major stumbling blocks in the path towards equity between the sexes" (Rico, 1993).

In this regard, the gender perspective appears to be the most likely conceptual device through which effectively implement this involvement, since it relates to the distinction between anatomical and physiological (sexual) traits, and sociocultural (gender) characteristics.

The gender perspective seeks to understand the sociocultural processes which institutionalized male superiority –and continue to do so– at the expense of women, with the attending educational implications for the female population of Latin America and the Caribbean.

The gender approach looks beyond the purely quantitative aspect of women gaining access to formal education, and focuses on the structural problems that determine the male/female ratio of schooling rates; the sociocultural factors that permeate the contents of teaching materials; the role of teachers in building and replicating gender identities; and, the impact of sexually-biased division of labour, on vocational opportunities.

In formulating curricular proposals, this means bringing into the open the androcentric biases underlying the theory and practice of education, and identifying its implications and consequences in the lives of male and female students in terms of living conditions, personal growth and development, entry in the labour world, and social interaction.

The gender approach has set as its target the transformation of current reference and gender interrelation patterns, envisioning a different scenario –affecting the family, school, and society– characterized by more flexible roles, where both men and women may find fulfillment both as persons and as citizens.

Women integration into formal education

Pre-school enrollment in the region, involving age groups 0 to 5, rose to 14% in 1989, from 7.8% in 1980, which represents an annual increase of nearly 10% (Schiefelbein, et al, 1989). Preprimary education was shared evenly between boys and girls, give or take 1 or 2 percentage points either way, depending on the country (Valdés and Gomariz, 1992, 1993).

Enrollment for *primary education* female students, based on information provided in 1990 by the Women's Advancement Division of the United Nations Secretariat, has suffered no alterations maintaining the same ratio of 96 females to every 100 males –matching that of Western and Eastern Europe– and, so far, never excelled anywhere in the world. At the national level, this represents first grade enrollment rates ranging from 54.3% of the 6 to 11 year old group (90 girls per 100 boys) in Guatemala, to 100% in Jamaica, Mexico, and Trinidad and Tobago.

Despite the high repetition and drop-out rates characteristic of marginal-urban and rural areas, in terms of academic performance, girls outdo boys in every country where figures broken down by sexes, are available (Valdés, Gomariz, 1992, 1993). The inconsistency of available data, however, makes uncertain any calculations of regional rates.

Figures for *secondary education* reveal that female enrollment has not only matched that of males, but in eleven Latin American and various Caribbean countries, it has exceeded it, reaching a regional average of 109 women per 100 men. Quite remarkable, considering that teenage pregnancy forces many adolescents to abandon formal education.

In order to grasp the extent of the vocational guidance problem in secondary education, it should be noted that middle education is not homogeneous and includes several levels depending on the country: general, technical, professional, teacher training, etc. Analysis of this dimension of education demands addressing the issue of enrollment by specialty and gender segregation, both of which affect women in terms of vocational guidance opportunities.

A *higher education* enrollment ratio equivalent to 106 females per 100 males –the world's largest– established by the United Nations in 1990, conceals discrepancies that range from ratios of 50 females per 100 males in Guatemala, to 200 or more in small Caribbean countries (United Nations, 1992; ECLAC, 1994b). These differences become more conspicuous when measured against the dissimilar levels of higher education attained by the populations of the various countries.

The sharp inequalities that characterize women's access to higher education, are directly proportional to the educational system's unequal style of expansion, which has allowed its higher levels to grow faster than its lower levels, owing to the fact that "middle and higher income groups, who stand to benefit the most from the expansion of university, post-secondary, and middle education, showed a greater ability to cajole the State into expanding the levels that interested them" (ECLAC/UNESCO, 1992, p. 53).

The inequity and the capacity for exclusion, that typify the region's educational systems, is also reflected in the numbers of individuals who access higher education. The gap between urban and rural areas is significant, and the nearly total lack of indigenous people at this level, is conspicuous.

In terms of choosing a university career, the ratio of women signing up for studies traditionally regarded as male territory, has showed a substantial increase, particularly in countries where educational shortcomings are critical (Valdés and Gomariz, 1992, 1993). Nevertheless, change is still insufficient to eradicate the segmentation women must confront when choosing a profession.

The fact is, women are up against a pure and simple discrimination problem, not unlike that found in industrialized countries where a large number of female students "concentrate on less time-intensive careers or more compatible with household chores, which also happen to be fairly

free from wage discrimination " (ECLAC/ UNESCO, 1992, p.59).

Hence, the origin of discrimination is not so much that the educational system establishes differences openly devised to harm women, but, more properly, said system "forms part of a broader society and, therefore, its opportunities are used differently by men and women, in line with the values and beliefs which that particular society upholds" (Varela, 1991).

Major educational system pitfalls confronted by women

In spite of efforts undertaken by the various countries of the region to provide universal coverage of primary and secondary education, equalitarian education remains a chimera.

Sexist tendencies persist which "lessen, exclude, underrate, and stereotype individuals based on their sex" (Michel, 1989). In the academic culture this has led to an underestimation of what is masculine and a smothering of what is feminine, a current that seems to reappear in the stereotyped contents of teaching, in the lack of attention dispensed to women in the classroom, and in the shrivelling of professional opportunities for women.

A thorough study of the contents of basic and middle level educational material –textbooks, illustrations, films– utilized by a large number of countries in the region, confirms the presence of gender discrimination. These determinations are obtained from indicators such as how frequently a male or female character is mentioned, working women, domestic and family activities, the adjectives used in reference to one sex or the other, and situations involving protagonism (SERNAM, 1992).

Based on the findings of a study of school texts conducted in Belice (Laaksonen, 1991), Chile (SERNAM, 1992), Costa Rica (Costa Rica, 1991), El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama (Caldera, 1990), Peru (Valdés and Gomariz, 1993), and Uruguay (Piotti Núñez, 1990; Valdés and Gomariz, 1992), the books and texts analyzed mention women in less than 30% of the cases involving protagonism, and then, they are presented as socially inferior, weak or subordinated (Caldera, 1990).

In the wake of the aforementioned studies, several governments have begun actions intended to modify school texts, and portray feminine models more in tune with reality, slightly increasing the number of images that represent women in public spheres, and men sharing household and child care activities. However, the curricula has not been sufficiently revamped to reflect the contribution made by both sexes or convey a balanced image of them.

The role of teachers is another fundamental factor. One of the outcomes of the study on gender discrimination in educational systems, is the heightened awareness of the importance of the relationship between teachers and male and female students in the transmission of sexual stereotypes. Next to the family setting, the classroom is where girls and boys first experience the ranking of social roles, and the attitude and behaviour models society will impose upon them. The extent to which teachers support, encourage or ignore the demands for attention from boys and girls, sends out implicit messages about the rules of the surrounding society, and prepares students to abide by them.

Training men and women teachers to become aware of the impact of their behaviour, and to encourage them to turn their classrooms into learning spaces that mirror the cultural changes unfolding in the outside world, is extremely important, particularly when considering that most of the region's teachers are women.

The eradication of gender discrimination in formal educational systems, also requires analyzing it from a labour perspective, and from the demands arising from production processes. Such analysis should produce measures designed to counteract a current deficit in educational opportunities for women, since the role ascribed to them "in social development is one that portrays them as reproductive factors rather than social actors capable of fully exercising their rights" (Dasso and Montaño, quoted in ECLAC, 1991b).

Choosing a profession is vitally important for the personal development of individuals. It is also a determining factor in terms of social participation and quality of life, and it can also set limits to income. Within this context, segmentation analysis of female enrollment in secondary and higher education does not necessarily reflect that "a change in the social status assigned to each sex is under way, although it may herald a redefinition of the professional roles, and a qualitative change still too incipient to evaluate" (Rico, 1994).

A case in point. In the late eighties, women engineers represented almost 35% of all university graduates in four countries where production development is a key factor in economic and social progress: Brazil, 15.2% in 1988; Colombia, 27.1% in 1986; Cuba, 34.8% in 1989; and, Venezuela, 34.6% in 1988 (Valdés and Gomariz, 1992, 1993).

These figures confirm that at the higher education level, women's interest concentrates in the pedagogical sciences, humanities, art, social science, and some areas of the health sciences. Some women are catching up to men in business administration, economy, architecture, urbanism, law and chemistry. However, in both engineering and the natural and exact sciences males students still predominate, a fact that will become more conspicuous, when the percentage of female attendance in these careers is broken down by disciplines. This will reveal that women are still excluded from participating in technological innovations and knowledge production.

Female participation in scientific and technological development, has become specially urgent for this region, since "it diminishes as the intellectual value assigned to each variable increases". Thus, for example, in 1985 Latin America and the Caribbean contributed 8.3% to the world population and 6.0% to the global GDP; on the other hand, the region produced 3.2% of the world's capital goods; 2.5% of scientific engineers, and 1.3% of all Research and Development resources (ECLAC/ UNESCO, 1992).

In terms of technical and professional training, statistics for the region indicate that the number of women accessing technical education is on the rise, however, it is limited to those specialty areas traditionally held by women. Additionally, both government and non-government organizations are sponsoring various training initiatives, although the biggest problem is entering agreements with entrepreneurs to secure female employment following training.

Contributions of non-formal education

The battle against illiteracy in the region intensified in the decade between 1980 and 1990. The number of absolute illiterates went from 44.3 million in 1980 to 42.5 million in 1990, in addition to the 68.8 million –who were also made literate– which accounts for the growth in population for that ten year period (ECLAC/ UNESCO, 1992).

Despite advances made, it should be noted that the levels attained by the various countries of the region differ markedly, as do the rates of female illiteracy in the different social and occupational categories (Schiefelbein and Peruzzi, 1991).

At the regional level, female illiteracy rates go from 1.4% in Jamaica to 52.9% in Guatemala. At the national level, the number of illiterate women in the urban areas of Bolivia, Guatemala, and Haiti, is twice that of men, while in the rural areas of Bolivia, Guatemala, Mexico, and Peru (most of which include indigenous populations), this figure approaches or greatly exceeds the values for the above-mentioned cities. The effects of the generation gap mentioned earlier, compounds the problem.

There are validated educational experiences involving indigenous women of the andean region (Ecuador and Peru), achieved through bilingual literacy programmes which include civic education contents. These programmes sponsored by UNESCO, government and non-government organizations, drew their inspiration from a common objective: bring literacy to peasant women, and simultaneously; educate

them in terms of their rights and civic duties, support their organizations and encourage their active participation at the family, community, and national social levels. These experiences were also approached from a gender and cultural identity perspective, as fundamental aspects of development.

The aforementioned programmes brought dynamism into community living, improved access to drinking water, resurfaced roads, offered training in agricultural and animal husbandry techniques, promoted raising family and community orchards, and fostered the creation of cooperatives. Customs were reassessed and traditional medicine was encouraged. All of this was made possible thanks to the utilization of an integrated approach (Jáuregui, 1992).

A recent study conducted by UNESCO (Ruíz Bravo, 1993), examines several types of educational programmes for low income women, in order to determine their impact on the subjects' quality of life, and on the education of their children. These include: literacy, income generating, health, ecology, and environmental programmes.

The most successful experiences observed, are those wherein the activities designed to improve the quality of life of the participants and of their families, include both a material and a subjective dimension, that is, those activities that in addition to yielding greater economic gains, reinforce women's self-esteem and self-assertion. Many of these programmes incorporated this gender perspective as they went along. With the help of these programmes, beneficiaries improved their self-image and overcame the shyness that kept them from becoming literate.

The programmes under way show a distinct preoccupation for simultaneously acting on two fronts: a training or educational area, and a technical, economic or service area. This marks a change from previous experiences where one action line would take precedence over the other. This strategy responds not solely to the need for meeting survival requirements, but it also acknowledges the importance of providing women with the material (credits, land, food, etc.), and symbolic resources (education, information, and training), that will empower them to access the decision-making circles, and influence the sustainability of their projects.

The NGO's sponsored Popular Education programme, provides an enormous supply of educational experiences for women. It offers workshops that address a variety of topics ranging from literacy, sexuality, health care, and the female condition, to democracy, creativity, autonomy and leadership, and so forth.

The Popular Education Network among Women, member organization of the Latin American Adult Education Council (CEAAL), since 1982, has taken upon itself to systematize the methodology, participative research, communication and dissemination activities with a view to establishing basic criteria in educational processes involving adult women (Popular Education Network among Women, 1987).

Action strategies

The educational system allows the reproduction of traditional models, although its structure may encourage the development of new ones. This necessitates the political will to question the cultural contents transmitted through education, and to welcome the participation of all the social actors who are part of the system: national and educational authorities, teachers, authors, illustrators and publishers, employers, civil society, and women organizations.

The proposed strategies seek to help women fulfill themselves as citizens of a modern society, a condition that entails equal educational and labour opportunities. The suggested action lines should be dealt with separately by the government of each country, and adapted to their own realities.

Efforts should focus on a minimum number of actions, regarded as essential for improving women's access to equal educational opportunities, within the framework of regional consensus. Likewise, emphasis ought to be placed on strategies that take into account public policy proposals, the eradication of sexual stereotypes

in education, and the enhancement of the general condition of young girls and youths at the various levels of formal and informal education. There is a need to foster research on the existing interrelations between culture and education, since culture constitutes the matrix and the product of educational processes.

Overall objectives

Fulfillment of the objectives described earlier, is predicated on an all-out and sustained literacy effort, with one hundred per cent coverage at the basic and secondary educational levels. The structural shortcomings of the educational system must be identified, and gender discrimination dealt with.

Governments should increase their participation in educational matters through increased public spending. In fact, the countries which have successfully raised the educational level of their populations, are those whose governments have assigned the greater portions of their public spending to education, assuming –in some instances– all of the primary enrollment and most of the secondary enrollment (Valdés and Gomariz, 1992, 1993).

Efforts aimed at guaranteeing that all statistical surveys include data disgregated by sex, must be reinforced. The idea is to develop adequate analytical and research methodology which generates the necessary data to design reliable educational policies, dependable describers of female performance and qualifications, which may be used for profile definitions and job classifications.

Specific objectives

The eradication of sexual stereotypes in the educational process, should be regarded as an initiative for immediate execution (Montero, 1993):

This means:

- Sensitizing the family group as to the need for changing the social interaction of sons and daughters, and thus eliminate differential treatment based on sex;
- Producing audiovisual programmes to disseminate ideas more in keeping with the reality and the equality of the genders;
- Modifying curricula and teacher training to support their participation in the elaboration of ancillary educational material which may contribute to the equality of the sexes and to a greater sensitization with respect to the discriminatory contents of texts;
- Elaborating non-sexist texts and evaluating their impact;
- The inspection and approval of the finished texts, should be the responsibility of experts highly motivated in terms of achieving equality between the sexes, and sensitized to discrimination in drawings, titles, and writing;
- Sensitizing authors, artists, and publishers of school textbooks to the need for eliminating underlying discriminatory stereotypes from their texts, and encouraging the participation of new authors with the purpose of incorporating human material intended to counter discrimination in school texts (See Montero, 1993).

Reforms to basic formal education (primary and secondary), are also urgently required. To this end, the following steps must be taken:

- Establish a complete national network of preschools in the public sector, focusing mainly on the rural areas;
- Bring all primary and secondary education programmes in rural areas to a successful conclusion;
- Introduce into the school system of the countries concerned, intercultural bilingual education programmes. Prevent the deplorable consequences attending the learning process of indigenous boys and girls, in terms of academic performance, cultural identity, and psychological stability, through the provision of sufficient financial and technical inputs. Be particularly mindful of the training standards of teachers responsible for running such programmes;
- Encourage rural girls to enroll in schools, and promote the timely incorporation of all chil-

dren into the school system, through mass media supported public information campaigns.
- Foster improved quality of education, higher remunerations, in-service training, and social acceptance of the teaching profession;
- Encourage in-service training of science and mathematics teachers. The extra help they could provide, it is felt, would motivate female students to participate, and neutralize hidden discrimination in the classroom.

A third action line of priority implementation, includes changes in formal –university and technical– higher education.

This requires:
- Planners and educational policy makers to develop a clear guideline strongly committed to an education that includes the gender perspective, and which demands the formulation and application of appropriate policies, at every administrative level.
- Increased resources for implementing these policies, and for ensuring community support through information and sensitization campaigns;
- An ongoing evaluation of the formulated strategies, the systematic gathering of data (including participation analysis by sex), and the fostering of gender-sensitive research in the area of scientific education;
- Ensuring that equality is promoted in technical and professional institutes;
- Developing specific and innovating methodologies for women molders; encouraging women to make their career choice in accordance with possibilities and interests, and inclusive of scientific and technical professions;
- Reassessing short term training, given the high percentage of women who access it, by supplementing it with modules that facilitate further learning of industrial or other specialized matters.

Linking education to the labour market is another unpostponable task which entails:
- Promoting changes in the educational supply consistent with the transformations the productive structures of the region must undergo: involve the various social actors (employers, workers, public authorities) in the drawing up of women's training programmes in accordance with employment and development national policy guidelines, which conform to the qualification standards set by the market, placement opportunities, and to the various types of target- populations;
- Sensitizing all actors to women's capacity for performing satisfactorily at every level of the labour market, and implementing a nationwide campaign for the dissemination of the educational supply, the professions, and local occupational opportunities through efficient communication channels.

Strengthening non-formal education is also an essential part of the strategies to be implemented in this area. This involves:
- Assigning top priority to the education of women –children, youths and adults– who lack basic education, and those who are absolute and functional illiterates, so they can all meet their basic learning needs as set forth at the World Conference of Education for All (Jomtien, Thailand 1990).
- Intensifying efforts aimed at increased educational opportunities for the marginalized female population, particularly indigenous, black, peasant, and marginal-urban women.
- Planning adult education programmes for indigenous women, which complement the intercultural bilingual dimension with the gender perspective;
- Increasing the number of education programmes geared towards functional illiterate women of marginal-urban areas, keeping in mind their family situation, the locality they live in, the domestic load they bear, and their instructional level;
- Including, in every educational project for adult females, programmes designed to enhance their self-esteem, as well as the minimum training required to prepare them for gainful employment;
- Coordinating actions with NGO's and other

public organizations that offer popular adult education programmes;
- Optimizing the spaces made available by the mass media: radio, television, newspapers, as distance education means.

The development of a type of research which focuses on the cultural dimension of education, becomes the pivotal element of any strategy. Hence, the systematic study of current cultural models in Latin American and the Caribbean and their impact on the region's educational process, is an initiative that should be encouraged.

Furthermore, academic institutions must be urged to participate in the elaboration of a new historiography which accords women's protagonism its rightful place in the history of our nations.

At the higher education level, foster new careers based on women's studies, and include in the field of research specific studies on female creativity and development of a life project.

In closing

The educational progress exhibited by the female population in numerous countries of Latin America and the Caribbean over the past thirty years, has translated into the emergence of a working population (EAP) which prides itself of higher educational levels than its male counterparts. Additionally, it is estimated that in most countries of the region women who access qualified positions have studied, on average, two years more than males (ECLAC, 1991b; Psacharopoulos and Tzannatos, 1992). However, we are aware that discrimination is alive and well in areas such as salaries, opportunities, further education, etc.

According to studies sponsored by the World Bank in fifteen Latin American and Caribbean countries (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela), on women's participation in the labour force as measured against educational background and salary earned, the choice of career is the most influential factor in the salary discrimination practices inflicted on the women of the region.

These studies conclude that female participation in the labour market rises sharply in direct proportion to the number of years of formal education completed, particularly secondary and higher technical education, and that education is an absolutely determining factor in terms of income level, for both men and women. The economic returns yielded by education, however, continue to be lower for women in the fifteen countries surveyed. According to the authors, the explanation lies not in an obscure limitation inherent to human resources training, but in the ubiquitous discrimination practiced in the labour market. The other significant factor in salary determination, would be the choice of occupation (Psacharopoulos and Tzannatos, 1992).

Most women crowd the non-technical, non-scientific areas, a phenomenon which implies a long term risk since "the most relevant feature of today's occupational cycle is that the vigorous dynamism of technological innovations –rather than reducing employment opportunities– renders conventional knowledge and skills obsolete" (ECLAC, 1994a, p 4), leaving behind and increasingly larger number of women.

Thus, it is evident that vocational guidance and preparing women to enter the scientific and technological areas, will get top billing in the agenda for coming years. Furthermore, research analysis and scientific experience have shown that female students who can associate the learning of sciences with their own experience, perception, and values, will be as motivated as male students to embark on scientific careers, and that they are every inch as good in this area, when it comes to problem solving and creative thinking (Fox Keller, 1985; Harding, 1992).

At a time when the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean express the urgent need to modernize education so as to better adapt it to the requirements of today's business world, it is equally important that women are introduced to the new forms of leadership, management, and decision making.

In terms of the productive transformation process affecting the region, this means that participation by women in scientific and technological progress –and knowledge production in general– should increase substantially. This, in turn, will tend to redefine production, division of labour by sexes, and cultural values, as they become integrated into society.

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Information systems and electronic mail

As part of networks' interconnection (REPLAD, REDALF, PICPEMCE, SIRI) they may be connected at OREALC, Santiago, Chile through two electronic mail boxes. The first is connected to the BITNET network, with headquarters in UNESCO/Paris. The address is:

uhstg@frunes21

A gateway may also be used, that is a connection between two networks, in this case INTERNET and BITNET. Their address is:

uhstg%frunes21@cunyvm.cuny.edu

The second electronic mail box connects through the INTERNET network, with headquarters in Universidad Católica de Chile. The address is:

unesco@lascar.puc.cl

Through these mail boxes communications as well as documents in diskettes may be forwarded. Up to this date the following are interconnected: the CFI in Argentina; The University of Campinas, Sao Paulo and the University of Brasilia, Brazil; CIDE and REDUC in Chile and the University of Monterrey, in Mexico.

EDUCATING TOWARDS TOLERANCE? MISCONCEPTIONS, REQUIREMENTS AND PROSPECTS

Pablo Latapí*

1995 has been declared International Tolerance Year by the United Nations. For this reason, but particularly so because I believe that the issue of tolerance is at the very core of education for peace and human rights (or inclusive of the concept of democracy), that I have purposely punctuated the title for this paper with a question mark - Educating towards tolerance? and added the sub-title "misconceptions, requirements, and prospects", to suggest that there is a problem that needs to be elucidated.

The concept of tolerance

["Actually, what we would like to see is a couple of our prisoners starve to death, so that other penal institutions in Chiapas are not bedeviled by hunges strikes; that ought to teach them a lesson". Arturo Nazar, Director of the Comitán penal institution (La Jornada, June 9, 1994)].

It seems to me that the concept and the expression "tolerance", will not do to describe coexistence based on respect for others and the effective exercise of human rights. Let us explore this in further detail.

The Royal Academy Dictionary (1941), defines "to tolerate" as follows: "suffer, endure, agree in allowing the right of something that one does not approve; support, accept"; and "tolerance" as "respect and consideration for the opinion and practices of others without repugnance".

Therefore, I should not like to imagine a democratic society –as defined by this concept– as a group of people who endure one another, who suffer each other because they have no choice, in a reciprocal holding back of aversions and animosities.

The etymology of the word (Corominas and Pascual, 1981) reveals that "tolerance" stems from the latin "tollere", that means "remove, lessen, detach" (hence the word "tullido" (crippled), one who had something removed), and by extension it also came to mean "to lift". We use the term "tolle-tolle" when we wish to describe an uplifting, a disturbance.

The concept became enriched with meanings, starting from the 14th century. In Spanish and other romance languages, as well as in English, "to tolerate" was used to describe a conciliatory attitude towards different opinions or beliefs. Marsilio de Padua's "Defensor Pacis" (1324), Spinoza's Theological-Political Treatise (1670), Locke's Three Letters on Tolerance (1689-1692), and Voltaire's Treatise on Tolerance (1762), constitute some of the literature on the subject.

The religious wars of the 17th and 18th centu-

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Adapted from a speech delivered at the II Latin American Convention on Experiences in Teacher Training for Peace and Human Rights, Aguascalientes, August 8, 1994.

ries, reinforced this meaning, and the Enlightenment strengthened it even more.

It is often claimed that the concept of tolerance springs from a Europe catalyzed by the schism of the christian universe, and the ensuing problem of coexistence the various beliefs were forced to confront.

It begins to unfold within the theological world, taking the shape of condescension proposals before the heterodox faction that threatened to leave the established doctrines. A weak, purely ethical expression of freedom of conscience at the onset, it soon moves into the political realm as a state strategy designed to curb the conflicts brought about by diversity.

In the legal order, it is accepted as a consequence of the freedom gained by the individual, and in the social order as a pragmatic need to rule peaceful coexistence (Economic Culture Fund 1974; UNESCO 1988; The New Encyclopedia Britannica 1974; Political Dictionary 1982).

Following the religious wars, the concept of tolerance takes on an added dimension.

It becomes a philosophical principle of the liberal thinking which characterized the Enlightenment, closely linked to the tenets of a lay state, a pluralistic society, and a constitutional state; to ensure a peaceful coexistence among dissenters, a regulatory framework was needed that set limits to the degree of freedom with which the differences were expressed.

Today, this concept is considered a cornerstone of democracy; it overlaps various other concepts such as equality for all, the right to voice one's opinion and the right to dissent, pluralism, distributive justice, reciprocal obligations, the line that separates what is public from what is private, all of which stems from the principle of civil freedom for all citizens (Cisneros, 1994: 32).

Ascribing intolerance to catholics and tolerance to protestants is far from accurate; both sides can claim their fair share of abusive acts, crimes and shortsightedness.

It would be more advisable to analyze, whether in our Latin American culture –which is founded on elements derived from a specific catholic theological principle– the conception of religious truth and the right to its social expression, harbour the seeds of intolerance.

Within some closed cultures, catholic or otherwise, tolerance is regarded as a principle of social dissolution, whereas in progressive cultures, it is seen as an indispensable device for coexistence.

A study of the seeds of tolerance or intolerance contained in the unadulterated Gospel, independent of the historical vicissitudes of the various churches that have invoked it, would be still more interesting.

Nevertheless, despite the conceptual richness that tolerance has been adorned with throughout history, it does not appear to be the best expression to describe an attitude which lies at the very foundations of democratic coexistence, as I will attempt to demonstrate in the following pages.

The roots of intolerance

*"Your ideas on everyone being equal are anachronic. Today, inequality has been scientifically proven and, furthermore, biodiversity has been the driving force behind evolution and progress; it seems to me that inequality should be encouraged".**

Both in the ambit of individual and collective psychology –and we will be exclusively concerned with the latter– the roots of intolerance are twofold:

On the one hand, the search for security and the need for assertion. Every culture or subculture tends to defend that which identifies it; this is why it reacts with hostility –or at least suspiciously– against what is "different", before the "foreigner". It disqualifies those whose opinions and habits do not conform to its cultural patterns, it feels threatened by them, and resorts

* October, 1993. Universidad de las Americas, auditorium packed with students. I have just finished delivering a presentation on the concepts of equality and distributive justice. A question and answer period is under way. A student.

to stereotypes, prejudice, and stigma. In the words of Goffman (1993: 152): "The use of stigma is a common trait of our society. It will be present wherever identity rules prevail".

Therefore, creating stereotypes, ascribing disqualifying labels to that which is different –as a self-assertion mechanism– is an instinctive reaction. We have all inherited –and construct our own– stereotypes of the other sex (man, woman, homosexual), indians, "gringos" (foreigners), the chinese, etc.; for the most part overloaded with negative connotations, precisely in the areas we feel they differ from our particular lifestyle, or what we perceive as being our lifestyle.

*"Hegel claimed that blacks represented the 'natural man, totally barbarian, and unrestrained'".**

A second root of intolerance, is the tendency to give absolute values to our truths.

Perhaps, this is a specific aspect of the aforementioned, that is, it could also be a self-assertion and defense mechanism. In this instance, however, mediated by the forces of knowledge which in accepting something as true, automatically brands the opposite as false. Intelligence – older civilizations have claimed– is a power "needed" or "determined" by its object; upon accepting something as true any opposing ideas are excluded.

In the limitless field of likely trues and opinions –the religious, political, scientific, and artistic realms, in short, all that we know– we always run the risk of ascribing absolute values to our knowledge, while excluding that which is different in the process.

The extreme position is embodied in fanaticism which every one of us is vulnerable to: it means identifying our identity with the identity of all beings; thus, the enemies of our identity are enemies of all human beings; my enemies then become the enemies of the world.

Culturally, we must reflect that intolerance comes to us through two roots: Spain's Counter-Reformation and Inquisition which culminated in the submission of the moors and the expulsion of the jews; the Aztec Empire's characterized by a system of subjugation, a rigidly hierarchical society, and a concept of authority based on the supremacy of the cacique.

I believe that the essence of intolerance lies in these two mechanisms; what is essential, however, is that they are responsible for creating in us a sense of superiority with respect to the "other one", the ultimate root of intolerance.

*"That the rich are rich, is God's will, since when God created man, He did not give all men identical hands; our hands are different from those of peasants". "Equality is an impossibility. God wanted a world peopled by the poor and the rich, where the ones cannot live without the others. We cannot be equal".**

The existing strain between the legitimate and constructive need for assertion, and the illegitimate and destructive urge to feel superior to the rest, is painfully evident. If we do not wish to delve into that cryptic area where our values are shaped, or become aware of the borderline between instinctive and deliberate action, we will be ill-prepared to avoid intolerance in ourselves, making us hardly qualified to help others receive education in tolerance.

I once wrote, in reference to those obscure processes through which we human beings mature: "We ignore, for instance, when or through which dark mechanisms the survival instinct turns into a sense of achievement, and the latter into psychological self-assertion which in turn becomes a most sophisticated type of individualism. We ignore how the biological search of he who gives satisfaction turns into eager appropriation, and how one goes from instinctive reflex to possession, and thence to a concept of

* Quoted by Bobbio, Norberto in Enciclopedia del Novecento, 1977, Vol. II, Rome, Instituto dell' Enciclopedia Italiana, p. 363.

* Felipe Santiz, representative of small displaced homeowners in the Las Margaritas municipality, La Jornada, June 13 and 18, 1994.

ownership. We ignore at which point the innocent competitiveness of the child turns into a sensitiveless urge to rule over others, and selfish rivalry. We also ignore the origin of the thirst for power that inevitably attends the self-assertion process of every mature individual.

How, when and why do the impulses of children and adolescents become value options and the dynamic forces of their personality align with a given philosophy and social system? Many questions about these enigmas remain open, and it is important to ponder them" (Latapí, 1979: 85).

I believe that such an introspection effort, and honest analysis on how we handle our feelings of superiority, and how we accept those of others, is indispensable if we are to become tolerant. The last question which propounds whether our need for self-assertion has led us to conceit, obviously, has no definite answer, as is the case with the disquieting and recurrent questions regarding the uprightness of our intentions.

Equality and diversity

The foregoing, brings us to the issue of plural coexistence, a third stage of these reflections. How to live alongside those who are different? How can the intolerance that spontaneously springs among them be prevented? How can equality and diversity be combined?

*"If the truth were known, I hate indians; they don't even work. I have no use for them".**

The expression goes: "equality for living, diversity for coexisting". Beautiful, in terms of ideals; but where should we acknowledge each other as being equal, where different? Is it wrong to nurture any feelings of superiority even if we know for a fact that in some aspects we are superior to others? How can we overlook the tepid feelings of superiority we all have? Will accepting that which is different lead us to diluting our identity as a group, a people, a culture? How to educate not losing sight of these problems?

These are tough questions I do not intend to answer here. Their answers demand a most sincere and profound personal effort, in order to transform the easily elaborated theoretical answers, into truths assimilated through our own experience.

It is said, for example, that freedom implies acknowledging and respecting differences, as well as accepting a fundamental equality for all. However, even if we accept these principles in theory, in actual practice we should be alert not to react with intolerance. When debating politics, when approving or rejecting young people's habits or fashions that probably displease us, or when confronting the intolerance of others, this is where the elusive art of tolerance should be built, one day at a time.

What I am about to state in the next pages, might help us resolve the antinomy "equality-diversity" we face daily.

"[The gap between the primitive, mystical, and pre-logical mentality of blacks and the white man's reasoning process is so immense, that it is inconceivable to think it could ever be bridged". (Lucien Levy-Bruhl, La Mentalité Primitive, 1992)].

Philosophical foundations of human rights

Rather than attempt to expound on such a vast subject, I would like to offer some sort of answer to the following question: why respect the rights of others? It is simply a way of approaching an explanation of why should all men be equal, and the sense and scope of such an equality. It is a device to keep us from feeling superior to others and, consequently, from preventing intolerance.

Allow me to recall a personal anecdote. Many years ago I traveled to Sweden in order to study this country's educational reform. My trip, including visits to schools and interviews with researchers and politicians, was organized by the Swedish Cultural Institute.

* A Tuxtla Gutiérrez cabby (Article by H. Bellinghausen, La Jornada, August 18, 1994).

During an interview with one of the technicians responsible for the design of the 12 year "comprehensive school ", I was being explained the principles of political philosophy the reform drew its inspiration from. While mentioning the democratic nature of the school and the equal rights to an education shared by all, he suddenly lapsed into silence, as if hesitating to continue. I thought it was a typical gesture of the Nordic's tormented psychology, made familiar by Bergman's films; however, my interlocutor proceeded with these words: " Actually, we are at a loss when it comes to supporting equality among men; in this post-christian nation, having suppressed the belief that we are all sons of God, what we have left are the differences among human beings. How are we to justify equal educational opportunities from a secular point of view?" End of anecdote.

Human rights were not fashionable at the time. The United Nations had adopted the Declaration, although it was far from being the important cultural referent it is today. The question lingers: What is the basis for the fundamental equality of all men? Are human rights necessary expressions of the ontological dignity of the individual (moved by religious motives or by the absolute imperative of reason seeking to safeguard its freedom), are they consensual agreements between States, or are they purely practical transactions designed to allow living in peace?

The currently proposed theories unfold along three axes: ontologist, contractualist, and pragmatic. Perhaps the contractualist view which explains the nature of human rights –in the present stage of evolution of these rights (UNESCO, 1985)– through covenants among the States, is the more prevalent.

My personal stance is somewhat different: I uphold an ontological view of the individual, who turns his particular dignity into an end in itself, preventing it from becoming a means or instrument of anyone or anything. I would like to supplement this philosophical view, by invoking the christian argument that all men are sons of God and, therefore, brothers, sharing a common origin and fate, and duties of love and solidarity that transcend philosophical considerations. I do accept, of course, that there are other ways of establishing equality among men and the universal validity of human rights. Maritain propounded that democratic values – the "democratic charter" he used to call it– required a general consensus, but each and every member of a pluralistic society had to justify them, in accordance with his own convictions; he applied these ideas to school laicism.

Returning to the issue of equality as the foundation of tolerance, it helps me to envision three distinct "truth" zones, since I am convinced that all the truths we uphold cannot be seen in the same light.

A first such zone contains my "opinions": the "opinionative" zone. It is quite large: it includes trivia (my favorite soccer team or my musical preferences) as well as opinions on political or economic issues, views that are typical of a social stratum or obviously relative cultural musings.

These judgments never go beyond the realm of "opinions", disputable, questionable. In this first zone, my obligation is to make my opinions relative to those that are different, engage in dialogue, attempt to enrich my experience through the consideration of opposite points of view.

The second zone, includes some cultural values I consider fundamental, which were probably dispensed along with the education my family provided me during the first years of my life.

This cultural zone includes judgments and appreciations that I hold dear, and involve principles or values such as my feelings on income distribution policies, since the value of justice is at stake here; the issue of international solidarity and the differences between North and South; my judgments on neoliberalism and the philosophical tenets underpinning it; my stance on the indigenous mexican issue; or on abortion or capital punishment, inasmuch as they deal with human lives, and so forth. This set of values and appreciations, are already part of my world vision and are unrenounceable. I can and should

discuss them, although making them relative is quite another story.

The third zone would harbour my absolute values, a great many of them –although certainly not all– associated with my religious beliefs. For example: man's eternal life, God's kindness, the existence of an ultimate justice, doing unto others, etc. Naturally, there is a continuum between this zone and the preceding one, and setting their limits is somewhat difficult. But, I would rather make this distinction since I do not regard many of my cultural values to be absolute truths.

All the truths contained in the second and third zones I define as unrenounceable, although the former's are not absolute truths and the latter's are. It is not my intention to impose them on anyone, however, I will not diminish their weight and significance as an offering to a pluralism that turns every truth into something relative.

As regards those who hold truths different than my own –notably, in zones two and three– it is my contention that they too have a right to advance and express them, and not because all truths are equal, but because they have the same dignity as persons and the same freedom of conscience, that I do. I am convinced that this is how diversity can be seen in a positive light, and how coexistence based on equality and respect for the rights of others, can be established.

This attitude is markedly different from the other two being proposed. One of them advises: "When your opinions run counter to those of others, just keep them to yourself; it is the price you pay for peace; in a pluralistic society, to go around brandishing controversial ideological or religious issues, is in poor taste". The other one goes further; "Pluralism demands that your truths be made relative; society should be lay, which means that so called absolute values must be rejected".

Small wonder Luis Villoro observes that there are only two forms of intolerance: dogmatism and skepticism. He who imposes his beliefs on others, is no less intolerant than he who attempts to impose on others, the obligation to believe in nothing at all.

Personally, I support the need to hold absolute values, given a sort of existential energy I cannot change which goes beyond social conditioning.

I claim my place in the physical and psychological order, but more vehemently, in the spiritual, cultural, and moral order, since it provides references, explanations and answers to my consubstantial doubts. I feel that, despite those voices that proclaim that "God is dead", It has resurrected taking on different faces and names as civilization trudges on in its endless pilgrimage.

I wanted to highlight this point, because in our culture, that which is pragmatic, and temporary, has become fashionable; that every bit of knowledge and every value is relative, has emerged as the post-modernity ideal. The ethics of this situation and its outcomes, intend changing the principles of accountability and solidarity, and proclaiming it as a democratic feature, an effective condition of equality, and a manifestation of tolerance. I do not think so.

Coexistence pedagogy

How may we educate towards tolerance, or more to my liking, towards "solidary coexistence"?

Allow me to identify four steps:

- The first step, entails working towards stripping ourselves naked of prejudices. Identifying, through rational and psychological analysis, those barriers I use to ward off that which is different. This step also includes trying to understand that others may be prejudicial towards me, and why.
- The second step consists of confronting what is different through dialogue and communication. Two procedures are advised against: neutralizing it, as a regrouping strategy; and, integrating it into my categories, which is nothing but a subtle neutralization mechanism. The thing to do is, try to understand it the way it is, and acknowledge its share of the truth.
- Third step, attempt to build something together, out of what is mine and what I deemed valuable in his.

– Lastly, adopt a solidary attitude before he who is different. Make his needs yours, and work with him towards satisfying them.

Behind these four steps, there ought to be a growing willingness to be open minded and make commitments. There should also be increasingly more profound value judgments of the other person.

Harmonious coexistence, should educate us towards the attainment of these progressive stages: understand and respect one another, as required in the first two steps; bring out what is valuable in each other, as propounded in step three; and, engage in reciprocal commitments as stated in step four.

At the beginning of this paper, I observed that, in my opinion, the concept of tolerance was not the ideal choice for describing the attitude democratic coexistence demands. Perhaps now it will be clear why: tolerance stops short at the first two steps; it embraces understanding, and it even stretches to include respect.

I would rather talk of a "solidary coexistence" which involves the third and fourth steps: a genuine effort to attempt building jointly with what is mine and yours, in an act of authentic solidarity.

We would thus be conveying to democracy a positive sense of constructive interrelation and fraternity. We christians could take our utopic love ideals much farther, all the way to our enemies, perhaps. But that would side-track us, leading us to talk of a distant and different world which transcends the topic under discussion, just as the Kingdom of God transcends a purely democratic coexistence, and Divine Grace transcends the human wickedness we are immersed in. Maybe we should leave it for another occasion.

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OREALC Activities

REDALF

Regional network for training of personnel and specific support in literacy and adult education programmes

Literacy and civic education of Peru's indigenous peasant women (DANIDA-UNESCO (510-PER-10)

The DANIDA-UNESCO Project for Literacy and Civic Education of Indigenous Peasant Women of Peru, came to a close after having successfully trained 349 promoters –community residents for the most part –, brought literacy to 4.814 women, and sponsored post-literacy courses for another 1.172.

Programme activities, stretching from 1992 to 1994, were geared towards the indigenous peasant women of Cajamarca and Cusco, and enlisted the participation of three peruvian NGO's: PERU-MUJER Association in Cajamarca; Cusco's Ecology and Development Association (APED); and, the Andean Education and Advancement Centre (CADEP) José María Arguedas. The three NGO's worked in coordination with Peru's Ministry of Education's Literacy Department.

Upon project completion, a large amount of educational material designed for quechua, spanish, and bilingual literacy learning (readiness, reading-writing, mathematics), had been produced. Post-literacy, civic, cultural, and gender education material for peasant women in the form of leaflets, manuals, texts, illustrations, songs, folk stories and legends, riddles, etc., was also produced as supplementary material.

CADEP published two testimonials in book form, *Asuntapa Kawsaymanta* and *Chinchaypkyu Runakuna*, both in quechua language, which deserve kudos. The former narrates Asunta's life, a caustic testimony of the exclusion, oppression, and discrimination borne by quechua peasant women. The second book, is the story of an indigenous district as told by its own inhabitants. Their contents are an inspiration to reflect on ways to deal with the problems that confront women.

The post-literacy stage combined activities designed to reinforce literacy and women's civic rights; agricultural training; craftsmanship, and environmental protection. In the final analysis, it proved to be an instrument which in addition to furthering integration, communication, and interrelations with the rest of the community, contributed greatly to the personal fulfillment of participating women.

In an effort to preserve continuity, an attempt was made to link post-literacy initiatives with existing production ventures. A feather on the Project's cap, were the agreements subscribed with executing NGO's and other public and private institutions, both in Cusco and Cajamarca. In the latter location, PERU-MUJER entered agreements with the Provincial Municipality and the Ministry of Education's Literacy Department, with the objective of defining literacy zones.

PERU-MUJER, through a Forum on Literacy, stirred up enough interest to cause the Education faculty of Cajamarca's University and Instituto Superior Pedagógico, to sign agreements that would allow students to conduct, in these institutions, their practice in support of the Project.

Another Project achievement, was the Cooperation Agreement for Intercultural Indigenous Literacy signed in Anta, on March 28, 1993, between the Ministry of Education's Educational Service Unit (USE) and the Andean Education and Advancement Centre (CADEP) José María Arguedas.

The Literacy Department of the Ministry of Education, instructed the Regional Office and the USES of Anta and Chumbivilcas –sites of the Project– to include all literacy workers trained during 1993, in the official State roster.

Project activities involved the participation of civic and social organizations in implementing literacy actions, which resulted in communities making a strong defense of literacy in quechua before moving on to spanish.

The Project evaluation highlighted positive aspects of the meth-

odological proposal; namely, linking the literacy process to the intercultural self-assertion issue of indigenous peasant women. Other notable accomplishments are the selection, and training imparted to community literacy workers , and the efficiency levels observed. The bilingual literacy process also received praises.

Poor coordination among executing bodies, difficulties attending experience exchange and in-service activities, post-literacy actions which lacked clear contents, and the various operational glitches encountered by these initiatives, are some of the problems the Project had to cope with.

OREALC plans to immortalize the Project's experience in the book "Let us grow together" and in a Spanish-English version of a video on literacy, both to be released in 1995.

REDALF Technical meeting for the launching of phase II of the regional research on functional illiteracy (Santiago, Chile, OREALC, August 24-26, 1994)

Representatives of seven countries (Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Paraguay, and Venezuela) participated in the second phase of a regional research effort originally conceived in 1991. The theoretical framework, underlying hypotheses, operational strategies, and sample design of the regional investigation, were among the main points of discussion. A decision was made to implement reading-writing, mathematics, and personal data instruments to the existing instructional arsenal. A study of problem solving and reading strategies, was also added to the package.

Furthermore, it was agreed that a representative sample of a particularly relevant area of the country would be taken. The sample is to exclude absolute illiterates and include adults between the ages of 15 and 54.

Representatives of the host country submitted proposals including mechanisms for implementing research in each country, and the support required from UNESCO.

REDALF Workshop for specialists responsible for elaborating self-learning guides (OREALC, Santiago, Chile, October 10 to 14, 1994)

Mario Kaplún coordinated the activities of specialists responsible for producing the prototype Self-learning Guides to be used by Youths and Adults. The Guides will address issues such as Consumer Education, Intercultural Bilingual Education, Mathematics for Adults and Education for the Young.

REDALF Regional course on development of strategies for first language acquisition and introduction to a second language in intercultural bilingual education (Cusco, Peru, November 7-25, 1994)

The UNESCO/UNICEF sponsored course, gathered basic and adult education teachers from the following countries: Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela.

The course was intended to discuss the important role played by mother tongue in the learning of a second language, particularly in children; the significance of developing indigenous mother tongue skills at the individual and social level; the analysis and production of sample materials and activities for children and adults, designed to develop and exercise oral expression in indigenous language, fundamental and inseparable component of the reading and writing learning process; the exchange of spanish as a second language teaching experiences with indigenous children and adults; and, the major technical and pedagogical achievements and failures encountered, as well as the didactic material employed.

REDALF Seminar-workshop on formulation of training and professionalization proposals for educators within the framework of subsystem construction for youth and adult education (San José de Costa Rica, December 5-10, 1994)

Representatives of Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, and Uruguay participated in this Seminar which examined training and professionalization proposals for youth and adult educators, through the creation of educational subsystems specific to this type of education, the production of self-learning material and distance education.

Presentation of REDALF's programme at other international meetings

- UNESCO's contribution to the Adult Education Programme for the elderly, was presented by an OREALC Specialist on occasion of the First Ibero-American Congress on "The Elderly: A Challenge for the Third Millennium". The event organized by Chile's Universidad Mayor and the World Council on Education,

was held in Santiago, Chile, from September 1 to 3, 1994.
- An OREALC Consultant presented this organization's research findings, within the framework of REDALF activities, during an International Seminar on Research Trends sponsored by UNESCO's Educational Institute (Hamburg) and the Canadian Commission. The Seminar was held in the city of Montreal, Canada, between September 3 and 15, 1994.
- An OREALC Specialist presented the results of research conducted in the context of REDALF activities on women's educational programmes, at a World Congress on Family Literacy, sponsored by UNESCO headquarters and United States' Gateway Educational Products Limited. The event took place in Paris from October 3 to 5, and was hosted by UNESCO.
- An OREALC Specialist presented the results of research conducted in the context of REDALF activities, for the purpose of introducing innovative programmes in the area of Youth and Adult Education. The presentation was made at the Third Annual Meeting of Consultants for UNESCO's Innovation Project, between November 4 and 5, 1994, in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago.

REPLAD
Regional network for the training, innovation and research in the fields of planning and administration of basic education and literacy programmes

VI Regional seminar-workshop on educational policy, planning and management (Santiago, Chile, November 14 to December 2, 1994).

Every year since 1989, top level officials of the Ministries of Education, and coordinators of educational administration post-graduate programmes of regional universities, have been the traditional guests to a Regional Seminar-Workshop on Educational Policy, Planning, and Management.

Out of the thirty-three delegates from 18 countries of Latin America the Caribbean, and Spain–Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, El Salvador, Spain, Ecuador, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Peru, Paraguay, the Dominican Republic, Uruguay, and Venezuela– who participated in the 1994 event, 24 held public administration posts, 8 worked in the university system and 1 represented private interests. Half of those in attendance–18 women and 15 men–were high level administrators and the remainder, top executives.

The VI Seminar-Workshop addressed the analysis of educational policies, formulated proposals aimed at enhancing the quality, planning and management of education and, in terms of methodology, stressed active learning and teamwork strategies by participants. Consequently, three out of the four modules were organized through workshops. Each participant received in advance a video recording of the main topics to be discussed, so that actual attendance time of the seminar-workshop could be devoted to their analysis and subsequent debate.

The seminar-workshop consisted of a month-long distance learning session, followed by a three week attendance period. This arrangement provided a twofold advantage since it allowed for a more condensed seminar, as compared to previous years, and brought together a more homogeneous group of people. The system could have a multiplier effect within the participating institutions, if the materials forwarded are studied collectively.

The period of attendance to the seminar-workshop was divided into four modules (*Educational planning; Simulation games "A new opportunity"; GESEDUCA-Educational management model; Elaboration of educational projects*), and a parallel series of twelve conversation sessions (structured conversation units 1.5 hours long).

The educational planning module offered an introduction to the theory and praxis of the central theme of the seminar-workshop. Teams consisting of 5 to 6 persons participated in the module "A New Opportunity". The idea was to pretend that, for the next twenty years, they would have enough power to make educational policy decisions in a Latin American country. The software utilized contains –in game

format– all the necessary data, and estimates the repercussions these decisions may have on education and other development indicators. The game strengthens the capacity to assess educational needs, identify the proper policies, rank investments; and lastly to analyze the results obtained.

GESEDUCA represents an open model of educational management, in that it assesses the managerial effectiveness of a concrete institution, and defines where and how to improve its performance. This assessment is supported by a "tool box" provided by the programme. Since the capacity to design, formulate, and submit educational projects is an indispensable skill for Ministry of Education officials and university researchers, the module dealing with project elaboration extended long enough to examine in detail the design phases, culminating in the formulation and submission of a draft by each of the three groups.

Under the direction of a guest specialist, the conversation sessions offered participants a space for debate and exchange on issues of vital importance to the social and educational development of the region. Thus, issues such as productive transformation with equity; technological reforms, the globalization of economy and education; the modernization of the State and education, changes in the labour world and how they will affect education, were extensively debated.

One day was set aside for on-the-field visits to two educational experiences: *The 900 School Programme* and the *Educational Enterprise Project*, which would serve as inspiration for developing educational programmes in other countries.

As in past years, the VI Seminar-Workshop enlisted the support of specialists from international organizations such as: the World Bank, REDUC, ILPES, and IIPE (mexican, chilean, venezuelan and french specialists), responsible for coordinating the four modules. Specialists from ECLAC, University of Chile, Ministry of Education, and OREALC (argentinean, chilean, spanish, and guatemalan specialists), participated actively in the conversation sessions.

SIRI
Regional Information Service

Human development strategies in Latin America and the Caribbean: An educational perspective

The important level of dissemination of basic education (in terms of schooling rates) among the children population of most countries, and the still unresolved equity and quality problems, are some of the facts uncovered by the project Development Strategies in Latin America and the Caribbean: An educational perspective.

During 1992-1994, UNDP and UNESCO activities focused on various educational aspects –specifically inequalities in the distribution of educational opportunities, particularly among women and youths– and how they relate to employment and income conditions for these segments of the population.

The region's educational assessment, also revealed an insufficient basic and higher education coverage, as well as a strongly fluctuating segmentation of middle education, among and within countries, owing to differences in location and the mechanisms employed.

An educational assessment, the project concluded, formulated from the educational system perspective is more sensitive to expansion than it is to inequality and deficiencies, unless attention is given to non-massive educational levels and urban–rural differences.

The project delved into the relationship between education, work, and income, with special emphasis on the most vulnerable groups; women and youths. The parameters measured in this case were, the distribution of education in the population, and labour and income trends among the age groups 15 or older, based on secondary information provided by home surveys in ten countries of the region.

The data obtained through home surveys, confirmed the expansion of schooling and, consequently, the massive nature of the region's educational systems (schooling fluctuates between 4.8 years in Honduras and 8.7 years in Chile). The gap between urban and rural areas remains substantial, although is has shown a tendency to decline.

Schooling is on the rise in capital cities, while the differences between men and women are beginning to shrink. The strong correlation that exists between family income and educational opportunities, has been clearly observed.

Despite a recent substantial increase in pre-schooling rates, none of the cases considered approached 30% of the population. However, schooling rates for primary education, hover at 90% throughout the region revealing no gaping differences between rural and urban areas, or income levels (except for Brazil and Bolivia). Conversely, schooling rates for middle and higher education, exhibit significant variation among countries (about 50 percentile points, when considering extreme cases such as Uruguay versus Honduras and Brazil), between the rural and urban areas of the same country (also about 50 points in some extreme cases, as Bolivia), regions within a country, and income levels (differences of 50 to 70 per cent between secondary schooling rates of the well-to-do and the deprived, in countries such as Honduras and Brazil).

Experience confirms that absenteeism is greater in rural areas, and that it increases in direct proportion to age, while enrollment figures decline. At the lower income levels, male students drop out sooner for work-related reasons.

Findings corroborate that the profound transformations affecting the labour market (urbanization and service), express themselves as a skewed distribution of education among the working force. This is made particularly evident in most cases, by the large educational inequalities observed between the capital and the rest of the country, and the differences that become magnified at the non-massive educational levels. Higher levels of education and economic growth coexist in these countries, but social inequality remains unchanged. Such disparities are often reflected in educational expansion.

As regards the impact of the educational achievement index (ILE) on UNDP's Human Development Index (1993 version), the project commissioned a study to determine how representative of Latin American education the ILE really is; establish how it interrelates to a set of factors associated with human development, which either catalyze or originate from educational achievements, and propose new upgrading elements.

The overall conclusion, arrived at after analyzing correlations among numerous educational variables obtained in the above mentioned countries –plus Mexico and Panama– is that the present index is in fact representative, valid or consistent with respect to those educational achievements (literacy versus schooling) that affect quality of life, and human development in the various countries.

The construction of a new ILE, however, goes beyond its simple formulation and validation: it allows monitoring the region's educational processes, proposing policy, discovering new indicators of quality of education, implementing and validating a new index.

The need to draw into the project that group of countries in the region that exhibit lower educational development levels, and greater information deficiencies –an objective contribution to human development– is another conclusion worth noting.

Within the project's framework, UNESCO/OREALC coordinated a number of regional and national studies as well as a regional workshop, on educational indicators contained in home surveys.

Regional studies focused on the educational situation (Sonia Lavín); the relationship between education, employment and income among young men and women, based on information obtained from home surveys (Carmen Latorre), and the definition of an educational achievement sign, in UNDP's human development indicator (Luis Eduardo González and Oscar Espinoza).

National studies, also based on home survey results, were conducted with the cooperation of ten National Statistics and Census Institutes (namely, those of Argentina Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Honduras, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela). Subsequently, specialists from these organizations participated in a regional workshop held at OREALC's headquarters (Santiago, Chile) between 7 and 9 June, 1994, to analyze the information gathered on education and human development.

PICPEMCE
Programme for innovation and change in teacher training to improve the quality of education.

Seminar workshop on special classroom needs for Mercosur countries

This seminar-workshop held in Buenos Aires from November 21 to December 2, 1994, is part of the sensitizing-training activities of the "special classroom needs" Project began in December 1992. The event served a twofold purpose: disseminate project material to MERCOSUR member countries, and educate trainers who can, in turn, disseminate and replicate the project in their respective countries.

The seminar, under the joint sponsorship of OREALC and Argentina's Ministry of Culture and Education, stretched for a two week period. For the most part, first week attendees included persons involved in the educational policy of Special and Primary Education, and Teacher Training areas. Out of the total number of participants, ten were officials responsible for the Ministries of Education of the various MERCOSUR countries (2 from Brazil, 3 from Uruguay, 2 from Paraguay, and 3 from Argentina), while the other twenty were representatives of the different argentinean provinces. During the second week, the ten officials from the Ministries of Education, assuming the role of coordinators worked with a group of twenty regular teachers, with the objective of experimenting with the material and implementing the methodology sustaining the Project. At this stage of the seminar, the work sessions carried out in coordination with teachers were the object of daily evaluation and monitoring. The event closed with a schedule of future activities to be implemented in the various countries, with a view to disseminating the "Special Classroom Needs" material, and with an information exchange mechanism dealing with educational policy, and the integration experiences of these special students. Participants were highly encomiastic of UNESCO's special classroom needs project, not only because it represents an important about face in relation to the instruction imparted to these students, but particularly because it invites reflecting on the type of educational practices that will lead to a school that may guarantee the success of all its students, whether or not their needs are "special".

The special moment of renovation the educational policy of these countries is undergoing, lent the encounter a singularly rich quality. Every one of the countries represented at the seminar, includes the principle of integration of special needs students among its general education legislation. However, the mere existence of this principle, as important as it is, is insufficient if not accompanied by a number of conditions and actions that not only ensure the integration of these students into regular schools, but also guarantee a quality school for all.

An essential condition to achieve the aforementioned objective may be found in a more pliable curriculum, amenable to stretching and molding based on students' needs and their socio-cultural environment, and one that envisages a greater number of objectives and contents, particularly those referred to procedures for learning values and attitudes. The expansion of this type of content, on the whole absent from school curricula, is not purely a response to the growing demand expressed by today's society, but it also promotes a greater range of learning experiences that will benefit all students, not only those with special learning needs. In this respect, curricular reforms currently under way in several Latin American countries, presuppose a solid start towards improved schools where individual differences, special or otherwise, will be satisfactorily resolved.

Experience has shown that integration of special needs students into regular schools, requires the presence of an innovating driving force that, along with overhauling teaching practices, and introducing changes in methodology, classroom organization, and use of materials, leads to a participative and personalized type of education. Introducing these changes, implies looking at special learning needs from a different perspective, that is, from the understanding that learning difficulties do not lie exclusively with these students, but also with the conditions and characteristics surrounding the school, and with the educational responses proffered. This view, focuses not just on students's difficulties, but on the changes or adjustments that must take place, in order that the educational effort may counter or minimize said difficulties. This presupposes greater involvement and accountability by teachers who ought

to work collectively in pursuit of a project that considers the various students' needs, and a series of personal and material resources, that facilitate developing such a project. Participants agree that the main difficulties –in terms of integration– encountered by the various countries are the changes in attitude, educational notions about special learning needs, cooperative work among teachers, and the provision of human resources and material. This means that every effort must focus on overcoming these difficulties.

The presence of special needs students in regular schools, demands developing tolerant attitudes, respect for differences, solidarity, cooperation, etc., all vital components of a better society. Hence, although integration experiences in Latin America are scarce, and have run into all sorts of problems in terms of systematization, resource allocation, teacher training, etc., they nevertheless represent an important catalyst for motivation and change. Now more than ever, we must take progressive strides towards securing the conditions that will result in quality education for all.

An environment and population interdisciplinary programme

Following recommendations on the need to reorient education towards sustainable growth, set forth at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil 3-14, June, 1992), and those emanating from the First International Congress on Education Population and Development (Istanbul, 14-17 April, 1993), UNESCO –mindful of its mandate as facilitator in the area of ideas, knowledge, and commitments– unanimously approved at the XXVII session of the General Conference (October 25 to November 16, 1993), the creation of an interagency Interdisciplinary Project: "Education and Information on Environment and Population for Human Development" (EPD).

The project aims at satisfying an essential requirement for sustainable human development, namely, keeping the citizenship (men, women, and children) informed through an interdisciplinary approach that includes topics relative to human population, the environment, and the need for sustainable growth.

Thus, UNESCO adhered to international actions in support of development centered on people, with social equity, and environmentally sustainable. The EPD project addresses issues which stem from population growth, along with other population-related topics, as well as those connected with local, and global developments and the environment, from an integrated approach. In the words of UNESCO's Director General, Federico Mayor: "our capacity to curb population growth will be a leading factor in determining the exploitation rate of our raw materials, the purity of our environment, the intensity and direction of migratory flows, the equilibrium of our cities, the survival of our rural areas, the distribution of the products of development, and the reduction of poverty and inequality. And, above everything else, since all these factors make themselves felt at the very core of our society, our capacity to control population growth will be a decisive factor in civil peace and social stability".

From an education and information perspective, when addressing these themes, emphasis must be placed on specific contexts, on problem solving, and on action-oriented strategies. Thus, EPD stresses:

- sustainable growth, bearing in mind the importance of human dignity particularly when attempting to improve the individual's lifestyle and environment, while advancing a culture of peace, solidarity, and international understanding;
- diversity in life and in the balance between reasonable human activities, and the need to preserve natural ecosystems;
- a global and local perspective as regards environmental impact on a global scale, and population shifts;
- development of human capacity, fostering citizen's participation, and cooperation between individuals and institutions;
- redirection and enhancement of the quality of education and of mechanisms for disseminating information relative to sustainable human development.

The support of the United Nation's specialized agencies, gives the EPD project an international scope.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, UNESCO's Regional Office for Education, responsible for project execution, and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (FNUAP) through its Latin American Office Support Team launched, in 1994, the EPD project's activities for the region.

Twenty-seven Latin American experts from government and non-government organizations, who headed projects on environmental education and education in population gathered in Santiago, Chile, in October 1994. The Latin American Seminar-Workshop, inspired on the guidelines of Agenda 21 and the

specific needs of the various countries, set as its main task, the training of human resources capable of encouraging integrated educational actions –formal and non-formal– on Environment, Population, and Development, and furthering reflection on education for sustainable human development.

During 1995, OREALC will continue the training of EPD human resources through sub-regional seminars designed for teacher trainers within the framework of the PICPEMCE network.

Other activities

"UNESCO ten year action plan towards development of craftsmanship across the world (1990-1999)"

A first stage of a Ten Year Action Plan Towards the Development of Craftsmanship Across the World, within the framework of the World Decennium for Cultural Development, and under the joint sponsorship of the United Nations and UNESCO, has been recently evaluated.

On balance, regional activities undertaken by UNESCO Member States between 1990 and 1994, culminated in the publication of craftsmanship catalogues in three Latin American countries, namely, Brazil, Mexico, and Peru. Upgrading courses for artisans were imparted at the National Museum of Craftsmanship (Argentina), and the Regional Centre for the Development of Handicrafts (Peru), while numerous artisan centres were created in Belice, Chile, and Guiana.

Colombia and Peru also organized national fairs and exhibits. Argentina and Peru were the recipients of "Creativity Awards" in the amount of US$ 27,000 and US$ 10,000 respectively, and Colombia made annual presentations of medals for "Artisan Excellence".

Argentina funded artisan projects under the national budget to the tune of US$ 80,000. Doing their share for international cooperation, United States' AID earmarked US$ 100.000 to be used in Belice to this end. International trade of these products was promoted through diplomatic missions (Chile), while several seminars and training courses on trading, were organized in Belice, Colombia, Guiana, and Mexico.

Clearly, the most significant result is having made craftsmanship part of the national development agenda. The public powers have increased their participation; and, coordination of the pertinent national services has improved significantly.

Latin American and Caribbean artisans attended a UNESCO-sponsored seminar on "Design in Craftsmanship" held at Helsinki's Industrial Arts University, on July 1993. Additionally, in the framework of the Participation Programme, in 1992, UNESCO supported the inclusion of craftsmanship as a subject matter in Cuba's curriculum of professional art schools, and the creation of a beginners' artisan centre in Venezuela, this same year.

Furthermore, within the realm of UNESCO's Associated Schools Plan, an interregional trial programme offering "course-workshops on sensitivity to artisan trades", enlisted the enthusiastic participation of Guatemalan schools.

Other OREALC-sponsored meetings

Regional Seminar on "Contributions of Women's Studies to Educational Reform" for Universities and Ministries of Education (Mar del Plata, Argentina, September 24 to 25, 1994).

Participants to this Regional Seminar, sponsored by UNESCO and Educational MERCOSUR through Argentina's National Programme for Advancement of Equal Educational Opportunities for Women (PRIOM), included PRIOM specialists, and representatives of Universities and Ministries of Education from Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay.

The Seminar offered a progress report on "Women's Studies" at the university level, and set forth recommendations for improving their implementation strategies.

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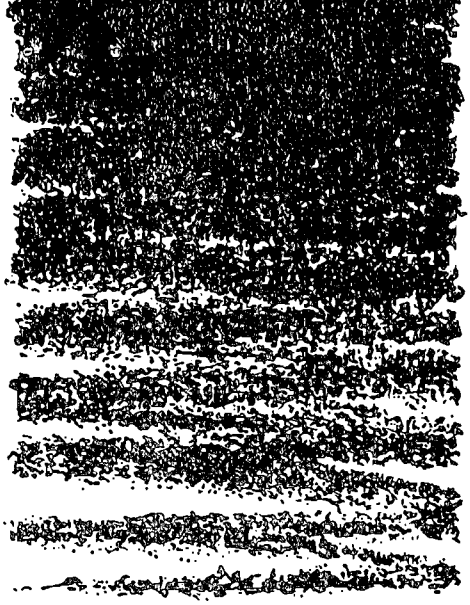

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