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4. POLICY TRANSFER FOR EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Complex Processes of Borrowing and Lending in Brazil and the Philippines[1]

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a comparative analysis of Education for All plans in Brazil and the Philippines. These two countries share a number of commonalities not least due to their current status as emergent, intermediate economies in the global world. However, the official indicators of educational development show disparate trends in the middle term, with Brazil overcoming the Philippines in the last decades. The analysis draws on two different strands of literature in order to make sense of these trends. On the one hand, it uses historical neo-institutionalist accounts of the 'developmental state' to account for the endogenous social transformations that both of them have experienced. On the other hand, the chapter draws on the literature on education policy transfer in order to spell out the clues of external influence in each case. The findings discuss some significant correlations between patterns of state development and the reception of the global educational agenda.

Nowadays, policy-making normally entails international transfer somehow, even in allegedly 'national' areas such as education. At the same time as new issues such as climate change, finance, migration or the use of big data enter the diplomatic agenda, the initiative Education for All, a worldwide programme designed over fifteen years ago came to the fore to extend schooling and learning to everybody, to be assessed in a global summit in 2015. The current widespread pessimism on the achievements of this initiative is a poignant reminder of our need to rethink the institutional underpinnings, the prevailing procedures of planning and implementing, and the methods of evaluating policies in order to envisage new and more effective projects. Simultaneously, development banks are making some of their loans conditional on national investment in education, and governments have widely adopted their generally accepted recommendation to tighten social benefits to family involvement in children's education. Even more, closer methods of international coordination introduce new institutional designs of regional education policy frameworks in Europe (e.g., the Education and Training 2020 Strategy), Latin America (e.g., the 2021 Ibero American Educational Goals) and in other regions of the world.

M. A. Geo-JaJa & S. Majhanovich (Eds.), Effects of Globalization on Education Systems and Development, 59–75.

This chapter will discuss the importance of policy transfer in education with regard to two intermediate countries in the world ranking defined by the Human Development Index, Brazil and the Philippines. Even though both of them underwent a significant phase of democratisation in the late eighties, their position in this ranking has flipped during the last decades. Brazil suffered from a worse situation than the Philippines in the mid twentieth century, but the former has experienced quicker and more persistent progress afterwards. This trend posits intriguing and disturbing questions inasmuch as the main international agencies have been intervening systematically in the latter since the end of World War II. Actually, a tentative comparative account of their respective histories concerning education policy and cooperation for international development suggests that different ways of external influence, among many other factors, have contributed to these disparate trends. While Brazilian governments and civil society have actively engaged in varied forms of both collaboration and conflict with international agencies such as UNESCO and the World Bank, and have actively engaged with undergoing processes of international educational planning in Latin America, the Philippines has basically enacted educational reforms according to the conditions required by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank in exchange for their financial collaboration.

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF EDUCATION POLICY TRANSFER: TWO CASE STUDIES

Education for All (EFA) has been a very ambitious experience of educational planning on the global scale. Promoted by a consortium of international donors, coordinated by UNESCO, and supported by other agencies such as UNICEF and the World Bank, it has pushed for international aid and policy reform targeted to universalise access to education as well as to strengthen quality in the functioning of educational institutions. The inception of this grand initiative has to do with the high expectations put on the international order that was to overcome Cold War tensions in the early nineties, when the initial period of EFA started. Although by 2000 multi-lateral reviews openly revealed that the balance of the prior decade had been extremely poor, the consortium decided to launch a second, longer phase in order to make significant progress in fifteen years' time. Recent monitoring reports notice that this second edition was successful in attracting funding and imprinting a positive trend on indicators in the beginning, but later on neither budgeting nor effective advancement have been sound enough (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2014). Remarkably, an exploration of the interplay of divergent political interests, which were pursued by means of uneven power resources at the national and global scales (Verger, Novelli, & Altinyielke, 2012), may suggest crucial insights on the inconsistency and contradictions of the initial political will. This analysis of education is inspired in a wide-ranging approach to politics and economics which is often labelled as political economy.

An overview of the indicators of Brazil and the Philippines in Google Public Data Explorer tells the same story repeatedly. Brazil was in a worse position by the seventies and eighties but significantly outperformed the Philippines after the launch of EFA. For instance, table 1 summarises the trend of a variable which is particularly sensitive to the situation of intermediate countries like Brazil and the Philippines. Table 1 provides an estimate of the expected years of schooling of children and their average probability to access education and remain in the system during the compulsory years. In 1980 Brazil scored slightly below the high human development countries whereas the Philippines scored slightly above. Over time Brazilian children gained 3.2 years, thus becoming a country of high human development in education, but the expected years of schooling for Filipino children remained at the same level. Although none of them could attain 16.3 years, unlike very high human development countries, disparate progress is apparent when comparing these two countries.

Table 1. Expected years of schooling (of children)

	Very high human development countries	*High human development countries*	*Brazil*	*Philippines*
1980	13.2	10.3	9.9	10.4
1990	14	11.2	12.2	10.7
2000	15.4	12.3	14.2	11.4
2005	15.8	13.1	14.2	11.6
2006	15.9	13.3	14.2	11.5
2007	16	13.3	14.2	11.5
2008	16.1	13.6	14.2	11.7
2009	16.2	13.8	14.2	11.7
2010	16.3	13.9	14.2	11.7
2011	16.3	13.9	14.2	11.7
2012	16.3	13.9	14.2	11.7

Source: UNDP (2014)

In the following sections a correlation between external influence on education policy, on the one hand, and endogenous transformations impinging on development, on the other hand, will be observed in Brazil and the Philippines. The objective of this exercise is basically to highlight the complex phenomena that have been playing a role in the stretch and the impact of EFA.

These cases are viewed as systems in methodological terms (Steiner- Khamsi, 2012, p. 12). That is to say, when looking at development it is not sensible to reduce countries to the role of single units for measure. Statistical measures have to do so in order to produce comparative figures, but this operation can neither delete nor

capture two features of the social structuring of a country. First, countries are bounded systems because they include an array of social phenomena that interact with one another. The very limit of these systems has to be carefully documented in each case. Thus, in Brazil in 1988 Education for All coincided with democratisation and regional cooperation in the making of the Southern Common Market, MERCOSUL. In the Philippines, EFA also arrived immediately after democratisation in 1986 as well as an increasing push for regional collaboration in the Asian Pacific Economic Cooperation. However, boundaries have not been constructed in exactly the same way in both cases, since regional cooperation is significantly stronger and more significant in Latin America.

Second, human agency does not reproduce the same pattern everywhere but produces varying webs of causes in different countries. In this vein, while political actors have built a complex, multi- level coalition gathering sub-national and national governments, international agencies and social movements intervening in education in Brazil, in the Philippines the crucial steps in educational policy-making have depended on the interaction between international donors who implemented their projects and the national government. This is not the only factor of the diverging trends in educational development, nor can international agencies be blamed as the sole responsible agents for this disparate political conjunctures, but the observation of recursive causal links between the building of a coalition addressing different layers of governance and the correlative progress in schooling and international tests of learning certainly points at a critical event in Brazil. In other words, an excessive confidence in the method of conditioned coordination normally adopted in the Philippines should be carefully revised from several angles, at least those addressing global issues on development, nation-building and the capacities of the civil society.

POLICY TRANSFER AND INSTITUTIONAL BOUNDARIES WITHIN THE STATE

A number of writers are accumulating evidence of the strategic inspiration of the international circulation of educational policies, the variegation of transfer processes and their impact on the structure of states (Dale, 1999; Steiner- Khamsi, 2004, 2010, 2012). Definitely, the most salient finding of these studies states that policy-makers make use of foreign policies regardless of any evidence on their effectiveness. Their frequent claims about the alleged empirical reasons that underpin their priorities are largely rhetoric, both because conclusive data are not available and because their reasoning is more concerned with endorsing recommendations than testing causal beliefs. Whatever the intrinsic qualities of a given best practice, the contextual political interplay sets the main reason for decision-makers to adopt it (Steiner-Khamsi, 2012). A rigorous analysis of the drivers of educational development cannot rely on establishing a list of policies that work. Rather, a more advisable approach consists of spelling out the interests and strategies of the agents who participated in the social transformations that eventually fostered or hindered the attainment of EFA goals.

Some typologies have distinguished economic and political types of policy diffusion (Dobbin et al., 2007) and educational policy transfer (Dale, 1999; Steiner-Khamsi, 2010). The former one induces governments to adopt policies as a condition to receive international funding. For instance, when attempting to solve the debt crisis of the eighties and nineties, the World Bank asked many governments to concentrate their scarce resources on funding primary education. This was a mandatory condition these governments had to fulfil if they were to become eligible for a loan. The latter type consists of international agencies and think tanks actively disseminating their recommendations so that policy frameworks are defined internationally. Thus, governments are likely to draw on these policy frameworks in order to look for available solutions to their most imminent problems. The very diffusion of EFA has followed this pattern in most countries.

When they investigate this topic, researchers normally observe some significant impacts on the structure of states. The specialised literature has noticed that international policy regimes reinforce the executive branch of government, and has realised that transnational networks of officials and consultants are increasingly influential in such terrains as the military, trade or central banking (Jayasuriya, 2008; Sassen, 2006). Unsurprisingly, analogous changes in the boundaries of the educational sector and the appearance of professional networks have been documented in education policy-making (Robertson, 2011; Steiner- Khamsi, 2010).

A comparative analysis of EFA plans in Brazil and the Philippines (and elsewhere) has to inquire whether the main policies have been borrowed and transferred, and if they have, whether financial conditions or discursive elaboration have been at stake. Such an analysis also has to argue for the influence of these external forces vis-a-vis the endogenous forces of the 'developmental state'. This concept indicates that the stability of bureaucratic planning by means of regular procedures, the intensity of nation- building after de- colonisation and anti-Communist dictatorships backed by the US, and the systemic reaction of Asian small nations to vulnerability and insecurity have dramatically contributed to human development. Although neither of our two countries is a pure illustration of this process, unlike the Asian Tigers, some symptoms of the developmental state can be identified in their recent history (Castells, 1998; Evans, 1992; Doner et al., 2005; Filgueira, 2009; Kang, 2002).

This analysis has to show which specific actors decided to stand for an international recommendation and actively attempted to put pressure on governments to follow it, or tried to convince national leaders and national public opinion that their proposal was particularly rewarding. In Brazil, UNESCO, UNICEF, the Ibero American States Organisation (OEI), the Federal Government, the national coalition of the Global Campaign for Education and the business-friendly All for Education (Todos pela Educaçao) coalition have been playing this role during the most recent decades (Rambla, 2012). In the Philippines, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have been deeply involved in designing the institutional scaffolding of the country's education system (Reyes, 2009).

The exploration of connections between types of policy transfer and transformations of the state invites us to be aware of institutional boundary-making. Currently, this research topic is motivating the main critiques to the assumption that education systems are mostly national and have a clearly defined institutional boundary (Dale & Robertson, 2007). Not only is evidence of supra-national influences accumulating but diverging boundaries are also being observed between education, economic and social policy. For example, when the World Bank recommended that governments concentrate on primary education, they were reducing the institutional domain of public education by subordinating decisions to financial stability. Similarly, when this donor decided to ask its beneficiaries to tighten social benefits to family commitment with children's school attendance, it blurred the distinction between education and social policy. The finding that these boundaries are often being displaced is well-known in policy studies (Sassen, 2006), particularly in education policy studies (Robertson, 2011).

Thus, if policy borrowing and transfer impinge on state structures by determining the institutional limits of education, different types of transfer may provoke contrasting effects on these boundaries. Crucial to the comparative appraisal of Education for All in Brazil and the Philippines is the observation that external influence on the education policies of these countries arrived by different types of policy transfer and imprinted quite different boundaries on the education sector. In Brazil, the ideas actively promoted by UNESCO were widely accepted in order to design and implement National Education Plans, as required by the 1988 Constitution. Besides prioritising certain issues, these ideas also favoured the alignment of education with the health system in the vein of cooperative federalism (Arretche, 2010). Conversely, in the Philippines the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and other international donors have been pushing for programmes that build managerial capacity and expand private education, which have been mostly implemented with their financial support. The outcome has been a plethora of 'projectized reforms' whose durability depends on the availability of external funding and whose general coherence is extremely problematic (Maca & Morris, 2012).

The former correlation between foreign influence and domestic institutional arrangements retrieves the logics of explanation based on mechanisms. Instead of a general law binding the same types of transfer with the same institutional differentiation everywhere, my point is that diverse types of transfer may fashion particular institutional boundaries in particular contexts. Certainly, here this approach remains sketchy because it is only pointing at a likely regularity that still has to be defined in a more formal way and researched in a larger sample of contexts. Mechanisms are structures of causes that may be observed repeatedly to the extent they are activated by social agency in specific conditions. However, social methodologists have proposed some ways of using this intellectual tool to conceptualise and scrutinise social processes (Elster, 2007; Tilly, 1984, 2001). If their action is finally identified in both progress and setbacks of educational development,

future policy designs may take them into account in order to foster well-grounded positive synergies as often as possible.

EFA PLANNING AND POLICY TRANSFER IN BRAZIL

Brazil has shown significant improvement in the main EFA goals. A dramatic rise of enrolment in primary and secondary education has reduced the number of out-of-school children. Although the proportion of over-age enrolment due to grade repetition is noticeable, the trend has decreased since 2000. Shortcomings in academic performance are huge, not least because more than half of the studying populations cannot attain the basic competencies. However, both national (INEP, 2012) and international (OECD, 2013) examinations show significant advancement, particularly in the reduction of this very high proportion of low-performers. Nevertheless, despite these symptoms of progress, it is unlikely that Brazil will finally meet the EFA goals by 2015, since early childhood care and education is clearly insufficient, a small share of children are still excluded from primary education, initiatives targeted at providing life-skills to young people after compulsory school leaving age remain underdeveloped, and adult literacy is advancing very slowly (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014a). For the last years UNESCO (2008) has not dropped a disappointing question mark about the capacity of the country to achieve the goals.

The Brazilian Federation has included education among the basic rights enshrined by its 1988 Constitution, and has experimented with an array of solutions to implement the corresponding policies. Mostly, the Constitution requires the government to implement a National Educational Plan each decade. In the nineties the Right-wing Cardoso Administration introduced a very restrictive definition of basic education in the 2001–2011 National Educational Plan—including exclusively the commitment to universal primary enrolment. This reform had to comply with the requirements of a Structural Adjustment Programme run by the International Financial Institutions, mostly the World Bank. But simultaneously, a coalition of teacher unions and social movements looked for the support of other international agencies such as UNESCO and EFA in order to vindicate a more ambitious understanding of education. This coalition became the national branch of the Global Campaign of Education when this transnational movement was launched so as to monitor the effective progress of the second edition of EFA, and put pressure so that governments and international organisations would commit to the principles of this initiative.

Over time, three policy innovations have widened the objective, gradually displacing this narrow understanding toward a wider one. Firstly, in 1996 the Cardoso Administration established a Federal fund to compensate for budget shortcomings affecting primary education in the poorer municipalities and states of the Brazilian Federation, where these three levels of government are responsible for education. This fund conditioned subsidies to an effective commitment of sub-national authorities to invest all the necessary resources so that primary enrolment increased in either their

region or their locality. In 2006 the Left-wing Lula Administration expanded the reach of the Federal fund so that it provided support to lower-secondary education too (Frigoto & Ciavatta, 2003; Ramos & Giorgi, 2011).

Secondly, in the late nineties a handful of municipalities and states started to deliver a social benefit to mothers whose income did not attain the poverty level, conditional on an actual, regular school attendance and vaccination of their offspring. Afterwards, these conditional cash transfers were scaled up to configure the Federal *Bolsa Familia* (i.e. family allowance) programme. Many evaluations have noticed its positive effects on enrolment and the decline of child labour (Farrington & Slater, 2006).

Finally, in 2007 the second Lula Administration launched a Plan for the Development of Education (PDE) that integrated a variety of former initiatives. PDE conveyed a strong commitment to extend educational progress beyond the objectives of the national plan that had been approved six years before. A large consultation process was also initiated so that the design of the national plan for the next decade was discussed at the local and state levels. In the end, a final, nationwide conference was held in Brasilia in 2010 (CONAE, 2010). The resulting design sets objectives affecting early child education and training, upper secondary education, vocational education and training, and higher education. Their attainment is continuously monitored by means of the Index of the Development of Basic Education, which looks at the rates of enrolment and the average scores in standard tests (INEP, 2012). Provincial and municipal governments are also designing, implementing and evaluating their plans for the development of education. Despite terminological variation due to contrasting ideological inspirations, the bulk of their objectives are aligned with the Federal plan. Active participation of the civil society has supported these initiatives in many municipalities (Sarmiento, 2005; Ramos & Giorgi, 2011).

The evolution of educational policy-making in Brazil strongly suggests that the Federal government has acquired a sound political capability consisting of coalition building at the scales of sub-national, Federal and international governance. In fact, the progressive extension of the objectives of plans has intermingled with the making of this coalition. Firstly, the inclusion of lower secondary education in the Federal fund was a vindication of the main teachers' union and the national branch of the Global Campaign for Education (GCE). Secondly, the creation of the Bolsa Familia social benefit recognised the policy innovation carried out by many municipal governments (most of them headed by Lula's political party) and also responded to a demand of these two advocacy groups. And thirdly, besides the teachers' union, the national branch of the GCE, and local and regional governments, a variety of political players was invited to the consultation of the new plan designed and discussed between 2007 and 2010. Remarkably, the business-friendly All for Education network joined the general consensus at that moment. This network is led by a group of corporations, and stands for improving enrolment and performance by carefully monitoring the effectiveness of schools and establishing public- private partnerships between schools and business. Although the teachers' union complains

about the participation of All for Education, so far both of them are included in the same general consensus.

In a similar vein to the union, the Brazilian GCE has succeeded in convincing the government to underpin public education with a sophisticated index of parity. It has commissioned research in order to estimate a cost-related index of quality in education (CAQi) that has been formally approved for the government as an official tool for budgeting. This index not only takes into account the basic demographic data but also special psychological and physical needs as well as the socio-cultural needs of Afro-Brazilian, indigenous and rural populations (Eickleberg, 2012).

Both the government and these civil society organisations claim that educational planning is inspired in both Education for All and the Ibero American Educational Goals (Ministerio da Educaçao, 2008; CONAE, 2010). Although UNESCO is not convinced that EFA goals will be met, the official confidence in following the guidelines of this international agency was pervasive in the interviews I conducted and the meetings I attended during research on the topic between 2009 and 2011 (Rambla, 2012). Moreover, the government, UNESCO and the national office of the Ibero American States Organisation (OEI, a commonwealth of countries supported by Spain and Portugal) agreed that the same philosophy guided the Ibero American Educational Goals, which are to be achieved by 2021 (OEI, 2010).

Education is a cornerstone of the public self-image of Brazil. Since the Federal definition of the country distributes institutional responsibility between local, regional and Federal authorities, such policies as common funds, a scheme of cash transfers conditional on school attendance, and strategic planning with public data openly reporting on all the administrative units have become a guarantee of nation- building (CONAE, 2010). Political consensus is far from stable, and the political conjuncture is rapidly changing compared to the time of my interviews, but the general reliance on the potential of this approach has not been eroded. On the contrary, widespread doubts on the availability of resources to implement it effectively are triggering mobilisation. In a nutshell, experts in the multi-level government conclude that the country is elaborating its own model of ‘cooperative federalism’, which has also been systematically applied to other policy areas as the public health system (Arretche, 2010).

EFA PLANNING AND POLICY TRANSFER IN THE PHILIPPINES

One must be more sceptical regarding the statistical trends which are underway in the Philippines than the common perceptions of Brazil. The first section of this chapter already mentioned that the bulk of UNDP indicators rendered stagnant and insufficient patterns. Actually, the number of out-of-school children and adolescents as well as the volume of youth and adult illiterate populations has failed to follow a consistent declining trend since 2000 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 2014b). Problems with early childhood education, gender disparities and provision of life-skills also remain overwhelming in some regions (Maca & Morris, 2012).

Certainly, this is not the consequence of political inaction, because a whole set of reforms has been put in place since the peaceful democratic revolution that expelled Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos in 1986. In order to guarantee free public education, in 1989 the first democratic administration introduced the Government Assistance to Students and Teachers in Private Education (GASTPE) so that private schools also contributed to educational expansion. In the nineties the structure of the ministry of education was reformed to stress a clear distinction between the mission of basic education and responsibilities in the areas of vocational, technical and higher education. In 2001 the Governance of the Basic Education Act created the current Department of Education (DepEd) and introduced school-based management by strengthening the role of school leadership. These reforms were expected to overhaul the system by importing innovations of new public management.

The Filipino EFA Plan was drafted and sanctioned soon after these reforms (Republic of the Philippines, 2005). This plan expects to make every school better, expand early education, transform Alternative Learning Systems, involve teachers in continuous practical improvement, and adopt a 12-year cycle of basic education which was finally approved in 2012. Thus, it selects some of the global EFA goals as the national priorities, but does not make explicit reference to out-of-school children and progress between school years.

Later on GASTPE acquired a crucial role in the system. Initially, it was a public initiative aimed at "decongesting" public schools by delivering scholarships to some students from vulnerable socio-economic backgrounds so that they could attend private schools. In 1998 it integrated the financial schemes run by the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE), a private, non-profit organization which was paradoxically chaired by the minister of education (World Bank, 2011a, 2011b; Asian Development Bank, 2010, 2011). The Asian Development Bank is also providing extra funding to the extent that it understands GASTPE as a critical instrument to implement a 12-year cycle of basic education on the grounds of innovative financial schemes that afford the construction of the necessary infrastructure by using public-private partnerships (Asian Development Bank, 2011: 1).

Thus, GASTPE is not a standard programme relying on controlled school choice but a singular combination of parental choice and positive discrimination. Officially, its main goals align with the EFA plan in at least three ways. Firstly, this type of assistance aims at complementing over-crowed public schools with a new network of private dependent educational institutions. Secondly, GASTPE indirectly wants to contribute to the expansion of public education because it assumes that private education saves substantial resources that can be invested in the neediest areas of the country. And finally, this programme aspires to attract the support of varied private agents to the construction of a longer basic education.

Although it was not fully implemented until 2001, school-based management had been widely discussed in the Philippines during the nineties. So, it did not take long to start new local programmes that contributed to this decentralization in the areas of parental involvement in school funding and pre-school day-care programmes

(Guzman, 2007). Therefore, this reform directly contributed to the goals for school improvement and early childhood education as stated in the country's EFA plan.

Altogether with Australian Aid, DepEd decided to take advantage of this reform so as to pilot a strategy to cope with corruption, a problem deeply ingrained in the Filipino educational system. Their cooperation produced the Programme on Basic Education (PROBE) benefiting about 76,000 educators and approximately 3.7 million school-aged children in the region of Mindanao, one of the poorest in the country and ravaged by civil war for a long time. This initiative also endeavoured to counteract the main focus of corruption, which was detected in certain linkages between principals and local and regional authorities of DepEd, as well as in the selection of staff who could take courses abroad. By stating clear rules and procedures, the programme not only yielded a higher performance of PROBE students (compared to non-PROBE ones) but also defined a visible set of primary tasks that were much easier to monitor (Reyes, 2009).

The World Bank is also assisting the Philippines to attain EFA goals by contributing to finance a conditional cash transfer scheme, run by the Social Welfare and Development Reform Project. The Pantawid Pamilya programme delivers social benefits to poor households who are able to prove their offspring attend school and have regular health checks. Starting in 2009, this benefit will at least be in place until 2015. The programme has been effective in targeting the needy, preventing infiltration of middle-class groups, and delivering basic services to its beneficiaries compared to non-recipients (Fernández & Rosechin, 2011). Due to the similar size of Pantawid Pamilya and some Latin American conditional cash transfers, that have been successful in crucial anti-poverty benchmarks, the World Bank expects a significant, positive impact of its current contribution with $100M. Collaborating with Australian Aid, it has commissioned an evaluation that has seen a real impact. The evaluators also propose the programme as a best practice for other similar initiatives to imitate (Fernández & Rosechin, 2011).

The Filipino branch of the Global Campaign of Education (GCE) has also joined forces with the official institutions to bolster EFA goals in the country. Compared to other GCE branches, it has gathered the support of a variety of small civil society organizations in most islands and regions; further, its internal cohesion is also reinforced by a fluent relationship with the teacher unions. It has managed to induce the government to adopt the Alternative Budgeting Initiative, which takes into account a variety of social conditions of students. The Filipino branch of the GCE has also convinced the government to pass an act to improve teachers' professional status, and the public opinion to be aware of the problems related to the difficulties of Education for All (Hoop, 2012).

Thus, the participation of the civil society has been relevant to underpin advancement toward the EFA goals with sounder budget criteria and better labour conditions for teachers. These contributions have also highlighted the positive feedback that all the former initiatives are producing. For instance, civil society input emphasizes that GASTPE needs the sort of transparency promoted

by PROBE. Teachers' conditions are also added to better socio-economic conditions of the poorest families who receive the grants of Pantawid Pamilya. And progress in both parental and teachers' living standards is likely to favour more robust school- and local-based management. International organisations also prove their interest in setting more transparent rules of the game by supporting GASTPE, PROBE and Pantawid Pamilya. They have proposed lines of reform to strengthen the accountability of private schools, curb corruption at the local level and provide social benefits according to objective criteria. But the social portrait of the Philippines is not convincing commentators of the ultimate positive impact of all these initiatives; on the contrary, there is a wide academic consensus that development is failing in the country. Apparently, the emergence of an institutional regime featured by 'projectized reforms' is blamed for this failure (Maca & Morris, 2012). Governments have been looking for the advice of international agencies so often that they have not been able to articulate their policies within a coherent and stable framework.

In sum, commentators search for the reasons of these shortcomings in the absence of key features that define the neighbouring 'developmental states'. First, they highlight that the relationship between business and government has been volatile, with different economic elites hoarding the bulk of resources depending on the political regime (Kang, 2002). Second, they notice that private corporations have gained such a broad autonomy in school management, the production of textbooks and quality assurance that they easily overlook the public good in favour of their private returns. And finally, they argue that national identity is so weak in the Philippines, where most respondents answer public opinion polls saying they would rather have US citizenship and live abroad, that the mutual reinforcing connection of the school curriculum and the sense of belonging repeatedly observed in Korea, Singapore or Taiwan is not taking place at all (Maca & Morris, 2012).

BRAZIL, THE PHILIPPINES AND TWO DIFFERENT WORLD REGIONS

The connection between foreign influence and domestic institutional transformations of educational systems that the former two sections describe must be interpreted with regard to concurring changes in governance in the respective world regions. Innovation in regional governance strongly reverberates in the key role of the Ibero American States Organisation in Brazil and the Asian Development Bank in the Philippines. In fact, countries are not isolated case studies but components of geographic constellations entailing relationships in culture, environmental challenges, geopolitical conflicts, public policy and other issues (Tilly, 1984). When some of them engage in innovative cooperation, their neighbours are logically affected in some ways. If the interaction between governments, business and civil society undergoes important changes in a country, it is likely that these actors will extend the range of these actions to its neighbours too (Jayasuria, 2008).

The contrasting role of the World Bank provides a telling illustration. Why was the Bank approach downplayed in Brazil whereas it kept its momentum in the Philippines? When this international financial institution endorsed Structural Adjustment Programmes throughout the world, indebted governments needed external loans desperately at the same time as they were reforming their economic regimes and their population was suffering increasing deprivation. This is no longer the case with middle-income countries like Brazil and the Philippines in the past few years. Their currency supply is large right now, and the links of their economic cycle with Western countries have been loosened during the series of recessions that started in 2008. However, although the economic situation of the two countries has been improving recently for the last decades, Brazil is significantly more reluctant to collaborate with the World Bank than the Philippines. These diverging attitudes respond to the varying strength of social movements and civil society organisations in the respective world regions. Remarkably, opposition to 'neoliberal' policies such as Structural Adjustment Programmes has become the leit motiv of Latin America's civil society. Not only a variety of social movements opposed these policies at the time of their implementation (Frigotto & Ciavatta, 2003), but in the years around the millennium these movements also wove a region-wide alliance to campaign against the Free Trade Area of the Americas, which was also blamed for conveying 'neoliberal' objectives (Saforcada & Vassiliades, 2011). And they succeeded in halting free trade agreements at the regional level. Since their victory was also associated with electoral victories of Left-wing governments in Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Venezuela and Uruguay, the Bank has become a symbolic reminder of the adversaries of those movements and these new leaders, and the political cost of sharing its perspective on anything has dramatically increased for most parties.

The position of the Philippines in the Asia- Pacific region has also contributed to the reception of external influences by the decision-makers involved in education in the country. Shortly after the democratic transition the World Bank issued an emphatic recommendation to experiment with private education by setting GATSPE. Reformers could expect to counteract the excessive power of authorities during the dictatorship by broadening the scope of stakeholders. A diversity of providers could settle a system of checks- and- balances that prevented schools from the corruption of those very authorities.

Thus, a nationally centred account of this reform makes sense at first sight. However, the importance of geography becomes apparent once the international diffusion of recommendations favourable to school quasi-markets is noticed. This approach gained momentum by means of complex international projections that mostly involved the US and the UK (Steiner- Khamsi, 2012), but also some Pacific countries such as Chile and New Zealand (Elacqua et al., 2006; Thrupp, 2007). The Philippines borrowed a policy of incentives to private dependent schools at the same time as they were being promoted in Chile, and competition between public schools was being stressed in New Zealand at an even higher degree than in Atlantic Anglo-Saxon countries.

FINAL REMARKS ON EDUCATION FOR ALL AND POLICY TRANSFER

When an international conference takes stock of Education for All in 2015, the general conclusions will hardly be satisfactory. Although progress was significant in the first years of the programme, afterwards both funding and empirical trends have lagged behind the yearly growth that was necessary for achieving the targets (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2014). In this context Brazil and the Philippines will present important policy endeavours to foster educational development, and maybe some positive improvements (mostly in Brazil), but an undeniable sense of frustration will pervade any comparison of the actual trends with the official goals.

The overview of these two case studies suggests a number of reflections on Education for All and policy transfer. To start with, it is obvious that initially the focus of public interest was too much restricted to enrolment in compulsory education, with early childhood education, literacy, life-skills and the possible difficulties with gender parity in some minority groups being largely overlooked. Although it is inevitable that concerns should be raised over the wide scope of these goals, their strong implications for human rights do not allow the debate on this consideration to be closed.

My specific discussion wants to add a couple of further comments to the general overview. To start with, it is plausible to open a new debate on the contribution of institutional boundaries to educational development. Both in Brazil and the Philippines governments, civil societies and international agencies have assumed that multiple actions deployed at different levels of government on primary and secondary education, social policy and (mostly in the Philippines) the private sector were likely to yield new progress by activating complex synergies. Although this general statement is coherent in logical terms, the paucity of the empirical effects of education reforms in Brazil and the Philippines invites us to define more qualified hypotheses about the components of these complex synergies, and then to think what programmes could eventually trigger them in a more precise way. At least, the difficulty in improving achievement of the most vulnerable children should be addressed in both cases with this precision, but it is noticeable than the connection between social policy and performance (besides enrolment) would be revised, and that the promise of a private contribution is not warranted in the Philippines.

Finally, the correlation between education policy transfer and the institutional boundaries of education cannot be overlooked. Despite common shortcomings, Brazil has recorded a sounder improvement than the Philippines. A comparative reading of the specialised literature on both countries suggests that the building of a multi-level coalition of social movements, governments and international organisations has played a positive role in their relative advancement of the country towards Education for All. Although they are not the only driver of progress, these coalitions have certainly been crucial for widening the initial goals and exploring new designs which were tailored to cater to the worst-off. Apart from the network of multi-lateral alliances in Brazil, a similar process may be observed in the Philippines, where the

national branch of the Global Campaign of Education has also collaborated with the government to move policy in new directions. However, the difficulty to overcome the negative consequences of 'projectized reforms' is bigger in this country. In fact, my comparison with Brazil suggests that a wider public debate and a wider policy framework might contribute to tackle this problem in an even more satisfactory way than the recent innovations that resulted from closer collaboration of the government with the civil society.

NOTE

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