Pontifícia Universidade Católica
do Rio de Janeiro

Anna Becker

The right to schooling

How the United Nations Understands and Promotes the Shifting Concept of Education

Dissertação de Mestrado

Dissertação apresentada como requisito parcial para obtenção de título de Mestre pelo programa de Mestrado Profissional em Análise e Gestão de Políticas Internacinais da PUC-Rio.

Orientadora: Prof Dr Andrea Ribeiro Hoffmann

Co-orientador: Dr. Alexandre Dormeier Freire

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Prof Dr Andrea Ribeiro Hoffmann

Orientadora

Instituto de Relações Internacionais – PUC-Rio

Dr. Alexandre Dormeier Freire

Co-Orientador

Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID)

Dr. Jana Tabak

Departamento de Relações Internacionais da Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro (UERJ)

Dr. Monica Herz

Instituto de Relações Internacionais – PUC-Rio

Rio de Janeiro, 16 de Setembro de 2022

Anna Becker

Graduada em Psicologia na Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ). Mestranda em Análise e Gestão de Políticas Internacionais pela PUC-Rio e Mestre em Desenvolvimento Internacional pelo Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies (IHEID).

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Abstract

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‘Education’ has become a key policy area both in nation-states and at the global level, particularly when it comes to the schooling of children. Although responsibility for formal education primarily falls to the state, International Organisations (IOs) have increasingly become involved in this field. This dissertation discusses the conceptions of education present in the United Nations through two of its main agencies with a mandate on the subject – UNICEF and UNESCO. A selection of the agencies’ reports are analysed through the theoretical approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in relation to a concept here called ‘traditional schooling’. This concept draws on authors that discuss how forms of education have been conceptualised and institutionalised as part of political, economic and cultural processes in Western Europe in the seventeenth to twentieth centuries, serving as reproducers of a certain social order. The dissertation conducts a historical overview of the emergence and dissemination of formal schooling, as well as the role of the United Nations in this process, and analyses UNICEF and UNESCO documents that refer to their vision of education, its goals, importance, actors and methods. It concludes that the organisations’ visions do not always align education’s goals, importance, subjects and methods, and although they frequently serve as promoters and disseminators of traditional schooling, there are dissenting initiatives that indicate there is room for other visions of education to emerge.

Keywords

Education, International Organization, United Nations, colonialism, UNICEF, UNESCO.

Resumo

Becker, Anna. **O Direito à Escolarização: Como as Nações Unidas Entendem e Promovem o Conceito Móvel de "Educação"**. Rio de Janeiro, 2022. Dissertação de Mestrado – Instituto de Relações Internacionais, Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio de Janeiro.

A 'educação' se tornou uma área chave tanto em estados-nação e a nível global, em particular quando se trata da escolarização de crianças. Apesar da responsabilidade pela educação formal ser primariamente do Estado, Organizações Internacionais (OIs) têm se tornado progressivamente mais envolvidas neste campo. Esta dissertação discute as concepções de educação presents nas Nações Unidas através de duas de suas principais agências com um mandato no tema – UNICEF and UNESCO. Uma seleção de relatórios das agências são analisados através da Análise Crítica do Discurso (ACD) em relação com um conceito auqi chamado de 'escolarização tradicional'. Este conceito é baseado em autores que discutem como uma forma de educação foi conceitualizada e institucionalizada como parte de processos politicos, econômicos e culturais na Europa Ocidental entre os séculos 17 e 19, servindo como reprodutores de uma certa ordem social. A disseração conduz um apanhado histórico da emergência e disseminação da escola formal, assim como o papel das Nações Unidas nesse processo, e analisa documentos do UNICEF e UNESCO que se referem à sua visão da educação, seus objetivos, importância, atores e métodos. Conclui-se que as visões das organizações nem sempre se alinham em relação a esses elementos, e apesar de frequentemente servirem como promotoras e disseminadoras da escolarização formal, há iniciativas divergentes que indicam que há espaço para a emergência de outras visões da educação.

Palavras-chave

Educação, Organização Internacional, Nações Unidas, colonialism, UNICEF, UNESCO.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

EFA	Education for All
GEMR	Global Education Monitoring Report
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
G77	Group of 77
ICFE	International Commission on the Futures of Education
IO	International Organisation
NIEO	New Economic World Order
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

1. Introduction

The educational institution is possibly the most extensive of all, because it aims to encompass all children; in other words, all of the population, almost since birth. 'Education' is a key policy area in nation-states and at the global level, its formal and compulsory dimension being deeply rooted in the history of the Western world since the Enlightenment, and becoming enshrined in the international sphere of the modern world through the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. National states and the international community have been devising and implementing measures to ensure that all children and young people in school age are enrolled in a school, complete its cycle successfully, and achieve the expected outcomes. Although responsibility for formal education primarily falls to the state, International Organisations (IOs) have increasingly become involved in this field. As globalisation advances, education becomes more internationalised, and so do debates over its norms, standards, expected outcomes, common language, and others. International organisations are important actors in this debate as they increasingly elaborate and implement new approaches and policies. In this regard, the United Nations (UN) is a key player when it comes to the production and dissemination of global norms in this field, particularly through two of its agencies with a mandate on education – UNICEF and UNESCO.

The importance of 'education' is widely agreed upon in the UN and its agencies' documents and campaigns, which are disseminated throughout the world. However, it is not often described in detail what this concept of education and education for children entails; or at least, its definition is considered to be implicit when the agency portrays its actions to promote it. The dissemination of this idea at the global level is, however, neither implicit nor given, but part of a historical process involving multiple actors and contingencies. Despite attempting to achieve commonly accepted international norms, the concepts put forth by the United Nations and its agencies are not universal, but located and disputed.

Both inside nation states and in the international sphere, education is often equated with formal schooling. Although neither concept is clearly defined, references to 'education' overwhelmingly relate to 'schooling', and the two are often used as synonyms. This happens despite the fact that education is a process that can take on diverse forms and may occur in any setting – education and schooling are neither synonymous nor closed and exclusive concepts. The form of education ascribed to schooling institutions is specific and characteristic of this setting but not exclusive to it. In other words, the form of education that is usually present in schools is a way of conceptualising and delivering it that is not exclusive or limited to one place or organisation. It is an intersubjective structure that informs what the purposes of education should be, how they can be achieved and assessed.

The establishment of a single form of education as hegemonic, to be guaranteed (and enforced) as a human right, emerged among historical, political, economic and cultural factors. Thus, discussing education internationally also means examining formal education systems, how they have been embedded in the nation-state and considered an essential and desirable part of society – especially considering the increasing globalisation of efforts to guarantee this right.

Considering that the United Nations is part of this process, its defence of education is likewise neither given nor natural, and should be subject to analysis. Agencies responsible for education such as those discussed in this dissertation have had internal debates over different forms of education throughout the years. Today, with growing calls for reform in this field, it is possible that the debate over different forms of schooling may gain newfound importance. Investigating international agencies' multiple and shifting understandings of this fundamental

concept is therefore key to considering how they put forward their own norms and recommendations, which in turn trickle down to (and occasionally up from) states, education systems and classrooms.

With these issues in mind, this dissertation will discuss the conceptions of education present in the United Nations through two of its main agencies with a mandate on the subject – UNICEF and UNESCO. This investigation comes in light of a perceived lack of a clear definition by the author of what education means – which is key to establishing what it aims to achieve, and how – in contrast with the great importance attributed to it by these organisations and the UN in general. Considering the complex and multifaceted character of 'education' in general, but the often narrow definition of it in formal school settings, this dissertation aims to unpack the concept of education in the UN by positioning it in history and connecting it specific social and political settings. This allows the author to then analyse how the two UN agencies employ this concept considering their placement in these historical processes.

To conduct this analysis, the dissertation describes a specific form of conceptualising and practising education that has been established in the formal school, here named as 'traditional schooling'. The concept draws on authors that discuss how forms of education have been conceptualised and institutionalised as part of political, economic and cultural processes in Western Europe in the seventeenth to twentieth centuries, serving as reproducers of a certain social order. To explore the placement of the UN agencies in this discussion, it will articulate a selection of the agencies' reports with the 'traditional schooling' concept. The methodological approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) will be employed as a methodological strategy that can provide insights on the articulations between the agencies' narrative and its approach to education.

The dissertation begins by elaborating on its objective and research questions, in section 2, followed by section 3, which describes the methodologies employed. Section 4 conducts a historical overview of the birth of formal education systems and their dissemination through colonialism, describes the definition of traditional schooling and its traits, and discusses the different approaches of UNICEF and UNESCO to education throughout their histories. Before delving into the analysis of the reports, section 5 briefly introduces the framework of traditional schooling used for the analysis. Section 6 presents an analysis of the selected documents from both agencies to explore their approach to education. Finally, the conclusions discuss what are the implications of the previous debates in terms of the UN's policies, programs and recommendations.

2. Objective and Research Questions

Considering the previously mentioned issues, this dissertation will aim to investigate the following questions:

- First, *what is the United Nations' understanding of 'education'?*
- Second, *how have these institutional positions and narratives towards education been constructed?*

These research questions take into account that this understanding was constructed by multiple forces, and is not single or homogenous across agencies or actors. However, it is possible to draw common meanings from this multiplicity that point to UN agencies' actions that will attempt to influence policy and practice in this sector. The formal education institution is engendered by relations of power and the construction of a certain social order. By promoting it, UNICEF and UNESCO take part in this process, and remain the two main United Nations agencies with a mandate on the formal education of children of school age, despite the growth and impact of other agencies and organisations. The emphasis on the historical perspective is given considering that the priorities of UN agencies shift and adapt to different debates and circumstances, and it is useful to explore if and how the prioritisation of certain approaches to education have occurred.

In turn, the organisation's understandings of education factor in the way it shapes its norms, recommendations and programs. Its outputs may have significant influence on states' policies or impact education directly through their on-the-ground programs (Mcneely, 1995). As such, this dissertation considers that there is a constant articulation between education delivery – or what concretely happens in the daily lives of schools – and the policy or normative spheres of IOs. Investigating these different understandings of education and their effects is a way to analyse one of the ways in which the UN and its agencies contribute to the establishment and reproduction of a global order, ensured, among others, through education, and what spaces there are for alternative views to emerge and/or be pursued by it.

3. Methodology

To explore its research questions, this paper will employ two main strategies. First, it will conduct an historical overview based on secondary literature of the formal education system and its main form of conceptualising and practising education, here defined as 'traditional schooling'. Based on that concept, a framework will be developed that displays the definition of traditional schooling in categories that will later be used to frame the subsequent analysis. Second, through the framework, an analysis will be conducted of two of the core, agency-wide reports produced by UNICEF and UNESCO each, based on the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) theoretical perspective. The documents were selected based on their global scope (rather than a specific country-level focus), their relevance to each organisation's principles and/or programming, and their representation of an agency-wide view or commitment.

The analysis of the documents stems from the assumption that, in International Relations, it is in the interaction of language that problems of governance are created and approached (Diez, 2001). For Campbell, "Discourse refers to a specific series of representations and practices through which meanings are produced, identities constituted, social relations established, and political and ethical outcomes made more or less possible" (2013, p. 234-235). This does not mean that discourse only refers to or is confined in language: instead, "Understanding discourse as involving the ideal and the material, the linguistic and the non-linguistic, means that discourses are performative. Performative means that discourses constitute the objects of which they speak" (Campbell, 2013, p. 235).

This means that material objects - such as the State, or schools, or the United Nations - are constituted and legitimized by a series of discursive practices that, combining the ideal and the material, give them boundaries, content and surface. Everything that is material is understood, defined, and, in that sense, created, through discourse. In fact, Campbell (2013) states that it is in discourse that operations of power, and the conceptions of identity and subjectivity to which it gives rise, take place. Policy-making, political decisions and development projects are not excluded from this process, on the contrary; for a certain topic to rise as an issue, as well as certain solutions to be considered adequate (and others inadequate, or ignored), they must fall within certain patterns of discourse that are consonant with the corresponding structures of power. For Foucault, "Discourse does not only have a meaning or a truth, but a history" (1986, p. 146). Saying that discourse is above all a history highlights the importance of the relation between the material and the symbolic: all discourse is shaped by and shapes power relations.

In that sense, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a method used in social sciences that constitutes a theoretical perspective on language as an element of material social processes (Fairclough & de Melo, 2012). It considers social life as an interconnected network of political, economic, cultural, historical, social practices, all of which contain semiotic elements. Thus, any element of discourse refers to its positioning in these structures of power (Ibid). CDA investigates of the different manifestations of discourse and the structures of power, dominance and resistance associated with them (Wodak & Meyer, 2009), In other words, CDA critically investigates social inequality as it is expressed, signalled, constituted, and legitimised in discourse (Wodak & Meyer, 2009).

Since discourse is structured by relations of power, in order to critically analyse a text through CDA one must conduct a thorough assessment of the social processes and structures which give rise to production of that text (Wodak &

Meyer, 2009). As such, it is important to thoroughly explore the historical processes that give rise to formal schooling the dominant conception of education that within it – hence the historical overview that precedes the analysis of UNESCO and UNICEF. The use of documents to explore the conceptions of education within the UN considering that document analysis is particularly applicable to qualitative case studies, particularly non-technical literature, such as reports (Bowen & Glenn, 2009).

In the case of UNICEF, the selected documents are:

- The agency's Education Strategy (UNICEF, 2019), which outlines the vision of their work for the following decade with challenges, goals and implementation methods. As the agency's main output on education, this is a valuable document to assess an organisation-wide view of education and UNICEF's role in it.
- The Investment Case for Education and Equity (UNICEF, 2015), a report which aims to promote investment in education by outlining its importance, current challenges, and benefits. This document can provide insights as to UNICEF's justification for the importance education and how the agency advocates for it.

For UNESCO, the selected reports are:

- The 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report (herein referred to as GEMR), UNESCO's yearly publication monitoring progress towards SDG4 and explores a different thematic focus each year. The 2020 edition is named "Inclusion and education: All Means All" (UNESCO, 2020), and focuses on the unequal distribution of educational opportunities and the barriers faced by some groups to quality education. The report indents to be the main reference for SDG4, which is a key tool for education governance today, and thus is relevant in the analysis of UNESCO's conception and priorities on education.
- "Reimagining our futures together: a new social contract for education" report (ICFE, 2021), product of an independent commission tasked with reimagining how knowledge and learning can shape the future of humanity. This report is part of a larger endeavour that proposes to jumpstart discussions on education in the national and global sphere, and thus is relevant for the analysis of UNESCO's approach to the subject.

Although neither document is officially authored by UNESCO, its hosting and endorsement of them are here considered as indicative of some level of agreement within the organisation of its concepts and ideas, seeing as both are meant to be global reports on the present and future of education.

After an initial skimming of the selected resources, a more thorough examination was conducted specifically based on the framework for traditional schooling and its four main components (goal, importance, subject and methods), as part of the content analysis process, which involves organising information into categories related to the central questions of the research (Bowen & Glenn, 2009). A subsection on each of these elements for each organisation is available in sections 6.1.1 to 6.1.4, and 6.2.1 to 6.2.4. In sequence, the "Conclusions" for each organisation (sections 6.1.5 and 6.2.5) explore the relationship between the documents and the traditional schooling concept, with the goal of assessing if and how the organisations reproduce or question it.

That being said, this dissertation faces the limitation of the impossibility of conducting interviews with members of the organisations that can shed light on the

internal disputes and contingencies that affect not only their approach to education, but the resulting reports themselves. However, document analysis has been widely used as a stand-alone research method, particularly when relying on prior historical and cross-cultural research (Bowen & Glenn, 2009). The analysis of the selected documents is not aimed at revealing a truth about UNICEF and UNESCO, or asserting a single conclusion on their role in the dissemination of traditional schooling. Rather, it will aim to ascertain elements that are present in the agencies' narrative and programming that point to the historical contingencies around education and traditional schooling, and assess some of the ways through which each of them approaches this issue.

4. Historical perspective

As put by Varela and Alvarez-Uria (1992), there is a tendency to put some institutions, such as the school, in an 'ethereal', almost eternal place, removing it from historical processes and political contingencies. Thus, "In any case, if the School has always existed everywhere, it is not only justified that it keeps existing, but also that its universality and eternity make it as natural as life itself, making questioning it unthinkable or unnatural" (p. 68, my translation).

However, leaving aside discussions on the historical contingencies that led to the establishment of this system is one of the factors that contributes to its unquestioned reproduction and reaffirms schooling as intrinsically positive. As put by Popkewitz (2011), with regards to the curriculum, for instance, "The study of curriculum as the history of the present is to critically inquire into the foundations of the present" (p. 17). It is thus fundamental to explore the history of schooling as an inquiry into the foundations of the present. In this section I aim to explore the circumstances that allowed for the birth of this model of education that is henceforth called 'traditional schooling', its establishment in the national state as the main form of formal education, its dissemination throughout the world through colonialism, and its enshrinement in the United Nations as a right, which further affirms its proposed universality.

4.1. The birth of traditional schooling

Although diverse forms of education existed in the European continent, formal education through schooling emerged and was established from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries closely linked to the emergence of the universal condition of childhood. According to Ariès (1965), two main concepts of childhood emerged in this period: one was characterised by 'coddling' and came forth in the family circle. The other came from

> (...) churchmen or gentlemen of the robe, few in number before the sixteenth century, and a far greater number of moralists in the seventeenth century, eager to ensure disciplined, rational manners. They too had become alive to the formerly neglected phenomenon of childhood, but they were unwilling to regard children as charming toys, for they saw them as fragile creatures of God who needed to be both safeguarded and reformed (p. 132-133)

Among the cleric, interest rises in young individuals as objects of moralising practices, and "Moralists will elaborate educational programs aimed at the instruction of youth as part of the new missionary context (…) A privileged catechumenate is configured: "childhood" (Varela & Alvarez-Uria, 1992, p. 4, my translation). Despite not having a chronologically precise delimitation, throughout the 17th century this condition will be attributed some defining characteristics:

> In general, the traits conferred to this stage are: malleability, from which derives its capacity to be modeled; frailty (later immaturity) justifying its trusteeship; roughness, deeming necessary its "civilization" (...) and the nature in which reside the seeds of vices and virtues – which in the case of more severe moralists is converted in a nature inclined for evil – which, in the best of cases, must be channeled and disciplined (Varela & Alvarez-Uria, 1992, p. 72-73, my translation)

Although it never ceases to be a concept in dispute, due to a number of educational practices, 'childhood' in Western society will gradually become more stably defined in its age span, traits and needs. The modern conception of

childhood will be sustained by two other important institutions: the ‘family’ and the ‘school’ (Ariès, 1965).

The ‘child’ takes form as an unruly, uncivilised being that *must* be disciplined, but also as an innocent and malleable being that *can* be disciplined. The educational practices that eventually gave birth to the school were, therefore, designed as a form of governing this category, which can also be seen in modern societies:

> In turn, children’s high profile in modern society as the epitome of goodness and knowledge linked to the risks associated to “the” child’s undeveloped – or still uncivilized – stage has rendered them to different forms of regulation and training based on modern ideas of their development, protection, conditioning and innocence (Tabak, 2014, p. 41)

Despite the almost sickly nature attributed to the child, its importance, as stated by Ariès (1965), is placed on the future – not only its future, but that of society as a whole. This will serve as one of the main justifications for the importance of educating children: the safety and prosperity of society depends on them *becoming* adequate adults.

Thus, diffuse and diverse (and mostly religious) educational practices begin to take shape as the model of formal education that became institutionalised through the State. Up to the 19th century, although the Jesuit order had constructed a highly regulated educational system, national and regional forms of education varied greatly and had a high degree of autonomy. Educational institutions were organised individually and separately by each town: school founders determined their programmes; regional development determined the availability of schools, their curricular programmes and teacher qualification; and school attendance and choice of school were left to parents alone (Müller, 1987). Thus, “Only the organisation of educational institutions by the states since the second half of the eighteenth century was able to transcend confessional character and regional particularities in a long-term process (...)” (Müller, 1987, p. 16).

The establishment and expansion of schooling came in the period of industrial development. However, Müller (1987) disputes the notion that education systems were established to fulfil the needs of emerging industrial economies. Carl (2009) agrees, arguing that, in the nineteenth century, the growth rates of education and industry do not necessarily match. During the high industrial phase of European secondary and higher education (mid-nineteenth century to early twentieth century) educational inclusiveness (enrolments per age group) steadily rose, and much of the growth was concentrated in more recent and less prestigious schools with inferior status that was supposedly linked to their increased practicality – since they specialised in 'technical' or 'applied' studies (Ringer, 1987). Despite the belief of many contemporaries, there is no clear evidence that these contributed significantly to the economic development of the period (Ibid).

But industrialisation did bring about a massive expansion of formal education and the formation of a schooling system, since “Before the industrial age, provision of formal schooling virtually everywhere was scarce – dependent on tuition and fees, voluntarist, and usually limited to males” (Carl, 2009, p. 503). The church was the main provider of education, and with the majority of workers engaging in agriculture, very few earned their income through the written word. The growth of industry generated a growth of support for public education, resulting in the transformation of schooling from a limited provision to widespread and hierarchical educational systems (Ibid).

Thus, in Western Europe, from the mid-19th century to the early 20th century, a series of developments led separate, heterogeneous and fairly autonomous educational units to become part of a coherent and integrated system. For Carl (2009), "Industrialization breathed life into patterns of schooling that had already been set in the emerging market societies" (p. 504). This meant an internal codification and organisation of curricula, institutional structures and processes, as well as greater integration with other fields:

> The educational institutions of the West European states, which were very incompletely institutionalised at the beginning of the nineteenth century, were gradually transformed during the course of that century into state-wide educational systems, with increasingly codified and organised relationships among the school types (school system), among the university courses of study (university system), and between these two levels and occupational careers (occupational system) (Müller, 1987, p. 17)

This process of systematisation involves three main phases: system emergence, referring to unrelated developments that anticipate the later system (such as individual school types); constitution of the system, which entails the organisation, articulation and classification of all parts of the system; and system complementation, the rounding-out of the system through modification, integration or codification of different areas (Müller, 1987). In German states, for instance, the establishment of the *Abitur* in as a national standard exam for entry into universities, the granting of partial exemption from compulsory military service to secondary pupils, or the introduction of qualifying standards for teachers were some of the measures that "(...) gradually transformed distinctive regional educational structures into comparable units" (Ibid, p. 18-19). Similar processes took place in France and England around the same period, resulting in the modern educational system as we know it today.

The establishment of this coherent system entailed the capture and integration of several different forms of education into a more standardised and homogenous form of schooling:

> Thus in the phase if system emergence, an increasingly autonomous, internally directed, differentiated and comprehensive apparatus of educational administration succeeded in enforcing the implementation of such generally compulsory traits of the system as the structure of sequential age groups in place of flexible criteria of school attendance and promotion – and the standardisation of courses into nine-year and six-year sequences (Müller, 1987, p. 19)

In this case, therefore, the formation of the system postulated a reduction of diversity. This is not a simple and continuous process, however, but one that faces the complexities and contingencies of regional specificities. In Prussia, for instance, the new system of boy's secondary schooling, which fixed the place and rank of the several existing types of school, was particularly difficult to apply in towns that only had one local school. "A combination of small populations and a broad range of educational backgrounds within these populations required great flexibility in the schooling provided" (Müller, 1987, p. 42). This meant that the educational administration was continually forced to permit exceptional arrangements to allow schools to survive, and concessions became so numerous that they had to be integrated into a bureaucratic scheme (Ibid). The process of systematisation, although leading to greater homogeneity in the name of standardisation, is adaptive and has the capacity to include variations – although it only accepts them up to a certain point.

The systematisation and widening of access to schooling meant that "(...) by the twentieth century, the importance of schooling for both national economic development and individual mobility took on the status of an "education gospel" (Carl, 2009, p. 503). Schooling became a part of the government's social expenditures, made possible by the gains in income and wealth during the industrial age. At the same time, the emerging system became paradigmatic – its fundamental structures and inner workings are present in educational institutions up to this day (Müller, 1987). Aspects such as division into grades, student progression and evaluation, even curricula and pedagogical methods persist in the organisation of current education systems. Similarly, the perceived importance of formal education (the 'educational gospel') persists, with schooling gaining the status of an unquestionable ritual (Cannella, 2000).

Within this complexity, there are important points to consider on how this emerging system operates, what its effects are and how it is integrated with other social, political and economic processes in a system of social governance.

4.1.1. Traits of traditional schooling

As previously mentioned, the structures and postulates of schooling have become paradigmatic and persist to this day. Some of these include: universal and mandatory enrolment for children of a certain age; division into groups according to age; full-time attendance; authority of the teacher regarding curriculum and knowledge (Illich, 1972). These traits rest upon certain conceptualizations of children and how best to educate them.

To maintain its universal and all-encompassing character, the school must rest in the assumption that "Children belong in school. Children learn in school. Children can be taught only in school" (Illich, 1972, p. 13). Both Ariès (1965) and Illich (1972) point out how childhood has emerged as a distinct social category in Western Europe in a specific period of time, coupled with the establishment of institutions such as the family and the school. With this category, 'childhood' gained a specific character, nature, and specific times and places assigned to it – one of which is school. Thus "The discourse, promotion, construction, and implementation of education in our society has become a tradition, a *ritual*. Those who challenge that ritual are placed in the margin, are considered uncaring, non-democratic, not supportive of learning, children, and/or progress" (Cannella, 2000, p. 38-39).

Educational institutions of this period integrate Foucault's (1995) analysis of disciplinary institutions, part of the 'projects of docility' of the 18th century. In these institutions, bodies became objects of investment in new forms. Control was exercised over them as indissociable units, individually, infinitesimally; its object was the efficiency and internal organisation of bodies, rather than their signs or behaviour. Bodies were supervised in an uninterrupted and constant coercion in the processes of its activities rather than their results, and time, space and movement as was codified as closely as possible. "These methods, which made possible the meticulous control of the operations of the body, which assured the constant subjection of its forces and imposed upon them a relation of docility-utility, might be called 'disciplines'" (Foucault, 1995, p. 137).

For the author, the historical moment of the disciplines was when an art of the human body was born, directed "(...) not only at the growth of its skills, nor at the intensification of its subjection, but at the formation of a relation that in the mechanism itself makes it more obedient as it becomes more useful, and conversely" (Foucault, 1995, p. 137-138). Disciplinary mechanisms, operating in a

variety of institutions which includes the school, would exercise power over bodies so that they would operate in the desired way. Thus “Discipline increases the forces of the body (in economic terms of utility) and diminishes these same forces (in political terms of obedience)” (Ibid, p. 138).

This political anatomy can be seen in the schooling institution at its early days, first in secondary education and later in primary schools (Foucault, 1995). Aspects of the disciplinary regime are present in institutions such as the *colléges*, in France, where boarding became the most frequent educational regime, enclosing pupils in a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself, protecting the disciplinary monotony (Ibid). Schools partition, classify and rank bodies in time and space, eliminating the diffuse circulation of individuals. Each space has a function and assigned activities, avoiding idleness and ensuring productive control of time. Individuals are distributed by ‘rank’:

> (...) rows or ranks of pupils in the class, corridors, courtyards; rank attributed to each pupil at the end of each task and each examination; the rank he obtains from week to week, month to month, year to year; an alignment of age groups, one after another; a succession of subjects taught and questions treated, according to an order of increasing difficulty (Foucault, 1995, p. 146-147)

Students thus constantly move along these compartments, some of which mark a hierarchy of knowledge or ability, such as school grades. This organisation “(...) made the educational space function like a learning machine, but also as a machine for supervising, hierarchizing, rewarding” (Foucault, 1995, p. 147).

This also entails a clear distinction between pupil and master – the latter being given the authority to divide and rank the former. This important trait of traditional schooling has been named by Freire (1987) as ‘banking education’, in which learning is a passive process that happens through a transfer or ‘deposit’ of knowledge from one who already possesses it (in the case of the school, the teacher) to one who lacks it (the student). This requires knowledge to be (1) ethereal, meaning it exists outside of subjects (2) static, concrete, stable; a bundle of preconceived notions that adequately represent reality, and (3) neutral, void of political or power implications.

Through the notion of neutrality, knowledge valued by traditional schooling can affirm itself as universally applicable, since it is supposedly absent from political, historical, cultural or economic processes. Its static character also allows it to remain neutral. The fact that it exists outside of subjects means that for one to possess it they must absorb it, usually through transfer from a material or another person.

This process allows for the creation of a dichotomy between *those who know* and *those who do not know*. In the case of the school, it converts the student into an empty recipient that must be filled, often ignoring their insertion in a culture, a territory, a history. If they do possess knowledge, it is not the legitimate and/or relevant knowledge – hence the need for schooling and a process to fill up the vessel. Thus, another effect of these mechanisms is to establish a distance between legitimate knowledge – neutral, scientific – and illegitimate, ‘popular’ knowledge, which receives the status of superstitious or mediocre. Varela and Alvarez-Uria (1992) state that in the emerging schooling institution knowledge is considered personal property of the teacher: only he correctly interprets authors, establishes sources of knowledge, and ranks students.

> But what knowledge detains such omnipotent specialist? “Neutral,” “immaterial” knowledge, that is, knowledge separated

> from social and political life that not only has the virtue of converting into non-knowledge the vulgar knowledge of the popular classes, but beyond that, through mechanisms of exclusion, censure, ritualization and canalisation, impose a distance between truth and error (p. 86, my translation)

This, in turn, authorises *those who know* to intervene on *those who do not know* to provide them with this knowledge, since they, quite literally, know better. Thus, with the established dichotomy of student-teacher comes the capacity to classify and hierarchize pupils inside schools and among them.

The hierarchizing function of education is apparent especially in the differentiation of school types and students among them based on class, parent's professions, or occupational expectations (Müller, 1987). Ringer (1987) defines this process as *segmentation*, which is "(...) the subdivision of educational systems into parallel schools or programmes that differ both in their curriculum and the social origins of their students" (p. 53). Educational segmentation critically affects the way a society is experienced by its members, as "Conceptions of education help to define social roles, and social distances are measured by educational differences" (Ringer, 1987, p. 69).

Segmentation plays a role in dividing secondary education into more or less penetrable 'tracks', differentiated into more 'academic' and more 'vocational' ones. One way to interpret this is that "(...) the segments of contemporary systems no longer mark out subtle differences between small subgroups or elites *within* the middle and upper middle classes; instead, they legitimate and thus perpetuate the social differences between the upper middle, the lower middle and the lower classes" (Ringer, 1987, p. 60). Thus, the expansion of the reach of schooling did not mean a rise in mobility or greater equality, but could in itself serve to perpetuate social hierarchies: "In the rise of the new educational systems, social cohesion was central to the schooling directed to every child, whereas schooling's selective upper reaches ensured that educational distinctions grew in importance as markers of social stratification" (Carl, 2009, p. 504).

In Prussia, for instance, educational reform was not made to purposely limit students' expectations and prospects,

> But it did ascribe to the existing school forms a functional position in relation to other school forms, and it ordered all these schools in a social and educational hierarchy of curricula and credentials. The imprecision in the definition of existing schools, the variety of their social and educational goals, the flexibility of their curricula and course duration, were replaced with precise regulations for each school type (Müller, 1987, p. 39)

This allows schools to govern through (1) the creation and reproduction of social hierarchies based on educational differences and (2) the designation of different forms of education to different social groups. Illich (1972) likewise emphasises that differentiation in the "(...) hidden curriculum of the ghetto streets which brands the poor or with the hidden curriculum of the drawing room which benefits the rich" (p. 16).

In the early years of schooling, the type of education delivered in different institutions varied greatly according to social class. According to Varela and Alvarez-Uria (1992), schooling institutions meant for the lower classes had the goal of instilling in students the virtues of obedience and submission to authority: "This contributes for medical and pedagogic discourses directed at these classes to essentially adopt the form of prohibitions, while, on the other hand, for the more powerful classes they will have a more positive tone" (Varela & Alvarez-Uria, 1992,

p. 91, my translation). In Prussia and other German states, compulsory schooling for the lower classes was seen as favourable so long as it inculcated obedience and diligence rather than a desire to leave the agricultural or industrial workforce (Carl, 2009).

In the 19th century the lower classes were perceived by the bourgeois almost exclusively through the lens of danger and depravity, which served as justification for a series of interventions designed to combat practices seen as leading to vice, immorality and degeneration (Varela & Alvarez-Uria, 1992). In this context, “The school serves to preserve the poor childhood from this environment of corruption, rid it of contagion and the harmful effects of poverty (...)” (Ibid, p. 88, my translation). In industrial England, the immense social changes brought by the new system uprooted the new proletariat from their pre-industrial experiences and traditions – and education was seen as a solution for the perceived ‘disarray’ of their children (Carl, 2009). With the deeper class separation, “The conception and provision of education were, like all aspects of society, influenced by the different angles of vision” (Silver, cited by Carl, 2009, p. 506).

Inside classrooms, disciplinary mechanisms also arrange places so that “(...) those whose parents are neglectful and verminous must be separated from those who are careful and clean; that an unruly and frivolous pupil should be placed between two who are well behaved and serious, a libertine either alone or between two pious pupils” (Foucault, 1995, p. 147). The student becomes a privileged target for state intervention, seen as a potential capital that must be cared for, protected and educated to permit the maximum extraction of social and economic benefits in the future (Varela & Alvarez-Uria, 1992). Furthermore, these educational practices allow the school to alienate students from lower classes from the habits, traditions and culture of their own social class, atomizing and individualising them (Ibid).

For Illich (1972), the ‘poor’ are defined not only by their own state of poverty, but by the claim of bureaucracies for monopoly over social imagination, setting standards of what is valuable or feasible. Thus “Every simple need to which an institutional answer is found permits the invention of a new class of poor and a new definition of poverty” (p. 3). Lacking a certain number of years of schooling also becomes a determining factor of poverty, for instance. This creates not only the possibility of social hierarchies and classifications (which again authorises institutional intervention) but also a lack of self-reliance consistent with Foucault’s (1987) disciplinary institutions, since “Modernized poverty combines the lack of power over circumstances with a loss of personal potency” (Illich, 1972, p. 3).

The expansion of access to schooling was therefore neither meant for social inclusion nor led to it. According to Ringer (1987), even though reformers expected educational reforms to produce some upward social mobility, they did not expect graduates from lower classes to reach the highest positions in society. In other words, “(...) an increase in 'applied' schooling could be expected to lead to no more than sectorially limited forms of social mobility (...)” (Ringer, 1987, p. 61).

As put by Freire (1987), “The more the pupils are exercised in archiving the deposits made to them, the less they develop in themselves the critical conscience that would result in their insertion in the world as agents of its transformation” (p. 37, my translation). Thus, as a disciplinary mechanism of diminishing political agency while maximising functional capacity, schooling functions as a governance structure that captures, dissects, and operates on bodies to adequately integrate a certain political, social and economic system. For Illich (1972), schooling blurs the line between process and substance so that “The pupil is thereby "schooled" to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma

with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is "schooled" to accept service in place of value" (p. 3).

Carl (2009) points to four perspectives that explain the rise of public education in the industrial age: state formation, the rise of the western cultural frame, status attainment, and democratisation. The first, also mentioned by Mcneely (1995), "(...) looks to the evolving industrial state in its efforts to forge national identities and legitimize the changing economic order through its leadership in education reform" (Carl, 2009, p. 504). The second suggests that public education developed to promote national union through the cultivation of a western cultural frame that emphasised "(...) rational individuals, humanized religiosity, egalitarianism, and universal citizenship" (Ibid), positing schooling as a constitutive factor of this society. The third, also shared by Müller (1987) and Ringer (1987), highlights the school's role in the reproduction of social distinctions through educational hierarchies. Finally, the fourth argues that the expansion of schooling came as an effect of the expansion of democratisation and male suffrage.

All these aspects point to the multifaceted role that schooling plays in modern societies. Educational systems played a role in emerging nation-states as producers of cohesion and reinforcers of social stratification (Carl, 2009). Every child quickly became a target for this project of socialisation into the new economic, social, and political patterns that emerged in the Atlantic world (Ibid). In short, "In the long nineteenth century, then, the result was systems of public education that contributed to the cohesiveness of nation-states even as they emerged to determine and legitimate new forms of social stratification in societies undergoing rapid industrial change" (Carl, 2009, p. 515).

This, as previously mentioned, this was made possible through the construction of the social category of the child as an object of discipline and intervention with a view of maintaining social order and constructing a desirable future. It is important to note, however, that although childhood itself is determined as an uncivilised, weak, fragile being who must be disciplined and steered in the right direction, it is not a homogenous category: not all childhoods are the same, and different childhoods will be subject to very different forms of governance. Outside the newly born nation-states, in their ventures across the American, Asian and African continents, schooling was also eventually instituted. Although schools in colonial settings structurally mirrored its European origins, its goals and practices differed in key aspects, discussed in the following section.

From this discussion, we note that traditional education rests upon a specific conceptualisation of childhood that is indissociable to the reproduction of a certain social order. Education as it has been established and practised in formal schools comes with a vision of the future for a society marked by hierarchies and social stratifications, with children being instructed in the – in the words of Freire (1987) – 'archival of deposits', to learn not only content, but how to operate in a functional and docile manner. This will be relevant to reflect upon the implications of the UN's defence of 'education', the importance given to it by its agencies, and what kind of future is envisioned to be achieved through it if left unquestioned.

4.2. Colonialism and the dissemination of traditional schooling

As previously mentioned, there is no single vision of childhood that emerged with the schooling institution, but several childhoods, in line with social stratifications, leading to different conceptions and practices of education. This is

particularly noteworthy in colonial settings, where the duality of the coloniser-colonised hierarchy leads to explicitly different forms of education reserved for each. Although forms of colonial intervention varied widely according to the metro-politan power concerned, according to Rist (2008), many practices presented today as new are actually fruit of a long-term trajectory into which colonial policies are inserted. To understand the implications of the traditional schooling paradigm today, it is important to also explore its role in the governance of the colonised, which is linked to its global dissemination and universal pretences.

Bhattacharya (2014) points out the two main strategies adopted by historiographers in the attempts to advance towards a global history of education: "First, they trend towards a diffusionist point of view that stresses the spread of ideas and practices – for example, pedagogical methods, patterns of textbooks or, at a higher conceptual level, paradigms in the philosophy of education – beyond national boundaries" (p. 27). The second, aggregative approach (…) puts separate national histories together and adds them up" (Ibid). The author points out the limitations of each method, emphasising the disputative character of global history and suggesting that the diffusion of educational practices cannot be explained simply by Western diffusion or by local adoption. Therefore, this section does not aim to establish a single history for schooling or to claim that it consists of a single model that has been disseminated in a centre-periphery fashion, but rather to explore the expansion of traditional schooling and the shapes it takes when it comes to colonial expansion.

The fact that the traditional schooling system has become mainstream and paradigmatic of formal education today implies its expansion and dissemination throughout the globe. In the European continent, education has had an important role in nation building, social cohesion, and the reproduction of social hierarchies. On a global scale, it holds an equally important role in governance and the maintenance of a certain social order. The belief that "Education civilised the man" (Hall, 2008, p. 778) made it central to the colonial project. Hall (2008) highlights the importance of education in the creation of a global world dominated by the West and the creation of colonial subjects: "Colonies were imagined spaces for the production of new societies, as well as places to deposit some of the problems of 'the old country'" (p. 777).

The author describes the belief by colonists that they held the knowledge that marked off the boundaries of 'civilisation' and 'barbarism'. Thus they instilled upon themselves the authority, ability and legitimacy to understand and act on behalf of the colonised. Having as a frame of reference the practices and beliefs of the colonist, any deviation by the colonial subject from their expected behaviour was considered barbaric, primitive, and dangerous. This is exemplified by Hall (2008) in the case of Sierra Leone, where

> Evangelicals thought enslaved Africans were victims of the 'circumstances' of slavery. Once freed they would become new Christian subjects – grateful, obedient, industrious and domesticated. On the contrary they found them full of demands and claims, and subscribing to dissenting practices which were almost as bad as African barbarisms (p. 779)

The central importance of education was strengthened by the perceived barbarism of indigenous Africans: "It was *the* route to civilisation, and a way to make African children, and African adults were often represented in childlike ways, into full human beings" (Hall, 2008, p. 779).

Lindmark (2014) points out that "The history of colonialism iterates the importance education had in the hands of the colonising power, which offered a

restricted curriculum to inculcate knowledge, values and attitudes deemed necessary to controlling the colonized." (p. 141). This is also seen in colonial Sierra Leone, for instance, where some children were taken to England "(...) to be trained in industrial habits and prepared to take civilisation back to Africa" (Hall, 2008, p. 781). It was hoped that English education would preserve them from 'degradation' on their return.

For Lindmark (2014), the colonised's curriculum was to be limited to the basic skills needed by them to enter the labour market, in addition to (and perhaps more importantly) values and ethics expressed in the form of teaching and educating students (what is often called the *hidden curriculum*):

> Thus the colonized were prepared to enter the labor market equipped with the norms and values essential to a loyal, diligent, conscientious working class. This ethical perspective was transmitted both openly, in textbooks and curricula (moral curricula), and informally, in the very organization of the lessons themselves (hidden curricula). By instilling virtues like order, precision, punctuality and obedience, schoolwork groomed students fulfill the demands of colonial society (Lindmark, 2014, p. 141-142).

Colonial education had a distinctive character even when it resembled that offered in the metropolis, since "By advancing the colonial power's demands for obedience and efficiency, education helped lay the groundwork for political dominance and economic exploitation" (Lindmark, 2014, p. 142).

Another setting in which these elements are visible is the United States, where "With the founding of the republic in the later eighteenth century, pedagogy as 'converting ordinances' was disconnected from its religious institutional settings to give *providential character* to the land and its people (*or at least certain parts of its population*)" (Popkewitz, 2011, p. 5, my emphasis). Pedagogic notions and educational values travelled across the Atlantic, leading to schools having similar concerns with teaching as an evangelising and calculated design on the soul. Education was a nation-building and moralising enterprise. Later on, with American Enlightenment, it became scientific- and logic-based as "The earlier nineteenth-century agrarian and pastoral image of society was now (re-)visioned in the urban-ness of the nation and an expanded educational system (...)" (Popkewitz, 2011, p. 6). The US's distinct national project embodied a cross-Atlantic social reform movement with the so-called 'social question' at its centre, which "(...) gave focus to the amelioration of the physical, social and moral conditions of the city through planned intervention" (Popkewitz, 2011, p. 9). The new social sciences would identify the causes of perceived detrimental social practices that violated the presumed norms of civility such as alcoholism, delinquency and prostitution, and devise interventions that produced like-minded, able and virtuous individuals.

Central to this project (in both the US and other colonial settings) is the notion of race and differences between races as basis for the governance of bodies. In the project of European identity, articulations of race as a form of demarcating and distributing human natures are already present in the mediaeval period (Heng, 2018). This is seen, for instance, in the representation of the world in the *mappamundi*, described by Heng (2018). The author states that locations outside Europe were defined by ethnography, "(...) with places being identified as the habitat of human groups made distinct by the attribution of traits to them that are notable by virtue of their difference from normativity in the Latin West" (2018, p. 34). As such, "Race is what the rest of the world has: Made visible and projected on a map through a human landscape, it indexes each vector of the world

according to its relative distance from Europe in human, as well as spatial, terms" (Heng, 2018, p. 35).

Integral to the political, economic and cultural expansion of Europe through colonial domination is the construction of dualistic, oppositional subjectivities between coloniser-colonised. In the case of children, medical and social sciences constructed the universal condition of childhood based on the Western world (Cannella, 2000) – and thus made differences tangible and measurable through scientific knowledge (Heng, 2018). The colonised is produced as the savage, portrayed as embodying some form of violence or brutality. The savage, then, is in need of assistance and intervention, due to their innate inferiority, but can also become dangerous, due to their innate violence. The need for education rises as a form of governance of a certain population in order to assure a desirable future for another. This led to the dissemination of educational practices, both religious and later secular and state-based, throughout colonial settings.

For Mbembe (2017), "The thematic of the qualitative difference between the races is an old one" (p. 64) and "The colonial idea and the racist ethos that was its corollary traveled along many byroads, one of which was education" (Ibid). In his writings on colonial India, Bhattacharya (2014) points out the many authors that have explored the cognitive authority assumed by the West, the design of concentration of knowledge production functions in the European metropolis, use of education as an instrument of cultural hegemony and the marginalisation of indigenous knowledge systems. The author concludes that "To the extent these propositions are generalizable, the discrete or separate histories of many colonized countries in Asia and Africa may be integrated on a theoretical plane as a system" (p. 31).

Lindmark (2014) discusses Swedish colonial educational systems established in Saami as incorporating elements that aim to create colonial subjects, such as "(...) isolation and surveillance; the significance of the teacher as a role model; an emphasis on diligence, obedience and compliance as fundamental virtues (...)" (p. 142). The author also understands this type of instruction from a colonial perspective, pointing out studies on colonial Congo that showed that similar strategies were adopted in different settings. Other studies about the Congo show that "(...) colonial educational history in the Congo allows itself to be read as Belgian history writ small. This characteristic extends also to the pedagogical orientation of the largely Catholic-oriented curricula, which emphasized moralization above knowledge acquisition" (Depaepe, 2014, p. 45).

4.2.1. Traits of colonial traditional schooling

Considering the history of traditional schooling, it is not unreasonable to expect to find its concepts and postulates in both colonial education and in educational systems today. The conception of knowledge as a neutral, observable and objective construct which exists outside the subject is still present in the schooling institution, as discussed by Freire (1987). The adequacy of each subject in the absorption of that knowledge will then determine their educational success, which will, in turn, have strong implications for their future. By assuming neutrality, this epistemology will try to exempt itself from any implication in the reproduction of relations of power and dominance, and also attribute the responsibility for any success or failure to learn to the object of learning – the student.

The assumed neutrality of the schooling institution's knowledge supposedly implies that students' insertion in a history, territory and culture will be irrelevant in

their learning process. However, in colonial frameworks, it becomes clear how these factors will be critical in determining their educational experience. The type of education delivered, the content or language of instruction, shows how students are evaluated according to their distance or proximity to an ideal of colonial subject – which, in turn, is based on the knowledge and qualities valued by the colonist.

In this context, the creation of a colonial subject includes a process named by Carneiro (2005) as *epistemicide*. It notes that colonial ventures did not only exploit and appropriate land or resources, but knowledge: "The genocide that so often punctuated european expansion was also an epistemicide: strange populations were eliminated because they had strange forms of knowledge and eliminated forms of strange knowledge because they were sustained by strange people and social practices" (Carneiro, 2005, p. 96, my translation). This process is vast, encompassing different systems, times and populations, and occurs with the intent of undermining, subordinating, marginalising or prohibiting practices and social groups that could threaten imperial or capitalist (or, during part of the twentieth century, communist) expansion (Ibid).

Through several mechanisms, epistemicide will become, "(...) beyond the annulment and disqualification of the knowledge of subjugated peoples, a persistent process of production of cultural indigence" (Carneiro, 2005, p. 97, my translation), a process which will determine the educability of each subject. The denial of the other's humanity, its appropriation into categories which are strange to it, the scientific demonstration of its incapacity for human improvement, the destitution of its ability to produce culture will affirm a racialized rationality that hegemonises and naturalises colonial domination. As discussed by Mbembe (2017), this will also produce a kind of knowledge about the subjects of this education, their territories, culture, and history, where "Civic pedagogy and colonial pedagogy were deployed in the context of a crisis of masculinity and an apparent moral disarmament. Beginning in the 1880s, all twelve-year-old students studied the colonial expansion of their country in their history textbooks" (p. 64). In this education,

> the African is presented not only as a child but as a stupid child, prey to a handful of petty kings who are cruel and fierce potentates. This idiocy is the result of the congenital vice of the Black race, and colonization is a form of assistance, the education and moral treatment for such idiocy (...) Colonization was viewed as a form of general treatment for the idiocy of races predisposed to degeneration (Ibid, p. 64-65)

This can also be seen in Hongler and Lienhard (2015) in their description of Swiss humanitarian interventions in the 'Third World'. Banking on the 'white man's burden' and the myth of the lazy native, these ventures positioned young Europeans as 'teachers' who had to educate locals, (re)producing colonialist hierarchies and creating a self-image for the Swiss based on those relations. Therefore, education can serve to reproduce and maintain racialized hierarchies, all in the name of the 'improvement' of the colonial subject:

> As testified by a wide range of historical studies informed by postcolonial theory, the degrading of 'non-whites' to pupils or children was an important element of colonial discourse, as it served to legitimize the presence of the 'whites' in the colonies as well as to affirm their supremacy (Hongler and Lienhard, 2015, p. 204)

Similar aspects can be seen in reforms in the US. There, the desire for a virtuous society led to criticism of the school curriculum and brought questions about the skills and dispositions that would enable children to become productive

citizens. However, questions about immigrants and race instantiated fears of those who threatened the presumed social unity (Popkewitz, 2011). Beliefs such as that some children were not sufficiently able to learn and would produce adverse effects on all others, or that schooling could disrupt social harmony for groups such as girls, permeated the period. Thus the newly founded country also saw efforts to intervene and civilise "(...) ethnic habits and traditions" (Popkewitz, 2011, p. 10), including through education. Thus, "The correcting of the ignorance and moral disorder of the city was placed into psychological registers of pedagogy that ordered the selection and organisation of the school curriculum" (Ibid).

Thus we have seen that colonial education for racialized populations is crafted in the image of the colonist, and that these populations are constantly evaluated according to their proximity or distance to this ideal. However, despite the attempt to inscribe in the colonised subject traits and knowledge valued by the coloniser, the former can never truly mirror these traits – in other words, equality between them can never be achieved:

> The logic of evolutionary progress by which colonizers justify their extraterritoriality and craft their right to colonial rule – is pronouncedly a racial logic, and exercises "the language of colonial racism". Racial logic of the evolutionary kind seems to promise (or even mandate) progress, yet racial logic's ostensible goal of a subject population's achievement of a civilizational maturity which will guarantee their equality with their colonial masters is never attained, but merely floats as a vaunted possibility on an ever-receding horizon (Heng, 2018, p. 38-39)

This is demonstrated by Hall (2008) in her account of colonial education in Sierra Leone. There, despite the belief by settlers that all could be civilised, their need to detail the barbarisms of Africa and other colonial sites succeeded in fixing representations of African difference and inferiority and disseminating them more widely than ever before. Thus, "They claimed universalism but practised the making of racial hierarchies, always alongside those of class and gender: this was a rule of difference" (Hall, 2008, p. 778).

There are deep continuities in imperial policies, articulated in several religious beliefs and political languages, but all dependent on the view that 'the West knows best' (Hall, 2008). The model of education crafted and systematised in Western Europe along the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is thus packaged, adapted and disseminated in these nations' ventures across other continents, even more strongly based on social differences and racial hierarchies. Today, educational differences between countries cannot be examined without considering colonial history and its legacies.

However, what we have seen is an enshrinement of education as a fundamental (and often unquestioned) human right and its solidification as a tool for several aspects of the governance of countries and organisations. Through the notion of education as a human right, it has been depicted as necessary to the fulfilment of individual basic needs. This has informed much of the research in nation-states as well as the world-level diffusion of related ideas and practices (Mcneely, 1995). It is in that context that international organisations such as the United Nations and its agencies arrive to take on a leading role in the dissemination of the rights established through international agreements.

4.3. Education as a right: the role of the United Nations

According to Jones and Coleman (2005), the inclusion of education as a concern was not a certainty at the time of the founding of the UN, largely due to the doubt of whether to establish a specialised agency devoted to the subject. Thus, initially, only UNESCO adopted education into its agenda, and other agencies such as UNICEF, the World Bank or UNDP followed in the 1960s. For the author, "(...) their entry into education as a multilateral concern in the 1960s was all to do with economic justifications of education; human rights figured nowhere, except occasionally when the language of rights was convenient" (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 26).

Three 'waves' or rights characterise the development of the UN's human rights thinking: political rights (freedom of speech, assembly and political association); second, economic, social and cultural rights; and the collective rights of peoples. Education was conceived as a second generational right, "(...) and has essentially remained as such, particularly in terms that see the universalising of education as a pathway to economic, social and cultural development" (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 25). Thus its recognition as an essential human right has related more to its material consequences for society than to other dimensions (Ibid).

There are several other issues that contribute to the inclusion of education in the UN's agenda. One is the notions of progress and national development, to which the United Nations' conception of education as a human right is inextricably linked (Jones & Coleman, 2005). In the second half of the twentieth century, programs of modernisation were often seen as strategies to thwart the spread of communism (Ibid). 'Development' became the chosen narrative and practice of the West to sustain and expand its influence through the ideas of concepts of progress, modernization and growth (Kothari, 2005). Not unlike the paradigm of traditional schooling, development conceived life as a neutral, technical problem, a matter of rational decision to be entrusted to the people with the specialised knowledge that allegedly qualified them for the task (Ibid). International organisations (IOs), particularly those with potentially universal membership, were instrumental to disseminate and establish a standardised theory of development (Mcneely, 1995).

In this context, throughout the twentieth century education has been progressively cast as a fundamental driver of national economic development, individual mobility (Carl, 2009), and social and cultural development (Jones & Coleman, 2005). This has been linked to, among others, the idea of human capital and the qualification of the workforce, and concerns about how educational investment could sustain economic success (Ydesen, 2019). This is consistent with education's foundational role of modulating subjects to fulfil a certain vision of the future, discussed in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. IOs also were fundamental driver of this, as "(...) the worldwide view of education as a crucial means to development and as a basic human right, alongside the remarkable expansion of education according to world models, has emerged under the aegis of international organization" (Mcneely, 1995, p. 484).

Another important factor to the inclusion of schooling as a concern in the global sphere is the growing importance of children in international policy. As seen in the previous section, the emergence of schooling is linked to the establishment of the universal condition of childhood. Thus "(...) articulated as naturally vulnerable and as an uncivilised becoming, the world child is assumed to require constant fostering through interventions, which are no longer confined to family or national services, but are (re)produced by international development, security and social

justice policies" (Tabak, 2014, p. 82). With the creation of international mechanisms as tools of global governance, such as the United Nations and its agencies, the child and their education gradually comes under the scope of international engagement. The importance of childhood and its prioritisation is almost indisputable and mostly seen as universal, de-politicized, transcending any and all political or ideological barriers:

> Children's rights are conceptualised by proponents as embodying a universal morality beyond state borders. First, conferring rights on children is viewed as recognising their moral equality with adults, thereby underscoring the universal moral worth of all human beings, irrespective of their situation. Second, the promotion of children's rights is seen as able to transcend international economic, political and social Divisions (...) (Pupavac, 2001, p. 96)

As such, children have become a key component of development programs, security policies and others, albeit usually without any subjecthood or voice in the elaboration and implementation of such policies. These rely on images about children, not children themselves, and "Those images concentrate easily around children as objects of protection and very much marginalise them as agents within the international system" (Ibid). This is premised on the conception that children are vulnerable, and as such, incapable of self-government – which is also important to justify the existence of the schooling system.

Pupavac (2001) argues that "Traditionally under modern law the possession of rights has been premised on the individual's capacity for self-determination: the extension of rights to different groups in society, working men, women, blacks and so on, was effectively de jure recognition of de facto (political) capacity to exercise rights" (p. 98). Thus, paradoxically, to achieve self-determination it is necessary for groups recognized as being able of self-determination to extend this recognition to others. She continues to say that "Critics have pointed out how making capacity a prerequisite for rights has excluded marginalised and weak groups in society, notably children — the very sorts of groups most in need of Protection" (2001, p. 98). In fact, the author claims that the human rights notion, cornerstone of the United Nations' work, is attractive for its supposedly pre-political grounding derived from human incapacity and frailty. Such conceptions serve an important role in governing any subject; in this case, children.

Along the twentieth century, the international children's rights regime gradually takes form – seen in documents such as the Geneva Declaration of 1924, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration of the Rights of the Child of 1959 or the more recent 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child –, and education is instituted as one of such rights, one which is vital to guarantee the protection of childhood. Thus the perceived importance of education (while used as a synonym for schooling) in international engagement has steadily grown as it is portrayed as a potential solution to issues of poverty, overpopulation, health, economic growth, sustainability and several others. It is one dimension of UN activity that has been rising in visibility and importance (Jones & Coleman, 2005).

In the context of the United Nations, two important organisations with a mandate on childhood and/or education are the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), which came about with the goal of promoting international cooperation in education, arts, sciences, and culture, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), responsible for providing humanitarian and developmental aid to children worldwide.

4.3.1. UNICEF

UNICEF's mandate initially included issues related to the aftermath of World War II, such as children's displacement, health, and nutrition. Since then, the agency has grown considerably, partly due to the "(...) irresistible political appeal of addressing the needs of children" (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 137). After the ease of the post-WWII feeling of emergency in Europe, UNICEF expanded to both other regions and other fields of work. Its interest in education and schooling gradually expanded, including formal and non-formal education, with the enshrinement of this right in a number of legal instruments (Beigbeder, 2001).

When education first came in as a topic, the organisation initially worked in cooperation with UNESCO (which had considerable policy influence at the time) and "(...) was grounded in assessments of how best agencies felt they could position themselves in a rapidly expanding and diversifying network of UN development programs" (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 143). Gradually the agency entered fields such as elementary education, agricultural education and vocational training that aimed to prepare the child for adult life. In contrast to UNESCO, UNICEF had an initially practical goal of supply of equipment and infrastructure, and even after moving on to broader concerns, maintained this 'aura of practicality' (Ibid).

Many disputes pervaded the organisation's approach to education, including its prioritisation compared to other areas such as health and nutrition or the form its educational policy should take. Despite beliefs by some that addressing drop-out rates, the relevance of the curriculum to everyday life and the quality of instruction was fundamental, from the 1970s until the turn of the century the agency was to target 'educationally deprived children', rather than aiming for the comprehensive development of national education systems (Jones & Coleman, 2005).

The agency had a brief interest in pedagogies and non-traditional schooling. According to Beigbeder (2001), "UNICEF's interest in informal education based on alternative pedagogy stemmed from reports presented by the International Council for Education Development in 1973 and 1974 to UNICEF's Executive Board" (p. 102). However, the agency later maintained that informal education schemes should not be a substitute for the mainstream educational systems.

The enactment of the Education for All (EFA) policy framework in 1990 stands out as a major commitment led by the organisation and followed by several agencies for the expansion of the right to schooling. In both this event and the International Year of the Child, UNICEF programming attempted to take on a 'whole of child' approach, although the 1980s had seen an immediate focus on child survival (Jones & Coleman, 2005). The spread of austerity policies led the agency to seek to address the impact on the most affected populations through the notion of 'adjustment with a human face', and "For education, no poor country appeared to be capable of achieving universal primary education in the foreseeable future if left unassisted" (Ibid, p. 160).

The agency's proposal of the Education for All approach came in the aftermath of both a successful 'health for all' approach in the preceding decade and the crisis happening at UNESCO, pointing to the need for new leadership in the UN (Jones & Coleman, 2005). In 1989, the heads of the World Bank, UNICEF, UNDP and UNESCO jointly announced their collective initiative for 'meeting basic learning needs'. In the subsequent EFA Conference in Jomtien, Thailand, UNICEF was recognised as a significant UN force for educational development: "Its abiding

characteristics were at the fore – its highly practical operations, its strong in-country presence, and its necessarily close association with governments, NGOs and public consciousness" (Ibid, p. 161). It also represents a shift in development discourse, previously shaped by the economic views of modernisation, which equated 'development' and 'economic growth'– and in which the role of education was to raise the productivity of the poorest so that they could be brought into the economic system (Rist, 2008). The growing human development approach saw its goal as expanding the range of people's choices, including access to income, employment, education, health and others (Ibid).

Despite its aspirations to be an agent of catalytic change and bolster of innovation, the realities of budget priorities initially meant UNICEF's rhetoric prevailed over its achievements, and the image persisted of UNICEF as a supplier of material aid.

> Fading were the days when UNICEF could merely dress up its practical operations in policy rhetoric. Its advocacy aspirations demanded of it a strong policy voice of its own. Shifting the emphasis in UNICEF education from supporting innovations to undertaking mainstream or systemic work also imposed a similar obligation (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 163)

This shift to a sector-wide approach clashed with the agency's original emphasis on pilot projects designed to meet a systemic need through exemplary local and small-scale initiatives: "It has not been so much a case of UNICEF education being at the forefront of new thinking about education, but rather having the in-country presence and operational flexibility to put new ideas into practice" (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 163). Following the commitments of the Jomtien conference girls' education, early childhood development and complementary non-formal education also rose as cornerstones of UNICEF's education commitments.

Another landmark in UNICEF's history that caused ripples in its education approach was the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1990, underpinned by intense discussions on needs-based *versus* rights-based approaches to child programming. With its widespread ratification by States, the Convention was strategically used as leverage to persuade governments to commit themselves to tangible and quantified goals for the turn of the century (Jones & Coleman, 2005). The organisation's shift to a rights-based approach in the end of the twentieth century was translated, in education, into the 'child-friendly school', which aimed to address the multiple factors preventing children from attending, remaining at or gaining from schooling, whether in the school itself or within its broader environment (Ibid). "Adjusting to the needs of working children, or to linguistic diversity, or to various kinds of discrimination, or to the impact of violence, or to the lingering effects of poor teaching in the past – were all regarded as fundamental aspects of the child-friendly school" (Ibid, p. 175).

The concept of child-friendly schools thus helped UNICEF turn its focus to the quality of education, aiming to provide sufficient scope for individual country programs to place emphasis in their own priorities according to their circumstances – contrasting with UNESCO, whose quality concerns addressed the functioning of education systems and learning environments as a whole (Jones & Coleman, 2005). UNICEF's focus included content (reflected in curricula and materials) for the acquisition of basic skills and child-centred teaching approaches.

Several disputes mark the history of UNICEF's entanglement with education: broader *versus* country-level approaches, a focus on immediate needs *versus* a pursuit of children's rights, the inclusion of childhood as a whole *versus* a more narrow focus on those considered most vulnerable. In education the same

conflicts are present, marking the dispute between an emphasis on perceived urgent matters and immediate needs – which somewhat limit the scope of the organisation's actions to the provision of materials and infrastructure – and a systemic, holistic view of education systems and the promotion of children's rights, be it through access to education or the pursuit of its quality. It is interesting to note that, despite being a children's rights organisation and thus approaching education through this entry point, UNICEF has concerned itself with educational contents and practices.

4.3.2. UNESCO

Although UNESCO's formal role as the UN's leading agency in education has never been disputed, there has been divisive debate about the translation of its ideals into practical strategies (Jones & Coleman, 2005). Jones and Coleman (2005) highlights its discursive role, stating that "Much of the story of UNESCO revolves around the manipulation and interpretation of symbols, of how understandings of education and its future can be understood at the global level" (p. 44). The organisation's establishment years were marked by a vague mandate, inadequate resources and a multiplicity of functions that made it difficult to put ideals into practice (Ibid).

In the immediate post-war period, the organisation's main mission was to promote international cooperation between States to develop education as a foundation for a unified and coherent postwar system. Following its establishment, there was an alignment of UNESCO's education program with governmental objectives to achieve universal schooling and articulate education with national economic and development objectives (Jones & Coleman, 2005). There was a disconnect between the myths and images UNESCO constructed around itself and the centrality of governments in the organisation's actual management, and ultimately "The establishment processes saw political pragmatism prevail uneasily and tentatively over principle" (Ibid, p. 51). A focus on literacy was embraced as a unifying matter and a way around the vagueness of the agency's initial mandate.

Eventually, the urgency of war reconstruction had given place to the more general task of raising living standards throughout the world and thus an equalisation of educational opportunity across and within member states (Jones & Coleman, 2005). This, combined with the focus on literacy, brought attention to former and current colonies. In that sense, according to Rist (2008), many of the broad themes taken up by UNESCO had been laid out in the colonial period – such as educational methods, textbook contents, vocational training and others – although there was little recognition of its legacies on the field of education.

Another concept that emerged at the time was 'fundamental education' – 'fundamental' in terms of the minimum knowledge required for attaining an adequate standard of living – aimed at children and adults deprived of adequate formal education systems (Boel, 2018). Rather than focusing on literacy, "The purpose was to enable communities to help themselves in order to achieve better and happier lives" (Boel, 2018, p. 164). The approach was later set aside, since countries wished to develop their formal education systems "(...) along western lines" (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 59)". 'Fundamental education' was considered compensatory and an attempt to formalise a parallel, nonformal approach that was loaded with skill formation, but lacked formal certification, which, in terms of an international order, was highly valued (Ibid). Thus, UNESCO set out to draw up educational planning as a cornerstone of its policy formation.

With the rise of the development concept and its global dissemination came a narrative that assumed a dichotomy between "(…) the ''modern'' and the ''traditional'', whereby the ''traditional'' culture, forms of social organisation, production and beliefs of the Third World are seen as outmoded and in need of being succeeded by more ''modern'', inevitably Western, attitudes and practices" (Kothari, 2005, p. 427). This notion is deeply rooted in Rostow's vision of 'stages of development', which namely refers to modernisation and economic growth. In this notion, societies range from 'traditional', "(…) a kind of degree zero of history corresponding to a natural state of 'underdevelopment'" (Rist, 2008, p. 95), to 'the age of high mass-consumption' characterised by American Fordism, industrial productivity and the welfare state (Ibid). The role of development practices would be to help these traditional, 'backwards' societies to transition into a fully functioning modern economy.

Indeed, "By embarking on unprecedented attempts to promote global development, the international community was sowing the seeds of a new kind of world order" (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 61). UNESCO wished to place itself at the centre of those efforts, closely integrated with the UN's development practices and aiming to mainstream the idea of education as an essential and indispensable tool for development (Boel, 2018). In this way UNESCO promoted its systems-oriented view of education, associated with its commitments to manpower and planning, and

> Much more importantly, by placing an absolute premium on locating itself and its views on education within development regimes, UNESCO was necessarily aligning itself with the global promotion of western schooling, justified in terms of modernist conceptions of state formation, nation-building, identity, productivity and citizenship (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 61)

In the 1970s economic crises as well as demands by the group of 77 (G77) within the UN brought a new reality to the organisation, as industrialised countries were faced with growing support for a new economic world order (NIEO) by the Third World (Billing et al, 1993). UNESCO thus adopted the concept of endogenous development – "turning to account of the developing societies' own potentialities in addition to a fairer distribution of wealth" (UNESCO, 1977, cited by Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 65), but found difficulties in translating it into program activities. UNESCO still lacked financial, intellectual and managerial capacity to address the many issues it identified.

In the following decade a crisis ensued in the organisation in the context of growing East-West and North-South tensions, especially following the entry of newly independent states (Billing et al, 1993). Criticism came from both Third World governments demanding a new order for the flow of information and Western countries defending that neither governments nor IOs interfere with communication across borders. This put UNESCO in s difficult position as the 'intellectually' specialised UN agency (Ibid). Furthermore, the organisation was criticised by Western states for being overcentralised and having excessive budget growth, causing delays, inflexibility, and inadequate coordination of programmes. Western states further complained of politicisation within the organisation, claiming specialised agencies should fulfil solely technical and economic roles (Ibid). Calls for both renewal and dismantling of UNESCO emerged, and among various responses was the exit of countries such as the US, the UK and Singapore (Jones & Coleman, 2005). Attempts to restore its credibility with the West, accompanied by a budget of zero real growth, meant a return to UNESCO as a primarily intellectual organisation and attempts (thwarted by budgetary limitations) to increase its country-level operations (Ibid).

A sign of UNESCO's diminishing influence was the fact that it was not a major player in the World Conference on Education for All, heralded by UNICEF and the World Bank (Jones & Coleman, 2005). UNESCO has been widely seen as a normative, standard-setting arm of the UN with general, not merely technical, concerns (Jones & Coleman, 2005). It has had, however, concrete and significant influence in countries' educational policies. Studies show the widespread adoption by countries of educational aims as expressed in international organisation policies, particularly UNESCO and the World Bank, and UNESCO itself actually prepared policies for a number of countries from the 1950s to the 1970s (Mcneely, 1995). Its conferences, reports, and programme activities have historically influenced country approaches to education (Jones & Coleman, 2005), and thus it remains a relevant player to consider when exploring the prevalence of traditional schooling.

5. Setting the framework: traditional schooling

To conduct the discourse analysis of the concept of traditional schooling in UNESCO and UNICEF´s documents, it is necessary to establish concrete criteria for what characterises it. To facilitate the understanding of the documents, four criteria were selected, based on both the academic literature that based the development of the traditional schooling concept and a preliminary reading of the documents. The criteria were then transformed into four questions that will guide the analysis:

- Goal: what is the objective of education?
- Importance: to whom is education important and why is it important for each of them?
- Subject: who are the actors involved in education and what are their roles?
- Methods: how should education happen?

These four questions – what, why, who, and how – were drafted with the goal of aiding and simplifying the analysis, allowing these four relevant aspects to be identified and systematised into categories, which in turn facilitates their evaluation against the traditional schooling framework. As previously discussed, traditional schooling emerged in specific circumstances in time and space, and thus speak to a certain social order. These criteria can help unpack this process for other ways of conceptualising education and the form of social order they relate to, understanding that these elements vary with political disputes and historical context, but certain aspects that may remain – the what, the why, the who, and the how – can point to a persisting relevance of the traditional schooling paradigm.

Elements that can point to the answers to each of these questions will be sought in the selected documents. The documents will be analysed to determine the proximity or distance of the agencies' conceptions and practices of education to the concept of traditional schooling (as discussed throughout sections 4.2 and 4.3.1), which has also been broken down into a framework that answers the questions above (available in Table 1). The texts will be investigated to establish what conceptions or values are present regarding each aspect. This will lay the foundations for the debate on the implications of these conceptions to the United Nation's policies, programmes and recommendations, and their impacts on the reproduction of a certain social order.

Criteria	Traditional schooling
a. Goal	Inscribe in its objects the values, behaviours and knowledge considered positive for social cohesion, nation-building, productivity and/or economic growth; thus (re)producing social hierarchies.
b. Importance	Education's capacity to produce beliefs, behaviours and abilities in its objects; augment the utility of bodies while diminishing their potency of transformation; ascribe and/or reinforce social roles.
c. Subject	On education practice in classrooms, its subject education is the one with possession of the knowledge – in the case of the school, teachers – and its object is the one who is yet to possess it – students. Other actors that help shape the system include governments, school staff, students' families, and others according to context.
d. Methods	Passive process in which knowledge considered neutral is transferred from the teacher and must be absorbed and reproduced by the student.

Table 1: Framework for traditional schooling

6. Analysis

Drawing from the United Nation's main treaties, documents and outputs, it is possible to establish an initial conclusion as to what is the organisation's understanding of education. International treaties such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights state that "Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory" (United Nations, 1948); the Declaration of the Rights of the Child claims that "The child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages" (OHCHR, 1959); and on the Convention on the Rights of the Child states agree to "Make primary education compulsory and available free to all" (UNICEF, 1989).

In the quotes above, from treaties that provide the basis for the United Nations' work, education is employed as a synonym for schooling. Both terms are used almost interchangeably, as if they meant the same thing – hence the references to primary or secondary levels and mentions of its compulsory character. Similarly, in the World Declaration on Education for All (UNESDOC, 1990), education is only referred to in the context of schooling, mentioning throughout its text aspects such as 'basic education', 'teachers', 'administrators', and others, terms that refer to aspects of the formal education system. This implies that, overall, education – at least in what concerns the UN's actions – is equal to schooling. Even when other modes of education are mentioned (such as what is called 'informal' education or family education) schooling is always prevalent as the main and most important form of educating children.

While establishing that education in this context happens in a specific institution, its goals, importance, actors and methods are not given, and may be subject to analysis. The next sections assess the two selected documents of each organisation against the elements of the framework described in section 5 through the theoretical approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA).

6.1. UNICEF

6.1.1. Goal

UNICEF's most current education strategy, covering the year 2019 to 2030 (UNICEF, 2019), is named 'Every Child Learns'. As per its title, it focuses on the so-called learning crisis affecting children inside education systems across the world. It celebrates the near universalisation of schooling along the twentieth century, but highlights three main challenges: "(1) inequitable access to education for children and adolescents, (2) the global learning crisis, and (3) education in emergencies and fragile contexts" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 6). Among these, the learning crisis is the one that makes evident the goal of education for the agency: "The breadth and depth of this learning crisis provides the greatest global challenge to preparing children and adolescents for life, work and active citizenship" (Ibid, p. 4). Thus, it may be concluded that the goal of education is learning, and that schools are currently failing to achieve this goal, leaving children unprepared for 'life, work and citizenship'.

With regard to the learning crisis, the agency emphasises that "Schooling does not mean learning, and for the first time in history there are more non-learners in school than out of school" (p. 13). For the agency, this is demonstrated by the fact that "Some 387 million primary school-age children and 230 million lower-

secondary school-age adolescents are not achieving minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics" (Ibid).

This concerns them due to the fact that children will not be on track to learn the skills they need to succeed in 'life, school and work'. The skills needed for the third element, work, are made clear in the references used. Among them is a report by the International Commission on Financing Global Education Opportunity (n.d.), which aims to ensure that all children can learn and gain the skills they need for "(...) adulthood and work in the 21st century" (p. 6). The Strategy itself also emphasises the amount of young people entering the workforce and the gap between what students are learning and what the job market is looking for. The second element, school, is described in terms of literacy and numeracy skills. However, the third element, life, has no further details in terms of the role of education in it or the skills needed to succeed in it. Therefore, although for UNICEF the goal of education is learning, and learning is meant to prepare students for the three elements of life, school and work, the agency is unclear on elements that do not refer to the labour market.

The second document does not outline what the specific goal of education should be. However, it aligns with the 2019 Strategy in its portrayal of the learning crisis and the perceived failure of education to reach its goals, which, in turn, can point to what those goals are. In this case, they seem to be to receive a 'full learning experience' and "(...) acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to succeed" (UNICEF, 2015, p. 23), or to "(...) lead productive lives" (Ibid, p. 28). These competencies begin with the minimum standards in literacy and numeracy, seen as the most basic skills. However, as in the Strategy, no other skills are specified. Although the goal of education seems to be similarly stated as acquiring a range of necessary skills, it is unclear which skills these may be beyond literacy and numeracy. Despite the vague notion of 'succeeding', the claim that children must access educational opportunities to 'lead productive lives' points to an economic goal for education.

6.1.2. Importance

The main argument used to justify the importance of education used in both documents is, in a sense, self-contained: that education is a basic human right. Both refer to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, while the Investment document also mentions the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, to reinforce education as a universal, inalienable and indivisible right of children. The Strategy also mentions that "Education contributes to many of the SDGs" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 12) to justify its importance. These arguments serve to justify the agency's attention to the issue and reiterate the importance given to it by the United Nations itself, rather than offering conceptual reasons as to why it is relevant.

The Strategy only touches on this topic once, stating that "It [education] reduces poverty, drives sustainable economic growth, prevents inequality and injustice, leads to better health – particularly for women and children – and it helps to protect the planet. Education empowers children and adolescents" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 12). In one sentence the document included social, economic, health, environmental, and personal benefits that education – which in this case means schooling – should bring. It does not go into detail as to how it would bring these positive effects, seemingly implying that education has that capability by itself.

While making the case for investment in education, the Investment document is more detailed and mentions a number of its perceived benefits, first and foremost its economic returns: "Among the most often cited rationales for education is its impact on gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, individual

earnings and poverty reduction" (UNICEF, 2015, p. 6). Several economic studies are mentioned, going back to the 1960s, that demonstrate the impact of additional years of education on GDP per capita or its growth. Additionally, education is claimed to be able to reduce both poverty and income inequality, as well as individual returns measured by labour market earnings. These economic impacts are measured in terms of human capital: "Providing more education, knowledge and skills to individuals of a country, i.e., accumulating human capital, increases their productivity and employability, which in turn increases the overall income and development of the country" (Ibid, p. 7).

Aside from economic returns, the document claims that "Educated people and the children of educated parents tend to be healthier, more empowered regarding their own lives and their society, and socially more tolerant and resolution-seeking" (UNICEF, 2015, p. 10). It mentions studies that show how it affects child mortality, pre and neonatal care, adult mortality, rates of HIV/AIDS, and even disability rates. A causal link is also shown between education and a higher support for democracy, civic engagement, tolerance and concern for the environment. These effects are said to generate an inter-generational virtuous cycle, as benefits are carried down to children of formally educated parents.

6.1.3. Subject

To consider the main actors and subjects/objects of education for UNICEF it is relevant to consider education beyond the schooling environment. Since it is a children's rights organisation, and not a pedagogical one, it may be beyond the agency's scope to give ample consideration to this topic. There are some conclusions that can be drawn, however, about which actors are considered relevant for UNICEF, and their roles.

Children – UNICEF's main concern – appear in both documents as the objects of education, those that must be schooled and learn the relevant skills to succeed in life, school and work. One term used that may point to a shift in subjecthood is 'participation,' one of the rights enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In the Strategy, the agency claims it aims to "support the meaningful participation of children and adolescents in decisions that affect them" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 21). However, there is no specific mention of goals or approaches for it in education.

Teachers also appear at several moments in the Strategy, be it as a description of an issue or as a part of their strategy for action. For instance, the organisation recognises that the number and functions, deployment, capability and working conditions of teachers are key determinants of learning. Thus, it states it will support ministries in several areas, such as the size of classrooms, teacher training, working conditions, time spent on classrooms, pedagogical practices and others. In some ways, teachers also appear as objects of learning through capacity building and classroom management, although, also due to UNICEF's mandate, it may be more difficult for the agency to specify areas of work directly with this group.

Another actor that appears in the Strategy is the 'community'. The agency lists "community engagement" as a valuable approach to promote their educational goals: "Evidence shows that community-based monitoring can be one of the most cost-effective practices to increase access and learning outcomes" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 42). Specifically, "Community engagement is proven to be effective for improving learning outcomes if communities: (1) have information to act upon; (2) have the necessary capacity to understand and act upon information; and (3) have a role, accepted by teachers, in influencing decisions made by school management" (2019, p. 42). Thus, this engagement is aimed at improving learning

outcomes and contingent upon communities' 'information' and 'capacity', which points to a limitation on the level of subjecthood attributed to them by UNICEF.

Furthermore, the engagement of communities is mainly aimed at increasing parental and household engagement in learning in the home, addressing issues in girls' education, and supporting social accountability for better service delivery. Thus it mostly involves producing changes in communities, rather than recognizing them as agents of change – save for one point which mentions "(...) providing parents with the information and opportunities to engage with and challenge the quality of public services" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 43).

6.1.4. Methods

Since one of UNICEF's primary goals is to address the perceived learning crisis, when it claims that "Schooling does not mean learning (...)" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 13), the organisation opening to debate the educational practices adopted in schools and classrooms. Indeed, the agency puts forth in its Strategy that "The lesson of the learning crisis is clear: the conventional assembly of education inputs is not improving learning outcomes" (Ibid, p. 4). For them, this presents a challenge to the way that governments, development partners and communities manage and support education systems – which is consistent with their supporting role as a children's rights organisation – and posits a radical approach that focuses on enhancing learning outcomes. However, the organisation does not go much further on specifying the educational practices that could improve these outcomes.

UNICEF does claim that "Education systems will be supported to further promote and realise their potential as a tool for transforming societies and economies – challenging, rather than replicating, harmful gender and social norms" (Ibid, p. 4). There seems to be a recognition of social norms generating exclusion of certain groups. However, this issue is only developed when it comes to access to education. The organisation aims to combat the exclusion of the "most marginalised" from formal education systems – the poor, children in humanitarian situations, displaced and refugee communities, children with disabilities, ethnic and linguistic minorities, and girls (UNICEF, 2019).

In terms of concrete strategies, however, it only specifies actions related to gender, mainly aimed towards improving girls' access to schooling, with the goal of "changing gender and social norms, including convening dialogue and providing information to address issues such as girls' education and gender equality in education, early marriage, child labour and violence against children" (p. 42). Similarly, one of UNICEF's strategies to achieve its equitable access goal in secondary education is to advance girl's secondary education, learning and skills development, complemented by "(...) cross-sectoral work addressing child marriage, harmful social norms and gender-based violence in and around schools" (UNICEF, 2019, p. 27). This suggests that the issue of social norms is not taken to be part of the school's structure and therefore does not posit a change in the practices of education.

6.1.5. Conclusions

As a child rights organisation, UNICEF's mandate does not necessarily extend to pedagogies or school structures. These issues appear, however, in the way the organisation employs its narrative of education, the goals it sets forth, and the roles of each actor in the process. The previous discussions on each topic has been summarised in Table 2, which follows the same structure as the framework of traditional schooling.

Criteria	UNICEF
a. Goal	Inscribe in its objects the skills they are considered to need to succeed in 'life, school and work' and lead productive lives.
b. Importance	Education is a basic human right that brings economic, social, environmental, personal and other benefits.
c. Subject	Children as objects of education that must be schooled and learn relevant skills. Teachers as ones who will produce these skills in students and be objects of training and capacity-building. Communities as facilitators of student engagement in school.
d. Methods	Claims to support transformation in schools without clear strategies related to educational practices.

Table 2: Framework of UNICEF's approach to education

The organisation recognises that certain childhoods are harmed by social norms. It sets forth aspirations and goals such as promoting children's participation in decision-making, supporting education systems as tools for transformation, and combating social exclusions. However, it lacks a broader discussion about the origins and implications of these exclusions (including through schooling).

This leads the agency to circumscribe harmful social norms in countries and/or communities. It also leads them to propose solutions that may reinforce these norms – such as inclusion in exclusionary schooling systems. Community participation seems to be conditional on the level of information they possess that is recognised by UNICEF as valid – which may raise points discussed in the previous sections about epistemicide and the attribution of valid knowledge only to the 'expert'.

Some of UNICEF's statements meant to argue for education can contribute to creating a duality between the 'educated' and 'uneducated' subject. This is clear in statements such as "Women with higher education are much more likely than uneducated women to be able to make their own choices in life (...)" (UNICEF, 2015, p. 18) or "(...) women with secondary education have, on average, 2.3 fewer children than women with no education" (Ibid, p. 11). Those with 'no education' vaccinate their children less, vote less, provide worse nutrition to their children, have lower support for democracy and catch more diseases. This establishes formal education as the designated space for children to be prepared, a failure of this system leading to the subsequent inadequacy of children (as seen in Tabak, 2014, Cannella, 2000, and Illich, 1972).

The manner in which this correlation is put can individualise and atomise these issues, offering a narrative perspective that portrays lack of education as the problem – rather than structural inequalities and violences which, as seen in previous sections, the formal school integrates – and more education – or investment in it, as is the goal of the report – as a solution. These solutions can be questioned, especially if they are linked to lack of schooling. For instance, the Investment report mentions a UNESCO document that found that higher levels of education in Ethiopia increased the chances that a farmer would adapt to climate change by techniques such as practising soil conservation, varying planting dates and changing crop varieties. Although the relevance of sustainable agriculture cannot be overlooked, when discussing climate change it can be argued that the farms that cause the most impact are large-scale corporations owned by some of

the highest educated people in the world.[1] What might have been the role of education in these cases?

For Qlees and Kargha (2014), when it comes to issues embraced by international organisations in education such as equity, there is a tendency to focus on access to schooling. Interestingly, in this document, UNICEF (2019) delinks schooling from learning, thus positing that access to education is not enough to ensure the reaching of its goals. However, it does not set out concrete approaches to achieving many of its more structural aspirations, such as empowering education systems as tools of transformation or combating the exclusion of various groups of children. Although transforming educational practices could mean a shift away from traditional schooling, a focus on learning outcomes could maintain its same postulates and conceptions.

Despite UNICEF's mandate not including schooling in itself, this does not mean that the organisation cannot contribute to the improvement of formal education. As put by Jones and Coleman (2005), "Throughout its history, UNICEF has never been shy of elevating its straightforward emphasis on supplies and equipment to more abstract levels of justification" (p. 147). There have been internal debates as to the scope of the organisation's actions in education, but there is historical precedent for it to seek impact in areas such as curricula and educational practices. Their approach, therefore, is more dependent on the prevalent view of education and children's rights in the organisation than on its core mandate.

6.2. UNESCO

6.2.1. Goal

The GEMR focuses on the internal issues that affect the achievement of inclusion in education, and thus does not explicitly mention what its goals may be. Its emphasis on inclusion in many ways is translated as a focus on access to and completion of formal education by marginalised groups, or in ways in which they are excluded from education due to gender, wealth, disability, ethnicity, language, migration, incarceration, sexual orientation, religion, and others. A lack of mention to the objectives of education itself would make the completion of the schooling process almost a self-fulfilling goal.

Entry, progression and learning are the three terms used when tackling the issue of inclusion. Since entry and progression are not goals in themselves, 'learning' could serve as education's purpose. Indeed, the discussions about all the changes in education systems, schools and classrooms needed to achieve a more inclusive education are directed towards and measured by students' learning achievements. The report also mention disadvantages suffered by marginalised groups in learning achievements, measured by PISA or other tests.

[1] For instance, Cargill, the world's largest agricultural corporation, has been linked with vast deforestation related to extensive fires in the Cerrado region, in Brazil (Jordan et al, 2020). Its CEO holds a bachelor's degree and an M.B.A. in finance, and its CFO holds a bachelor's degree in agriculture economics. Similarly, a report shows that the world's top five meat and dairy corporations are responsible for more annual greenhouse gas emissions than any of the largest fossil-fuel companies (GRAIN & IATP, 2018). The CEO and Chairman of JBS, one of these five and the world's top beef and poultry producer, have also received Higher Education degrees.

The Futures of Education report begins by describing a world at a turning point, where we have overwhelmed our natural environment, rapid technological changes are transforming our lives, and the fabric of society is shifting in many places around the world. It highlights how persistent global disparities show that "(...) education is not yet fulfilling its promise to help us shape peaceful, just, and sustainable futures" (ICFE, 2021, p. 1). The report explores what role education can play in shaping our common world and shared future. It considers that education has a foundational role in the transformation of human societies, and that "(...) to shape peaceful, just, and sustainable futures, education itself must be transformed" (Ibid). Thus, it may be said that the goal of education in this report is collective, in the sense of its potential to build shared futures. Indeed, it affirms that "Education can be seen in terms of a social contract – an implicit agreement among members of a society to cooperate for shared benefit" (Ibid, p. 2), which starts with a shared vision of the public purposes of education.

According to the report, "During the twentieth century, public education was essentially aimed at supporting national citizenship and development efforts through the form of compulsory schooling for children and youth" (ICFE, 2021, p. 2). The current global issues we face posit the need for a reinvention of this public purpose that can address common challenges and create futures that are shared and interdependent. In short,

> Education must aim to unite us around collective endeavours and provide the knowledge, science, and innovation needed to shape sustainable futures for all anchored in social, economic, and environmental justice. It must redress past injustices while preparing us for environmental, technological, and social changes on the horizon (ICFE, 2021, p. 11)

In addition, recognizing the multicultural and multi-ethnic societies of the world, the report states that education should promote intercultural citizenship: "Beyond learning about the value of diversity, education should promote the skills, values and conditions needed for horizontal, democratic dialogue with diverse groups, knowledge systems and practices" (Ibid, p. 53).

6.2.2. Importance

Similar to UNICEF, for the GEMR "Education is an opportunity with the potential to transform lives" (UNESCO, 2020, p. 6). Its focus is on the improvement of education systems themselves, and thus it describes in length the importance of inclusive education to improve aspects such as "(...) academic achievement, social and emotional development, self-esteem and peer acceptance" (Ibid, p. 18). Beyond the schooling environment, the report states that "Inclusive education promotes inclusive societies, where people can live together and diversity is celebrated" (Ibid).

For the Futures of Education report, it may be said that the importance of education lies in its capacity to build shared futures and lead societies to a common vision. This is augmented by the multiple overlapping crises described by UNESCO such as environmental degradation, people living in misery due to lack of access to goods and services, economic inequality, democratic backsliding and others – all issues that "(...) constrain our individual and collective human rights and have resulted in damage to much of life on Earth" (ICFE, 2021, p. 3). However, the report presents a number of new developments and solutions, or 'disruptive transformations' that it sees as having the potential to shift this path. These disruptions have both implications for education and can be shaped by it.

The report highlights the right to inclusion as one of the most fundamental of human rights, and education as a common good that promotes the possibility of a world in which the dignity and the human rights of all are upheld. Diversity of peoples and perspectives is portrayed as the only way in which the complex, multifaceted challenges facing the planet can be faced.

6.2.3. Subject

In discussing the concepts of equity and equality, the GEMR describes a famous cartoon (shown in Figure 1) in which a panel labelled 'equality' shows children of different heights standing on same-sized boxes trying to write on a blackboard, and another labelled 'equity' they stand on differently sized boxes, all able to write comfortably.

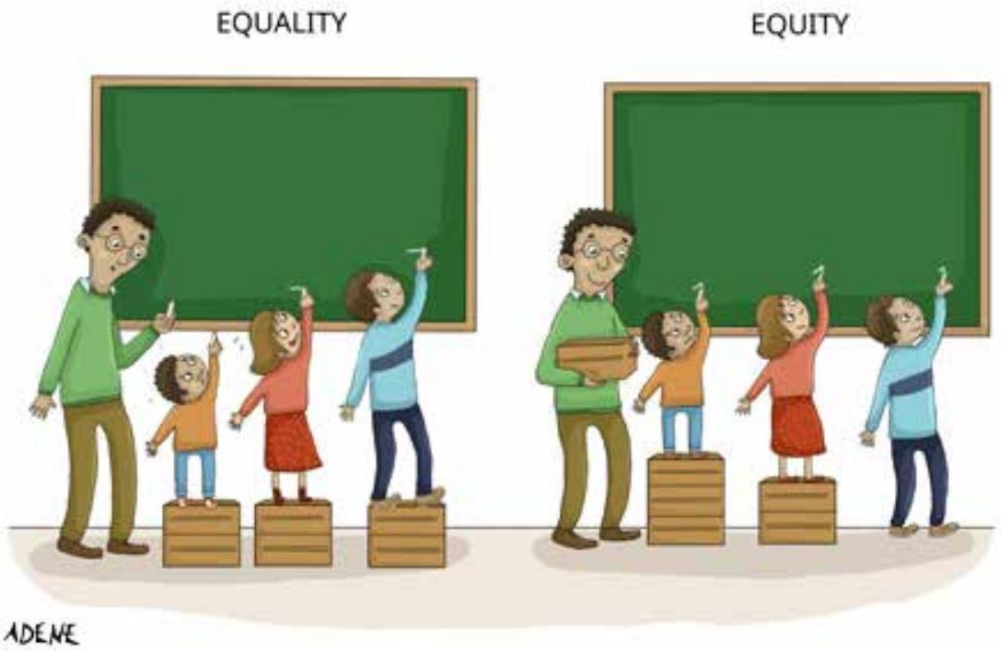

Figure 1: Equity and Equality cartoon. Source: UNESCO, 2020

UNESCO (2020) claims the cartoon is misleading and that equity is present in both images, and uses this to describe the concept of equity of inputs (on the first image) and outputs (on the second image). It is interesting to note, however, one element not mentioned by the organisation: the teacher, who seems to dictate and decide the use of the blocks by the students. If we include this actor, equity is not present in either image, since there is an inequitable relation between him and the students. Teachers still appear as agents of learning, and students as receivers of educational activities in order to achieve learning.

The report mentions several other actors that it considers relevant to support the development of inclusive education systems, such as Ministries of Education, head teachers, communities, and other stakeholders such as developers of classroom materials. They appear around the space of learning itself as enablers and supporters of education.

In the Futures of Education report, both teachers and students appear as relevant actors in education: "Both teachers and learners are transformed through the pedagogical encounter as they learn from each other" (ICFE, 2021, p. 51). Thus, teachers and students appear on a more horizontal scale as agents that interact and build together a learning experience. The report mentions that

students and teachers should, together, form a community of knowledge seekers and contribute to humanity's knowledge commons. Teachers still figure as the ones who propose learning experiences: "The art, science, and craft of teaching is wielded effectively by teachers who give students opportunities to explore, create and interact with the known and the unknown, nurturing curiosity and interest" (Ibid). However, the teacher's role appears in a more dialogical manner.

The report defends the recognition of teachers as intellectually engaged learners who identify areas of inquiry, define research questions, and generate pedagogical practices. It supports the autonomy and freedom of teachers and opportunities for their professional development, including their participation in public debate about the futures of education.

Another actor that appears, although in passing, is the community: "Transformational pedagogical encounters enable dialogue with classmates, peers and community members" (ICFE, 2021, p. 50). It figures more as an element that can improve education and students' experiences than as an agent itself: "Service learning and community engagement soften the walls between classroom and community, challenge students' assumptions, and connect them with broader systems, processes, and experiences beyond their own experiences" (Ibid, p. 52).

6.2.4. Methods

When discussing several issues of inclusion in education – including disability, language, displacement, gender and others –, the GEMR defends that schools and teachers must be prepared to embrace students with diverse needs and singularities. This implies a process of change in content, teaching methods and approaches in education that can accommodate differing requirements and identities of students. It also involves a process that contributes to the goal of social inclusion, "Moving away from education systems whose design suits some children and obliges others to adapt (...)" (UNESCO, 2020, p. 14). Textbooks, curricula and assessment are given special attention as elements that can reproduce patterns of exclusion if left unquestioned and that must adapt to learners' diverse needs, aspiring to an inclusive society.

However, practices inside classrooms themselves – pedagogies and teaching methods – are not widely explored in the report. It mentions that "Teachers may realize the new curriculum requires them to teach new skills or take more inclusive pedagogical approaches" (UNESCO, 2020, p. 114), and indicates a few examples that employ active pedagogies as integral to strengthen inclusion. The document states that "For instance, adapted, learner-centred approaches that establish measurable academic goals, address strengths and challenges related to learning, and mitigate social and behavioural challenges may be particularly suitable for students with disabilities" (Ibid, p. 138). Although alternatives to traditional schooling methods seem to be valued, shifts in teaching practices represent ways to achieve learning outcomes so that previously excluded students can achieve the same academic level as their peers.

The Futures of Education report, on the other hand, has much to say about the way education must be structured and practised in order to achieve its goals. It dedicates an entire section with five chapters and 71 pages to the topic of 'Renewing Education', covering topics such as pedagogical approaches, higher education, curricula and the knowledge commons, teaching, teacher training, the role and transformation of schools, inclusion, sustainability and many others.

In short, the agency defends that "How we learn must be determined by why and what we learn" (ICFE, 2021, p. 50). Since the goal of education would be

to achieve a common, desirable future, "(...) pedagogy should be rooted in cooperation and solidarity, building the capacities of students and teachers to work together in trust to transform the world" (Ibid). Pedagogy figures as an encounter meant to build capacities to improve the world, and thus requires participatory, collaborative, problem-posing, and interdisciplinary, intergenerational, and intercultural learning. It should also be continually recast in the light of the exigencies of the present and the future. In that sense, the report argues that "Project- and problem-based learning provide many opportunities for authentic, relevant learning and tap into our intrinsic interest in knowing and understanding" (Ibid). Due to the multitude of pedagogical approaches, it defends that their selection should be based on the values and principles of interdependence and solidarity.

Learning appears as a more active process in which students transcend disciplinary boundaries to find imaginative solutions to problems and projects. Knowledge itself appears as dynamic and interactive: "Individuals' knowledge and capacity expand in connection to others, by highlighting how agency is shared as well as the diverse and networked dimensions of knowledge itself" (ICFE, 2021, p. 50). Thus, pedagogies take place in emergent, heterogeneous places that are constantly under construction, meaning "There can be two identical lesson plans or curriculum units, but there are no two identical ways of teaching" (Ibid, p. 54).

Recognizing the historical exclusions that generate educational disparities, the report defends that education's methods must address these issues: "Pedagogies of solidarity must also recognize and redress the systematic exclusions and erasures imposed by racism, sexism, colonialism, and authoritarian regimes around the world. Without the valuing of different cultures and *epistemologies*, different ways of living and seeing the world – it is impossible to build a pedagogy of solidarity" (ICFE, 2021, p. 53, my emphasis). Thus, it posits the transformation of pedagogies that can achieve transform harmful dynamics in society: "Intercultural education should not be used as a tool for the assimilation of cultural minorities, indigenous peoples, or other marginalised groups to the dominant society, but rather to promote more balanced and democratic power relations within our societies" (Ibid). It explicitly mentions the decolonization of pedagogy in the sense of countering single, monocultural visions and values, which can be achieved through constructive, horizontal relationships among epistemological assumptions and perspectives. However, no concrete proposals are made as to how to pursue this ambitious transformation of educational practices.

6.2.5. Conclusions

It is perhaps telling of UNESCO's standing in the global education landscape that the two most prominent global documents it produced were drafted by independent commissions. In the case of the Futures of Education report, its ambitious tone may have only been possible due to the fact that it is not authored by the organisation directly. For the GEMR, its breadth and scope may have meant that a separate body was necessary to conduct it – and/or the need for editorial independence may have also played a part. Table 3 gathers the insights brought by the analysis based on the aspects of the framework. The wide differences in the vision of the two documents led the two to be described separately in the table.

Criteria	UNESCO
a. Goal	Produce learning outcomes in the objects of education (students).

	Produce transformation with a vision of a shared future based on ethical principles.
b. Importance	Capacity to promote inclusive societies.
	Capacity to build shared futures and lead societies to a common vision.
c. Subject	Teachers as agents of learning and students as receivers of education in order to achieve learning; other actors as enablers of learning in students.
	Teachers and learners as agents of pedagogical encounters that learn from each other; communities as actors that can improve education.
d. Methods	Educational practices are not widely questioned, shifts in teaching practices represent ways to promote learning outcomes.
	Educational methods should be determined by its goals, settings and actors, based on cooperation and solidarity, building the capacities of students and teachers to collaborate and promote transformation.

Table 3: Framework of UNESCO's approach to education

Historically, UNESCO has favoured the collection, analysis and dissemination of information about the world education scene – as seen in the annual GEMR – most notably assembling global data in order to assess the 'progress' of education systems (Jones & Coleman, 2005). It has also been continuously engaged in the drafting of reports drawing upon and shaping currents of educational thought, which can be seen in the Futures of Education document.

Specifically in the Futures of Education report, UNESCO takes a different approach to education than UNICEF. This document puts forward a vision of education that seemingly attempts to rupture the ties between schooling and traditional education, recognizing its existence, its origins and, to some extent, its effects. It defends a transformation – and even decolonisation – of educational practices based on inclusion and solidarity that can in turn transform societies and futures. This represents a radical break with the traditional schooling approach. However, it is not representative of the organisations as a whole, but of a specific initiative – one that also relied on an external commission to bear fruit. The nature of the report highlights the lack of homogeneity within the organisation and shows that the concept of education is not undisputed. In a historical perspective, the report be seen as somewhat of an anomaly for UNESCO, since

> It is somewhat rare for UNESCO to be at the cutting edge of new thinking about theory or the development of technical breakthroughs in education (...) Rather, UNESCO has sought to inform its view of education futures through systematic and comprehensive analyses of education and the mapping out of broad blueprints for the future (Jones & Coleman, 2005, p. 83)

Perhaps due to this, and following the organisation's historical tendencies, the vision of education portrayed in the report is complemented by very little in terms of concrete strategies and goals. Although it calls for a worldwide, collaborative research agenda that includes several actors and the mobilisation of different resources (data, knowledge, collaboration), concrete strategies are not set out to achieve this. The role of UNESCO itself is described as that of a partner whose job is to strengthen regional and national institutions and processes, and as an evidence broker and advocate for strengthened data and accountability of educational systems.

The GEMR, on the other hand, has a concrete set of monitoring strategies and employs its indicators – namely through SDG4 – to assess progress and the necessary improvements to achieve them. In this case, the report considers SDG4 to be an effective measure of education quality. Although its listed indicators contain parity measures between groups (based on gender, ethnicity, wealth and others) and the inclusion of issues such as global citizenship education and sustainable development, traditional education per se is not unpacked or questioned. Furthermore, there is still a disproportionate focus on access to and completion of formal schooling, which is insufficient to address equity concerns (Qlees & Kargha, 2014).

In the case of its thematic focus, 'inclusion', the report addresses learning outcomes as well as access and completion. However, the use of PISA and other standardised tests as measure of these outcomes indicates a continuity with the paradigm of traditional schooling. PISA's main concern – although it may claim otherwise – "(…) reflects the basic purpose of OECD; the concern for economic competitiveness in a global, high-tech market economy" (Sjoberg, 2019, p. 18). The framework and its tests are meant for relatively rich and modernised OECD-countries, and the fact that it is used as benchmark for educational standard for other nations generates a clear mismatch of the test with the needs of countries and their youth (Ibid). Thus, PISA indicates the level of adequacy of pupils to a form of thought and knowledge, and its use as a benchmark for education quality points to an instrumentalisation of education and pupils for the pursuit of economic goals.

The vastly different approaches seen in both reports make evident how education is still a concept in dispute within UNESCO. Although there is a mainstream effort to advance education in a way that does not necessarily transform traditional education postulates and practices, other initiatives are present that aim to promote a different view of education. It remains to be seen how the different agendas interact within UNESCO and how each will attempt or succeed to promote its own goals.

7. Conclusions

The discourse analysis conducted in the previous sections shows that not only different documents within the same organisation showcase varying viewpoints and objectives, but how two agencies belonging to the same international organisation can portray vastly diverse conceptualisations of education, its objectives, and the methods it should employ. Differences in their mandates imply that each organisation has its own 'entry point' to education, as well as its own endgame for what it should achieve. UNICEF focuses on education as a right of the child, and thus on its potential to improve their lives. For the agency, education is a fundamental tool through which children can fulfil their potential and contribute to society. UNESCO focuses on education per se, and thus on it as a right that must be ensured, improved – and, in some instances, questioned. It also sees it as a tool of transformation and societal improvement. The organisation does not employ a narrative of the individual right of the child, but a collective narrative of a shared future that includes these rights through another perspective.

These differences are often felt in each agencies' practices:

> The tension between addressing tangible needs for supplies and equipment (…) and addressing system-wide concerns for national

> educational development has remained with UNICEF since the very beginning. The contrast with UNESCO could not be greater, the latter unable to avoid the need to think holistically and systematically about education, but being materially incapable of mounting much at a practical level (Coleman 2004 p. 149)

These different viewpoints do not mean that the organisations' visions do not frequently align on behalf of shared historical, political and economic goals – especially since, as has been discussed in this dissertation, education is often cast as a means through which to secure a common future. Aspects such as the importance of the human capital approach, and of education as a form of promoting economic development through the qualification of the workforce, often appear in both organisations in different periods of history and in the analysed documents.

Mcneely (1995) argues that international organisations are important facilitators for the establishment of consistent principles for education and the tendency for those principles to guide state behaviour – or, in other words, educational institutionalisation. IOs aim to facilitate the establishment of uniform ideology, structure, and practice by nation-states. A common understanding of education would thus be relevant for establishing the standards to be followed and goals to be sought, and organisations that concern themselves with this topic would be interested in acting as facilitators and disseminators of this common understanding. However, "While research on education often relies on data gathered and provided by international organizations, very little direct analytic attention has been given to the role of the organizations themselves in the institutionalization of education" (Mcneely, 1995, p. 484). The process of educational institutionalisation in an international system is complex, involving multiple economic and political influences as well as moral and ideological tenets. Through this process, educational norms are not only internationalised, but also internalised by diverse societies throughout the world (Ibid).

Furthermore, "There is also evidence that the structure of the national education systems of most European countries, and others, from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth centuries, was influenced strongly by various international organizational factors" (Mcneely, 1995, p. 487). Aspects such as compulsory primary schooling have been woven from the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights into the constitutions of many nations (Ibid). Evidently, this relationship is not unidirectional and we must consider the effects that states and other actors have on IOS themselves (Ibid). One possible conclusion is that both at the IO and the state level there are certain conceptions that become hegemonic and are brought to the forefront of the broader international system. Education as a right has become one such conception, as well as education as schooling.

If the educational norms being internationalised and internalised correspond with those of traditional schooling, and these norms are disseminated by the United Nations' agencies, we may say that the organisation is contributing to the continuity of schooling as a system of domination and modulation of subjects catering to a certain social order. Indeed, some of the aforementioned authors have discussed how United Nations agencies have advanced educational institutionalisation, prescribed uniformity in educational ideologies, and aided the dissemination of formal Western schooling (Mcneely, 1995; Jones & Coleman, 2005; Beigbeder, 2001). Many aspects of the analysed documents also point to this conclusion, as shown on Table 4, which gathers the findings of Tables 2 and 3 and puts them side by side with the framework of traditional schooling.

Criteria	Traditional Schooling	UNICEF	UNESCO
a. Goal	Inscribe in its objects the values, behaviours and knowledge considered positive for social cohesion, nation-building, productivity and/or economic growth; thus (re)producing social hierarchies.	Inscribe in its objects the skills they are considered to need to succeed in 'life, school and work' and lead productive lives.	Produce learning outcomes in the objects of education (students). Produce transformation with a vision of a shared future based on ethical principles.
b. Importance	Education's capacity to produce beliefs, behaviours and abilities in its objects; augment the utility of bodies while diminishing their potency of transformation; ascribe and/or reinforce social roles.	Education is a basic human right that brings economic, social, environmental, personal and other benefits.	Capacity to promote inclusive societies. Capacity to build shared futures and lead societies to a common vision.
c. Subject	On education practice in classrooms, its subject education is the one with possession of the knowledge – in the case of the school, teachers – and its object is the one who is yet to possess it – students. Other actors that help shape the system include governments, school staff, students' families, and others according to context.	Children as objects of education that must be schooled and learn relevant skills. Teachers as ones who will produce these skills in students and be objects of training and capacity-building. Communities as facilitators of student engagement in school.	Teachers as agents of learning and students as receivers of education in order to achieve learning; other actors as enablers of learning in students. Teachers and learners as agents of pedagogical encounters that learn from each other; communities as actors that can improve education.
d. Methods	Passive process in which knowledge considered neutral is transferred from the teacher and must be absorbed and reproduced by the student.	Claims to support transformation in schools without clear strategies related to educational practices.	Educational practices are not widely questioned, shifts in teaching practices represent ways to promote learning outcomes. Educational methods should be determined by its goals, settings and actors, based on cooperation and solidarity, building the capacities of students and teachers to collaborate and promote transformation.

Table 4: Framework for traditional schooling, UNICEF and UNESCO

Aside from enforcing a specific form of education, the reproduction of this system also contributes to the continuity of colonial systems of domination through the production of colonial subjects. Distinctions between developed/developing countries are frequent in the United Nations documents, and an idea of 'catching up' in education outputs (such as reading proficiency, access or completion rates) permeates its narrative. This fails to take into account the history that leads to these discrepancies, or to consider the measures that generate them – which more often than not are based on the traditional schooling paradigm of inputs-outputs, or knowledge taught-knowledge absorbed –, and the epistemicide it promotes through the dissemination of a specific form of knowledge and the silencing of others (Carneiro, 2005). It shows how a Westernised model of 'world child' has been universalised, having the school as one of the institutions responsible for modelling it (Tabak, 2014). The knowledge the children of colonised nations are meant to absorb through traditional schooling is based on a model that puts them

in a position of submission and adjustment for the creation of docile, productive subjects. By refraining from questioning this model, the defence of education for children of post-colonial settings as advocated by the United Nations can constitute as a violence, even if it is believed to be a fundamental right.

That being said, the policy approaches of both organisations have changed historically according to internal and external political disputes, as well as socio-economic contexts. Their conceptions and approaches to education have been no different, despite an attempt by both agencies to maintain a certain level of coherence. These ways of addressing education not only changed with time, but between and sometimes within organisations. This is made evident by the different analysed documents, which portray very different, sometimes contradictory visions of what education should consist of, what it should aim to achieve, and the methods that should be employed for it to achieve this.

One possible manner of understanding these contradictions is through the extent and shape of the discussion present in the documents about education. When 'education' is left unquestioned, when it is portrayed as a 'black box' that does not need to be opened and discussed, it becomes seen as intrinsically desired and positive, and thus schooling is seen as an end in itself. When this happens, access to education is seen as the main form of ensuring this right. When discussions about the quality of education are present, they are often conceptualised as improvements of the existing system – through infrastructure, classroom sizes, teacher training and other aspects – and not its transformation. Unquestioned calls for education quality fail to acknowledge how education systems themselves were made with the aim of reproducing social hierarchies, as discussed in the previous sections. Thus, the United Nations reinforces and reproduces the dissemination of traditional schooling when it promotes education without a deeper discussion on what it implies.

However, this is not always the case. Both UNESCO and UNICEF are widespread agencies with several directorates and teams, and thus it is evident that there will be differing views of education within it. The impossibility of conducting interviews has somewhat constrained this dissertation in terms of the analysis of the internal disagreements and debates that permeate the enactment of different policies and the disputes between concepts of education and its goals[ARH1] , although, as previously mentioned, document analysis is a rich qualitative research method that can help make different discursive practices emerge. As such, the analysed documents make evident how these conflicts do exist and how different – even contradictory – conceptualisations of education are constantly in dispute within the United Nations. An unequivocal defence of education as a human right and a wish for its advancement are evident commonalities between them, as is the persistence of formal schooling as the means to ensure it. The presence of traditional schooling seems to still hold prevalence as the main form of education, and the UN works for its advancement, occupying the position it has frequently held as a disseminator of Western epistemologies and institutions. This role, however, is not given, nor is the place education occupies within the organisation. The constant debates and conflicting positions within its agencies tells us that there is room for other narratives of education to emerge and grow within the UN, and for it to better pursue its declared mission of advancing human rights, peace and well-being.

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