

FROM STATE SUPERVISION TO INTERNATIONALIZED AND TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the evolution of education from a state-supervised model to an internationalized and technology-driven educational reality. With a focus on exploring how educational reforms impact social justice, the study analyzes the function of education as a tool for reproducing social inequalities. It investigates the influence of internationalization and technology on educational policies, as well as the management of education systems, while exploring how contemporary reforms shape school operations and the educational process in a global environment. Emphasis is placed on the transition from state supervision, where educational policies and decisions were primarily national and local, toward a system increasingly guided by international organizations such as the OECD, economic actors, and technological advancements.

Through a critical analysis of international educational policies and their impact on national education systems, along with a literature review and an examination of shifts in goal-setting processes and the orientation of educational practices, the paper highlights the role of technology and globalization in reshaping the educational landscape. It also considers the changing relationships between states and educational institutions, as well as the influence of economic and political factors in shaping modern educational strategies. Despite the opportunities that technology offers for enhancing education, the research suggests that the trend toward internationalized and technology-driven education may exacerbate inequalities between countries and educational systems while limiting local and national autonomy.

Keywords: Internationalization of Education, Globalization of Education, Education Restructuring, Educational Reforms, Educational Policy Strategies

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the fundamental institutions of the modern state, with its role extending beyond the mere transmission of knowledge. It functions as a mechanism for social integration, political socialization, and economic development (Herbst, 2006). Historically, the state has been the primary regulator of public education, shaping the institutional framework and determining the priorities of the educational system. However, the profound political, economic, and technological transformations that have occurred since World War II have led to a gradual restructuring of the state's role in education, as international organizations, economic forces, and technological innovations increasingly influence educational policies (Dale, 2000; Rizvi & Lingard, 2000).

One of the most prominent theoretical approaches to state intervention in education is that of Jürgen Herbst, who analyzed the formation of national education systems in Europe and North America, emphasizing the state's role in institutionalizing public education. Herbst (2006) argued that educational policy served as a central tool for constructing national identities and strengthening social cohesion, particularly during the transition from pre-modern societies to modern nation-states. According to his analysis, public education relied heavily on state interventions aimed at creating citizens capable of integrating into the structures of the nation-state and responding to the demands of industrialization. His perspective remains relevant and valuable for understanding the enduring relationship between the state and education. Nevertheless, the post-war period has seen drastic changes, with state dominance in educational policy undergoing significant transformations.

The first major shift affecting the relationship between the state and education was globalization and the growing influence of international organizations on national educational policies. Scholars such as Martin Carnoy (1999), Roger Dale (2000), and Fazal Rizvi & Bob Lingard (2000) developed the idea that education is no longer shaped exclusively at the national level but is influenced by global actors such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank, and UNESCO. Dale's (2000) concept of a "Globally Structured Educational Agenda" suggests that states no longer operate as autonomous centers of educational policymaking; instead, they adopt practices and policies driven by supranational pressures, such as the evaluation of learning outcomes through initiatives like the OECD's PISA program.

At the same time, educational policy is increasingly shaped by market principles and neoliberalism, as analyzed by Stephen Ball (2008), Michael Apple (2004), and Henry Giroux (2007). According to their approach, education has gradually been transformed into a commodified good, with emphasis shifting from the universal provision of public education to models of competition, performance evaluation, and school autonomy. The privatization of educational services, the introduction of corporate practices into schools, and the growing influence of market dynamics on higher education reflect this shift from the state as a regulator to the state as a "facilitator" of the market.

Furthermore, educational policy is not shaped solely by state or international actors but also by social inequalities reproduced within the school environment. The theories of Pierre Bourdieu (1984), Basil Bernstein (2003), and Nancy Fraser (2009) demonstrate how educational policies are influenced by social class structures, with schools often functioning as mechanisms for the reproduction of inequalities. While Herbst (2006) focused on the institutional development of public education, contemporary analyses reveal that educational policy is not neutral; rather, it reflects class, cultural, and economic divisions.

Finally, the digital revolution and the development of new technologies have profoundly influenced the state's role in education. Analyses by Brynjolfsson & McAfee (2016) and Collins & Halverson (2009) indicate that the traditional structure of education is being challenged by new forms of learning, such as online education, adaptive learning systems, and artificial intelligence in the educational process. These developments pose new questions about the state's role, as knowledge becomes increasingly globalized, and learning transcends traditional school and university settings.

The analysis of the state's role in public education can no longer rely solely on the national frameworks described by Herbst (2006). Instead, a more complex approach is required, one that considers the interplay between state policy, international organizations, economic pressures, and technological advancements. Educational policy has transitioned from a model where the state maintained full control over education to a hybrid system in which decisions are made at multiple levels, reflecting the dynamics of globalization and the digital age.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT AND EVOLUTION OF MODERN EDUCATION

The formation of the educational system in Europe constitutes one of the most decisive factors for understanding the connection between state intervention and social and economic development. Since the late 18th century, education emerged as a central pillar of social reforms. Particularly during the final decades of the 19th century, European states began to recognize the need for an organized and structured educational policy not only as a means of promoting economic growth but also to ensure social cohesion (West, 1994). The demand for a skilled workforce during the Industrial Revolution led European states such as France and Great Britain to invest in education. However, according to Antonio Gramsci's perspective, education was not used solely to enhance productivity; it also served to reproduce class distinctions and reinforce the dominance of the ruling class, perpetuating social inequalities through education and the division of labor (Gramsci, 1971).

In France, the establishment of compulsory education for children in 1882 was a pivotal reform, integrated into a broader state modernization project aimed at strengthening political and social cohesion. The reform, introduced under the leadership of Jules Ferry, sought to provide all children with access to basic education and reduce the social inequalities prevalent in French society. Ferry's educational policy aimed to diminish social disparities and reinforce political stability, while simultaneously fostering the development of human capital in the country (Marks, 2007). His approach also promoted the idea of French national identity and patriotism, with public education serving as a key instrument for eliminating social and geographical divisions (Miller, Vandome, & McBrewster, 2010).

The expansion of education during this period was closely tied to the need for an organized and skilled population capable of contributing to economic progress and preventing social disorder. In Italy, for instance, the educational reforms of the 19th century were part of the broader national unification project, as the country was fragmented into small, independent states. Education was utilized as a tool to eliminate regional differences and build a unified national identity, contributing to the creation of a cohesive population. The 1859 legislation marked a critical step toward establishing a national education system, promoting education as a means of shaping a homogeneous population capable of meeting the demands of an emerging industrial society. The Casati Law (Legge Casati), enacted in the same year, laid the foundations for state intervention in education, making primary education compulsory and aiming to combat illiteracy. This educational reform was integrated into the broader plan for Italian unification, which was completed in 1861, with the goal of creating a common national identity that would transcend the regional distinctions of the individual states (Pruneri, 2015).

Educational reforms introduced in Germany during the 19th century were closely linked to the formation of the nation-state, the development of industry, and the consolidation of state power. The establishment of a structured and centrally organized educational system aimed not only

at disseminating basic education but also at producing a disciplined and skilled population with a strong sense of national identity, capable of meeting the demands of industrialization and military organization (Wehler, 1985).

The principles shaping German educational policy were significantly influenced by the theoretical contributions of Wilhelm von Humboldt. Humboldt advocated for an educational system based on intellectual cultivation and the autonomy of knowledge, emphasizing general education over vocational specialization (Humboldt, 1810/1964). His model, introducing the concept of *Bildung*, highlighted philosophical and humanistic education, aiming to develop individuals critically thinking. However, the practical implementation of educational policy in Germany in the following decades took a different direction, as state and economic needs determined educational priorities (McClelland, 1980).

The political unification of Germany in 1871 was accompanied by a gradual strengthening of central state supervision over education. The state utilized the school system to promote national identity and shape citizens with a sense of duty and commitment to work, qualities deemed essential for social cohesion, military preparedness, and economic progress. Educational policy was adapted to the needs of industry, enhancing secondary technical education and vocational training to meet the growing demands of a technologically advancing production model (Geiss, 1992).

Higher education also integrated these state priorities. Universities assumed a central role in promoting scientific research, laying the foundation for Germany's technological advancement and economic strength. The connection between university knowledge, state policy, and industrial innovation became increasingly pronounced in the final quarter of the 19th century, with German higher education institutions serving as models for other European states (McClelland, 1980).

Education, beyond the dissemination of knowledge, functioned as a mechanism for social formation. Through the educational system, values that served the stability of the state and the consolidation of state power were transmitted. Emphasis was placed on history and language, as cultivating a culturally homogeneous national identity was deemed crucial for enhancing political cohesion (Blackbourn, 2002).

The historical evolution of the German educational system reveals that, despite Humboldt's initial idealistic approach, education ultimately evolved into a key instrument of state policy. Successive educational reforms were shaped under the pressure of socio-economic conditions, while the relationship between education, state authority, and economic development shaped the core structures of German society throughout the 19th century.

During the 19th century, educational reforms in Great Britain were influenced by industrialization and the need for a skilled workforce. The Elementary Education Act of 1870, known as the Forster Act, laid the foundation for the establishment of a public education system, reinforcing compulsory schooling and institutionalizing state intervention in the educational process (Lawson & Silver, 1973). The establishment of primary education was not limited to the development of literacy but also incorporated broader social objectives, reflecting the political elites' efforts to manage the societal changes brought about by industrialization (Green, 1990).

Educational policy during this period was influenced by the ideas of Herbert Spencer and Matthew Arnold, who developed different approaches to the role of education in industrial society. Spencer (1861) emphasized the functional dimension of learning, viewing education as a means of adapting to technological and social developments. In contrast, Arnold (1869/2009) advocated for a cultural dimension in knowledge to prevent the reduction of education to mere utility. While the educational process was based on the dissemination of basic skills such as writing, reading, and arithmetic, it simultaneously served to cultivate a disciplined working class that would ensure the stability of the social hierarchy (Simon, 1991).

The connection between education, the labor market, and social structure was evident in the gradual adoption of a curriculum tailored to the needs of industry. The organization of the school environment mirrored the principles of standardization and strict hierarchy, resembling the structure of factory work (Johnson, 1970). Students were not only prepared for the production process but were also socialized to internalize values of discipline, obedience, and work ethics, establishing education as a mechanism of social regulation (Bowles & Gintis, 1976). These reforms were not confined to Great Britain but served as a model for many industrially developing countries, consolidating an educational logic that linked schooling to economic production and social class (Allen, 2017).

The development of educational systems was not merely the result of pedagogical considerations but reflected deeper social and economic processes. Educational reforms across Western Europe were closely linked to the needs of industrial development and the strategic goal of states to strengthen social cohesion and enhance societal efficiency. Education was not treated exclusively as a means of knowledge dissemination but as a mechanism for shaping a disciplined and skilled workforce capable of meeting the demands of both the economy and political governance. The emphasis on compulsory education and the establishment of a unified educational framework aimed not only at developing human capital but also at stabilizing social structures, as education emerged as a central element of state policy for national prosperity (Tomlinson, 2008).

Following World War II, educational policies became part of broader social and political reforms, as Western European states recognized the need to restart and reorganize their societies and economies. Within this process, education played a central role in the reconstruction of states, with state funding and universal access becoming fundamental concerns.

Educational reforms were gradually aligned with the development of a welfare state, aimed at ensuring social inclusion, upgrading the workforce, and shaping an active citizen capable of participating in political and social life. Education was recognized as a fundamental tool for social cohesion and the democratic foundation of society, promoting active citizen participation in public life and driving social change.

After the devastation of the war, European countries undertook the redesign of their educational systems with the primary goal of economic and social reconstruction, as well as preventing the causes that had led to the conflict. The destruction caused by the war exposed the weaknesses of previous social and political models and underscored the need for modernizing the educational system. The war had exacerbated social inequalities and divisions, which, combined with inadequate educational infrastructure, increased the marginalization of certain

social groups and the potential for perpetuating the regimes that had led to conflicts (Moss, 2017).

The post-war approach to education no longer viewed it merely as a tool to serve the needs of the economy and production but as the foundation for creating a stronger, democratic, and solidaristic society. Social cohesion and citizen participation in democratic processes became the focus of educational policies. European governments, recognizing the need for new values and principles in education, implemented reforms that promoted social inclusion, aiming to combat inequalities and strengthen citizens' political and social participation (McCulloch, 2000).

The dominant post-war educational reform was characterized by the expansion of public education and the establishment of compulsory schooling for all children to ensure universal access to education, regardless of social or economic status. These reforms were designed to meet the demands of a modern industrial and democratic society. Governments focused on developing an educated population capable of responding to the new requirements of both the labor market and social life (Tomlinson, 2008).

Changes in education thus became one of the primary tools for restoring and reinforcing political and social stability in Europe, aiming to build a prosperous and democratic social system. Governments realized that education should not only secure social cohesion but also prepare citizens for active participation in democratic life. Through these educational reforms, the goal was to cultivate an educated population that could meet the challenges of the modern world and contribute to economic development. The educational strategy adopted emphasized social mobility and the reduction of social inequalities to restore democratic order and enhance citizens' political participation (McCulloch, 2000; Rist, 2002).

The establishment of a state education system and the implementation of compulsory schooling for all children formed the foundation for a new social and economic reality. Education was recognized not only as a fundamental right but also as a necessary obligation for the development of skills that would promote collective progress. Through this process, states aimed to integrate socially marginalized groups, thereby strengthening citizens' cohesion and solidarity. Education served as a means of boosting productivity, which was seen as essential for the sustainability and growth of economies, as citizens were trained to meet the increasing demands of industrial production. The link between education and social stability contributed to the creation of a social and political framework that could ensure the functioning of democracy and the peaceful coexistence of different social classes (Tomlinson, 2008).

The need for education that promotes the values of democracy and social justice was connected to the broader desire to restore political and social order in Europe. Post-war education thus incorporated the need for democratic renewal, the fight against unemployment, workforce training, and ensuring citizens' political participation. This new perception of education contributed to the development of the modern European welfare state (McCulloch, 2000; Tomlinson, 2008).

European governments, facing the consequences of war and the need for economic reconstruction, were forced to reconsider their educational policies. Education came to play a decisive role in fostering social cohesion and economic growth, and educational reforms

assumed a central position in shaping a new social order capable of addressing the challenges of industrialization and technological advancement. Although the strategic role of education was initially nationally focused, it gradually shifted toward unification and the promotion of common goals through international and supranational agreements (Marks, 2007; Boli & Thomas, 1999).

However, from the mid-20th century onward, European educational policies began transforming from nationally centered strategies into policies embedded within an international and supranational political and economic framework. The establishment of international organizations such as UNESCO and the European Union contributed to the globalization of educational policies and guided countries toward shared objectives concerning education and human capital development. Educational reforms were no longer isolated or purely national but were integrated into international agreements and policies aimed at enhancing global competitiveness and social cohesion on a global scale (Dale, 2000; Davies & Pike, 2009).

Education evolved into a critical tool for strengthening international political stability and advancing the strategic interests of global superpowers. The infiltration of the United States and the Soviet Union into countries with developing educational systems, as well as the strategic support of education through international organizations, underscored the role of education as an instrument of ideological and political influence. Both superpowers invested in educational diplomacy to expand their political reach and shape global educational standards, seeking to establish an international educational framework that reflected their geopolitical aspirations (Spring, 1998).

This period marked a turning point for education in Europe, making it a vital factor for strengthening interstate cooperation and shaping a supranational framework. Education, instead of remaining confined to national strategies, began integrating into a broader international context, influencing and being influenced by political and economic developments. The establishment of organizations such as the EEC, which gradually evolved into what is now the European Union, and the promotion of common educational standards shaped policies that promoted global social and political cohesion. Governments no longer reformed their education systems solely to address national needs but also to align their strategies with supranational priorities (Dale, 2000).

The creation of supranational organizations contributed to the globalization of educational policies, shaping national strategies and guiding educational reforms. The need for education to align with the international demands of the labor market, technology, and scientific research highlighted the importance of cooperation between states and international bodies. Governments viewed education as a tool for achieving national progress, but also as part of a global effort to strengthen international competitiveness and political stability (Dale, 2000).

The 1980s proved pivotal for the restructuring of educational policies in Europe and beyond, as globalization and the rise of neoliberalism brought about dramatic changes in how states approached education. Europe, now a unified economic and political entity, and the expanding global market significantly influenced educational policy, steering it away from traditional national strategies and shifting it toward an international dimension. The creation of a single labor market, technological advancements, and the growing significance of international capital forced governments to reassess the role of education (Apple, 2001; Ball, 2012).

The 1980s marked a significant shift in Europe's educational policies, as globalization and neoliberalism began influencing the design of education systems. Education became part of broader strategies aimed at strengthening the global labor market, adapting its functions to the rapidly changing job market. Education policies focused on developing a workforce capable of responding to the demands of a globalized economy, while the education system moved away from its traditional emphasis on national unity and political identity (Apple, 2001; Ball, 2012). International educational reforms emphasized the link between education and global competitiveness, promoting an educational model that reflected market and commodity logic.

The dominance of neoliberalism reinforced the commodification of education. Market logic breached further into the education sector, with education being treated as a "commodity" intended to produce competitive advantages for both the state and businesses (Apple, 2001; Ball, 2012). Under these new conditions, international organizations such as UNESCO and the EU contributed to strengthening the link between education policies and global market strategies, promoting the idea of "education for employability" and the development of a mobile, specialized workforce (Spring, 2015; Stromquist, 2002).

This shift toward globalization and neoliberalism emerged as the primary dimension of educational reforms after 1980, as they no longer aimed solely at the social and economic development of each state but also at integrating them into global competition. In this context, education became embedded in strategies seeking to enhance global competitiveness and political stability (Apple, 2001; Ball, 2012).

Since the 2000s and the beginning of the 21st century, education has been recognized not only as a national duty but also as a global challenge. Education is increasingly regarded as an international good, with policies being shaped and adapted to the requirements of a unified global educational framework. The influence of international organizations such as the EU and other supranational bodies has grown, making education a central component of economic and political strategy. In this new environment, education is no longer solely dependent on national needs but is incorporated into a supranational plan driven by the demands of the global labor market, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

Although educational policies remain differentiated from country to country, they are increasingly shaped under the influence of a broader economic agenda, where the development of educational systems is adjusted to the imperatives of globalization. The influence of the EU and international organizations has reshaped educational policy, transferring oversight from national states to supranational bodies, which design strategies to strengthen competitiveness, economic stability, and political cohesion at the international level. In this context, national education policies, while continuing to acknowledge local needs, are required to align with a common international plan shaped by supranational goals and strategies (Olssen, Codd, & O'Neill, 2004; Rizvi & Lingard, 2010).

2.1 Education and Globalization

Since the late 20th century, education in Europe and globally has undergone significant transformations, as globalization introduced new dynamics that altered the way states shape their educational policies. Supranational organizations such as the OECD, UNESCO, and the World Bank began to play an increasingly influential role in shaping educational policies,

limiting the traditional autonomy of states and aligning educational strategies with international standards. In particular, the OECD, through the creation of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), contributed to the adoption of a comparative evaluation strategy that enhanced the international competitiveness of educational systems and incorporated internationalization into educational policy.

As Martin Carnoy (1999) notes, globalization has surpassed the role of states in education, restricting their ability to formulate autonomous national policies. Education, although still under the responsibility of national governments, is now dependent on international organizations that set strategies and standards to serve the needs of the global economy. Carnoy argues that the constant subordination of education to the demands of the global market and international development strategies has altered its character, transforming it into a tool that transcends national interests (Carnoy, 1999).

Dale and Robertson (2009) reinforce this view through the concept of the "Globally Structured Educational Agenda." According to their theory, education is not being abolished by states but is instead being transformed, as states increasingly adopt policies that align with international specifications set by bodies such as the OECD and UNESCO. National policies are being reshaped as they adopt directions associated with international interests and needs, while supranational organizations serve the goal of globalization by providing a common framework for developing educational policies that ensure global competitiveness, often disregarding domestic needs and national characteristics (Dale & Robertson, 2009). As a result, education integrates the strategies of the global labor market and the demands of the 21st-century economy, with states being forced to adapt their educational systems to international directives and specifications.

One of the most significant areas where globalization has exerted influence is educational evaluation and the introduction of international comparative assessment mechanisms. The PISA program, conducted under the OECD, introduced the capacity to evaluate students at an international level and defined educational success or failure in strictly quantitative terms, focusing on performance in key areas such as reading, mathematics, and science. The use of results from such international assessments as a policy tool shaped a new framework of global competition. The comparison of student performance across countries emerged as a primary criterion for assessing the quality of national education systems, directly influencing educational reforms. Subsequent policies adopted by many countries included a focus on improving performance in these specific skills, following strategies recommended by the OECD and other international organizations (OECD, 2019).

However, the internationalization of education is not limited to evaluation. UNESCO, as a supranational organization, has also played a decisive role in promoting a global "educational standard," encouraging countries to align with international strategies for education and its development. By drafting policies and strategies on education for sustainable development and reducing educational inequality, UNESCO reinforces the notion of the universality of education and the responsibility of states to promote citizens' right to education (UNESCO, 2021).

The issue of globalization and education raises fundamental questions about the nature of education as a social good and individuals' rights to education. As supranational organizations

influence educational policies, national governments are increasingly limited in their capacity to adapt education to local needs and ensure it as a public good for all. Education, despite declarations of universality and citizens' rights, is becoming a tool that primarily serves the interests of the global market and development strategies rather than social mobility or the enhancement of national policies (Apple, 2001).

The strengthening of the role of international organizations in education is linked to the broader need for uniformity and standardization of educational models at the global level. The creation of the PISA program by the OECD, as mentioned earlier, is a characteristic example of this internationalization of educational evaluation, which aims to compare national systems and record student performance globally. This evaluation reinforces competition among states and creates pressure for the continuous adjustment of educational policies to meet international demands (OECD, 2019).

This competitive trend is not limited to performance comparisons but extends to the adoption of policies that incorporate international standards and guidelines recommended by organizations such as UNESCO and the World Bank. UNESCO, for instance, promoted the concept of "Education for All," which includes the global provision of education at all levels and the fight against illiteracy, while the World Bank invested in education as part of its strategy to combat poverty and promote social and economic development (Carnoy, 1999).

The shift from traditional national educational policies to a framework determined by supranational organizations and international guidelines is part of a broader process associated with globalization and the economic and political shifts of recent decades. While education before globalization primarily served national interests and the formation of societies within a state framework, it now faces new pressures and challenges associated with international strategies and the need for competitiveness at a global level. The evolution of education reflects the shift in educational policymaking from the national to the international level and the changing relationship between states and education. The pressure exerted by supranational organizations such as the OECD, UNESCO, and the World Bank led to changes in the organization and management of educational systems, aiming to ensure the compatibility of national policies with the requirements of the global market and international competitiveness (Apple, 2001).

The globalization of education and the influence of international organizations limit the autonomy of nation-states in shaping educational policy. Education has evolved into a field where national interests are no longer the sole factor determining educational strategies but are influenced by global trends and needs. The historical development of education has transformed it into an international good that serves both national and global interests, as states strive to maintain their competitiveness in the global market.

2.2 Neoliberal Critique and the Commodification of Education

The globalization of education and the combined economic and political trends of neoliberalism have introduced new dynamics that radically affect educational systems on a global scale. Since the late 20th century, there has been a notable shift in the perception of education from the public good to a marketable product, a phenomenon closely associated with neoliberal policies. At the core of this transformation is the increasing privatization of

education, expressed through the growing involvement of private actors in the educational process and the corresponding weakening of the state's role as the primary regulator and guarantor of equality in education.

Stephen Ball (2012) documents the transition of the state from the role of education regulator to that of a "facilitator" of the market. According to Ball, education has evolved into a field of business activity where private actors play a central role in the provision of educational services. The privatization of education is not limited to the growth of private schools and universities but extends into other sectors, such as the proliferation of private tutoring services and the delivery of education through digital platforms (Ball, 2012). Neoliberal policies reinforce the market's position as the primary organizing principle of society, resulting in the transformation of education from a social right into a commodity distributed according to the demands of the economic system.

Michael Apple (2004) critically examines the educational policies shaped by neoliberalism, focusing on the emphasis placed on evaluation, accountability, and school autonomy. Apple analyzes how these policies heighten the pressure on schools to compete and measure educational outcomes based on quantifiable criteria, while simultaneously undermining teaching quality and the social dimension of education. He argues that evaluation, although capable of enhancing efficiency, reduces the flexibility of teachers and students to develop critical thinking and engage creatively in the educational process. The focus on measurable results tends to overshadow the more substantive aspects of learning (Apple, 2004).

It appears that the emphasis on competition and efficiency has led to the commodification of education, resembling a corporate structure that sets profit-driven objectives, as Henry Giroux (2011) asserts. He argues that neoliberal educational policies result in the transformation of knowledge into a marketable commodity that primarily serves market needs rather than social and educational interests. Giroux emphasizes that the commodification of education contributes to the reproduction of social inequalities, as access to quality education increasingly depends on individuals' financial resources rather than their educational needs (Giroux, 2011).

The growing privatization of education is further reinforced by the neoliberal logic of school autonomy, in which educational institutions operate as independent entities, required to tailor their operations to market demands and civil society expectations. Ball's analysis helps us understand that education fosters conditions of heightened competition, as schools are forced to achieve specific outcomes to remain viable in an environment where funding is tied to their performance in both the labor market and the education sector (Ball, 2012).

The neoliberal perspective on the commodification of education acknowledges that it leads to a subversion of the original ideal of education as a public good and social right, intended to guarantee equal opportunities for all. The focus on economic values and efficiency has turned education into an instrument for managing and reproducing social inequalities, negatively impacting social mobility and equality in education. The critical analyses of Ball, Apple, and Giroux highlight that the educational process, once oriented toward fostering critical thinking and social cohesion, has been transformed into a marketplace in which teachers and students must compete for resources and opportunities.

2.3 The Critical View of Education: Inequalities and Structural Challenges

The critical perspective on education highlights with clarity the ways in which the educational system reproduces and reinforces social inequalities. Key theorists such as Pierre Bourdieu, Basil Bernstein, and Nancy Fraser provide a range of analytical tools that allow an understanding of how education interacts with social structures and class distinctions. These tools focus on analyzing the mechanisms of inequality reproduction, which arise through educational policies, teaching practices, and the social parameters that determine access to and the quality of education for different social groups. Viewing education as a mechanism for reproducing social inequalities is not merely a theoretical approach but also a critical evaluation of the real impact of the educational system on various social strata (Bourdieu, 1977; Bernstein, 2003; Fraser, 2009).

Pierre Bourdieu (1977) introduces the concept of cultural capital to explain how the educational system reinforces and reproduces social inequalities. Cultural capital refers to the knowledge, skills, and values possessed by students, which, although often invisible, play a decisive role in their educational success. Students from higher social classes typically possess the cultural capital that the educational system demands, giving them an advantage in achieving better results. In contrast, students from lower social classes, who often lack this cultural capital, are placed at a disadvantage because the school environment favors and promotes the values and knowledge that originate from the upper social groups. According to Bourdieu (1977), the reproduction of social inequalities is reinforced by the structure of the educational system and the standards it imposes, resulting in the perpetuation and consolidation of existing class distinctions (Bourdieu, 1977).

In the same vein, Basil Bernstein (2003) analyzes the linguistic dimension of social inequalities. According to Bernstein, language is a critical factor in how students navigate the educational system. Students from upper social classes possess an "elaborate code," which allows them to articulate more complex and abstract thoughts, as well as to understand the dominant concepts within the school system. In contrast, students from lower classes are exposed to a "restricted code," which limits their capacity for complex thinking and expression, as it is less multifaceted and does not provide the same representational tools for social and educational values. The linguistic distinction observed by Bernstein intensifies class inequalities in schools and hinders lower-class students from achieving at the same level as their upper-class peers. Language, as a mechanism of class reproduction, contributes to the perpetuation of social disparities, creating a cycle of inequality determined by access to the "elaborated" linguistic code (Bernstein, 2003).

At the same time, Nancy Fraser (2009) offers a more contemporary analysis, focusing on social justice and the need for recognition and redistribution within education. Fraser emphasizes that education should not be confined to the reproduction of social hierarchies but must incorporate values that promote social justice. She proposes two fundamental elements for achieving this justice: the recognition of diverse identities and the redistribution of educational opportunities. According to Fraser, educational policy must recognize cultural, social, and economic differences and understand the importance of redistributing resources to ensure equal opportunities for all. Modern educational policy cannot focus solely on the reproduction of existing social inequalities but must acknowledge and combat them through policies aimed at promoting social justice and equality (Fraser, 2009).

The theoretical framework of social justice forms the basis for the critique of contemporary educational policies, which often reinforce inequalities rather than reduce them. The critiques of Bourdieu and Bernstein support the view that the educational system does not operate as a neutral space for learning and development but as a tool for reproducing social hierarchies. In contrast, Fraser offers a dynamic approach that incorporates the pursuit of social justice as a central axis for shaping the educational policies of the future.

2.4 The Theory of Digital and Post-Industrial Skills and New Forms of Learning

The Fourth Industrial Revolution, driven by the rapid advancement of technologies, has brought significant disruptions to the skills required in the labor market and, consequently, has led to substantial changes in educational policy and practice. Theorists Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2016) analyze how technological developments, particularly the spread of artificial intelligence, automation, and digital tools, affect the labor market, resulting in the need for a radical adaptation of educational systems. The demand for workers with digital technology competencies and the ability to adapt quickly to new conditions highlights the need for a new direction in education. The Fourth Industrial Revolution has underscored the importance of digital skills and the ability to manage complex technological tools, an evolution that requires educational systems to revise their curricula, integrating digital technologies and modern forms of learning (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2016).

Similarly, Allan Collins and Richard Halverson (2009) offer a more in-depth analysis of the new forms of learning associated with the digital age. The influence of online courses, MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), and adaptive learning has begun to reshape the structure and operation of educational systems. The authors recognize that, in this new technological environment, learning is no longer confined to traditional spaces such as schools and universities but extends to online platforms where students can interact, collaborate, and develop skills previously considered secondary, peripheral, or even unnecessary. This shift creates the need for new educational models that incorporate these innovations, making it imperative to bridge the gap between traditional and modern learning methods (Collins & Halverson, 2009).

The evolution of education, specifically the transition from traditional teaching to new forms of learning, has also posed significant challenges for the national education system. As Brynjolfsson and McAfee observe, traditional educational models, often based on a teacher-student structure and learning environments with limited tools, have reached a point of stagnation, as the demands for skill acquisition have outpaced the capacities of older methods. Schools and universities must integrate new technologies and develop strategies to equip students with the digital and post-industrial skills required by future labor markets. The advancement of knowledge and skills has led organizations such as the OECD to recognize the need for reforms in educational systems. Their proposals include innovative methods and tools that will help schools respond to these new challenges. At the same time, this transition is not without contradictions and social tensions, as the adoption of new technologies carries the risk of perpetuating social inequalities, with access to educational tools and resources heavily dependent on families' financial circumstances (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2016).

The adoption of these new forms of learning, however, is a decisive factor in ensuring the effectiveness of educational systems in the global digital era. As Collins and Halverson

emphasize, the new age demands not only the integration of technologies but also a shift in pedagogical methods to enhance creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking. Adaptive learning and the ability of students to learn at their own pace and choose subjects of personal interest are identified as critical elements for preparing students for the future (Collins & Halverson, 2009).

The coexistence of these technological developments with traditional educational structures necessitates the redesign of educational policies at both national and international levels. While the digitalization of education has the potential to expand educational opportunities for many social groups, it may also exacerbate social inequalities if appropriate policies for redistributing resources and ensuring access to technology are not in place. Governments and international organizations, such as the OECD, are called upon to address these challenges and develop educational models that promote equality and social justice while simultaneously incorporating the new skills required by the global labor market (OECD, 2018).

3.0 CRITICAL REVIEW - CONCLUSIONS

Education, as a social and political phenomenon, has undergone significant transformations in recent decades, reflecting broader social, political, and economic changes occurring globally. A central trend emerging from contemporary research is the transition from a model of strict state supervision to a more hybrid system, which combines various actors and influences. This new approach to education involves, first and foremost, the active involvement of international organizations that shape the direction of educational policies, alongside the reinforcement of market-oriented logic, which prioritizes competitiveness and efficiency as fundamental features of the educational system. Simultaneously, digital innovations are reshaping the way learning takes place and redefining the value of skills required in the 21st century.

Michael Herbst's (2006) theory concerning state supervision of education remains fundamental for understanding the transition from traditional, state-controlled models to the hybrid approach observed in modern societies. Herbst emphasizes that, for many years, education played a central role in the state's plan for development and the promotion of public interest. However, in recent years, there has been a drastic shift in which policymaking and educational processes are no longer solely dependent on state authority but are heavily influenced by the needs and demands of the global economy. According to Herbst, the state's role has shifted from control and directed regulation to "facilitating" international organizations, which often define the guidelines for educational policies (Herbst, 2006).

The growing influence of international organizations such as the OECD, UNESCO, and the World Bank, which set global guidelines for educational policy development, has reinforced the transition toward a hybrid governance model. As Roger Dale (2000) also notes, education is increasingly becoming a field of international politics and strategies, reducing states' autonomy in making educational decisions. International organizations impose policies that promote competitiveness, school efficiency, and accountability, elements associated with the commodification of education and the effects of globalization. The concepts of "global competition" and "European integration" necessitate the systematic evaluation of educational systems, aiming to cultivate "digital" and "post-industrial" skills, which are now considered critical for the global labor market (Dale, 2000).

On the other hand, the influence of market logic on education has been reinforced through an emphasis on competitiveness and efficiency. Education policymakers in many countries have shifted toward models that promote efficiency and the measurement of outcomes. The incorporation of neoliberal principles, which emphasize efficiency, evaluation, and school autonomy, has led to the creation of an environment where school performance is systematically measured based on market standards and management techniques (Ball, 2003). For instance, policies concerning school evaluation, resource management, and school autonomy reinforce the necessity for “entrepreneurial” approaches to school administration, as educational institutions are required to compete in an increasingly commodified and privatized landscape (Giroux, 2011).

At the same time, the digital revolution has introduced new forms of learning that challenge traditional educational methods. Digital technologies, online courses, learning platforms, and adaptive learning systems transcend traditional classroom boundaries and teaching models. These new learning approaches enable continuous access to education from any location globally and allow for the personalization of the learning experience. In societies dominated by new technologies, learning is being restructured, moving away from the classic teacher-student model and focusing instead on a more individualized and interconnected learning process. According to Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2016), the skills required for success in the labor market are evolving, and educational institutions must develop new strategies to meet these demands.

Within this hybrid model, where international organizations, market logic, and digital innovations coexist, education faces new challenges. Although educational reforms offer the potential to enhance access and equality, it is crucial to critically assess the impact of these changes on social justice and inequality to ensure that they do not reproduce or exacerbate existing disparities. The state, although no longer the sole actor in educational policymaking, still holds an important role in promoting strategies that guarantee social inclusion and equitable access to education. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen public institutions against the growing privatization of knowledge (Fraser, 2009). Changes in education imply a continuous transition, in which contemporary educational models adapt to the realities of globalization and digitalization without neglecting the need for ongoing critical reflection and social vigilance.

Modern education in Europe, within the hybrid model shaped by globalization and digitalization, is called upon to serve a series of conflicting goals that reflect both labor market demands and social needs. Europe, under the guidance of international organizations such as the OECD and the EU, is shaping its educational policies to prepare citizens for the constantly evolving needs of the economy. Adaptive educational policy has created a structure that combines skills development, the promotion of innovation, and the flexibility to meet labor market demands, while also aiming to maintain a high level of prosperity through technological progress.

In this complex model, education is no longer solely directed toward the development of individuals as citizens with full rights and freedoms; rather, it focuses on programming their skills to meet the demands of a high-performance technological world. Educational objectives are being redefined, with technological training, innovation, and continuous adaptation to labor

market changes dominating educational strategies. The goal is not only personal development and well-being but also the formation of a workforce capable of keeping pace with rapid advancements and changes in the global business environment. Organizations and European institutions demand an educational system that goes beyond the traditional dimension of knowledge, emphasizing flexibility, collaboration, and “digital” skills that enable individuals to survive and thrive in an increasingly competitive world.

The notion of well-being promoted through education, driven by technological progress, is based on continuous evolution and adaptation to new realities. The global labor market requires individuals equipped with cutting-edge skills, ready to utilize the latest technological advancements and integrate into new forms of production and communication. However, this shift is not universally accepted as positive, as many critics emphasize that it may intensify inequalities and social divisions, creating a distinction between the “privileged,” who have access to new technologies, and the “excluded,” who may be left out of the opportunities provided by this new era.

Organizations such as the EU highlight the need for educational systems that promote entrepreneurship and technological skills, focusing on strengthening professional and digital competencies to increase competitiveness and create a more flexible and dynamic labor market. However, the question remains whether this insistence on new skills will lead to genuine social progress and the well-being of all citizens or will merely promote a more limited conception of well-being, centered on technological and economic success, without addressing the social inequalities that may be reinforced. The dynamic interaction between education, society, and the labor market in the modern hybrid model underscores the need for ongoing critical thinking and reflection. As educational policies continually adapt to labor market demands, it becomes essential to ensure that the pursuit of economic goals does not overshadow social values such as equality, social justice, and personal development. The deep and multidimensional relationship between education, society, and the labor market in the contemporary complex model requires sustained critical thought and careful balancing between economic objectives and social values.

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