Re-branding Neoliberalism and Systemic Dilemmas in Social Development: The Case of Education and School Fees in Latin American HIPCs

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Introduction

Using Latin America as a broad context and drawing on evidence from some of its most heavily indebted states as cases, this paper considers the example of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and education as a means of exploring the question of whether poverty reduction strategies of the Bretton Woods Institutions (the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, herein referred to as BWIs) merely 're-brand' damaging structural conditionality principles inherent in neoliberal development paradigms. Employing an analytical perspective that seeks to unpack the political economy of these trends, the argument offered here is predicated both on a conception of hegemony adapted from Gramsci (1971), as well as an understanding of the dynamic of neoliberalism as an imperialistic and 'colonizing' set of policy discourses and practices, or a 'material-discursive dialectic' between the hegemony of neoliberal policy discourses and their attendant impacts when realized in various policy practices in education (Davidson-Harden, 2005). Neoliberalism is here understood as constitutive of trends and preferences toward privatization, deregulation, and commodification as modes of social policy wielded by a 'restructured' state whose principal aim is to continually 're-order' all aspects of the social according to the image of the market, both to facilitate capital accumulation on the one hand, and to promote a neoliberal vision for the state and society, on the other. The latter part of this project features a continual aim of re-shaping society in the image of the market, or in Polanyian terms (Polanyi, 1944), the continual 'dis-embedding' of the market from society, along with an attempt to entrench a vision of market society as a normatively preferred and 'superior' mode of social organization. Regimes of neoliberal conditionality are understood here as attributable to poor Latin American states' 'illegitimate debts', used as instruments of powerful leverage on the part of richer countries over poorer countries.

The case of school fees and the costs of education in these contexts stands out as a stark example of the material consequences (in terms of policy practices and preferences) of the hegemony still enjoyed by neoliberal-inspired 'solutions' (in terms of policy discourses) for educational development proffered both by the BWIs and various pro-neoliberal policy advocates and researchers. Restricted social spending on the one hand, as well as a stubborn preference for variously 'privatized' and 'marketized' modes of educational 'delivery' on the other, form the basis of the current political economics of the neoliberal development paradigm as it continues to play itself out in Latin American education, and particularly in its most heavily indebted states. The stubborn preference for neoliberal policy discourses and practices both broadly speaking, and specifically with respect to education in the context of regimes of debt continues to frustrate the substantial achievement of even the most modest of targets for educational development in the region. These factors will be explored as ongoing systemic dilemmas of (neoliberal) development that have disproportionate impacts both along gender and identity (in the case of indigenous peoples) lines, evidenced in a terrain of unequal 'educational opportunities' (or the prevalence of 'educational human rights violations'), integrated factors that are organically tied to the outstanding levels of social polarization and inequality evidenced across the region, including in its poorest states.

In addition to the argument that PRSPs comprise a 're-branding of neoliberalism', this paper will offer the additional contention that the mechanism of the PRSP has been a significant instrument for the co-optation and accommodation of erstwhile critics within the process of 'owning' country-based consultations on poverty reduction (embodying an example of a type of 'inclusive neoliberalism' along the lines suggested by Craig and Porter, 2006), which embody a process of further entrenching a core set of neoliberal macroeconomic conditions that northern banks require to facilitate capitalist accumulation for the few, under the guise of seeking that panacea, economic growth along with its elusive promise of 'poverty reduction'. In the continuing preference for the neoliberal ideological focus on market mechanisms as preferred and more 'efficient' means of allocating public spending resources, IFIs and donor governments continue to impose neoliberal policies in development strategies that reverberate in social sectors such as education, while a dominant orientation toward loans as well as bilateral aid belies deeper issues of neoliberalism's failure to lift countries in the global south out of poverty through its dictates, as well as its success in entrenching this poverty as a factor in ongoing relations of dependency. On the basis of an interrogation of these dynamics, which act as systemic dilemmas affecting educational development Latin America's poorest and most heavily indebted states, the author will argue that until neoliberalism's core conditions and normative preference for 'marketized' modes of development are effectively challenged and alternatives are acknowledged, progress toward the achievement of basic goals of equity of access to education and other forms of social rights will continue to be frustrated in the Latin America's most vulnerable states, and beyond. In the face of still-hegemonic neoliberalism, the struggle for alternatives is a type of 'counter-hegemonic' struggle based in a discourse of human rights as well as a strong role for states in social investment and development.

The 'elephant in the room': Latin American debt and its social consequences, with a focus on selected 'HIPCs'

Within its ambit, this paper will not pretend to be able to comprehensively treat the subject of regimes of external debt across Latin America as a region. That much broader analytical task would expand the scope of the present argument beyond the capability for clarity and an attempt at a concise focus on education. Instead, using a few macro-economic indicators and figures to paint a broad portrait of regimes of debt across the region, we will focus here on the cases of a few of the region's most heavily indebted countries – Bolivia, Honduras and Nicaragua – all officially recognized as 'Heavily Indebted Poor Countries' (HIPCs) by the BWIs and all accountable for PRSPs. Even within this somewhat narrower focus, the aim here is not to provide a comprehensive account of the complex picture of indebtedness and its parameters for education. Levels of private and bilateral debt, for example, are not included in the following 'portrait' of these three countries, but do merit consideration in terms of estimating the 'debt burden' the citizens of these countries face. Indeed, the complexity of the task of assessing the public debt and its consequences for citizens – a few of which will be explored here – represents a challenge that many civil society movements across Latin America and beyond have taken up with citizen-driven 'debt audit' processes [1] . This being said, it is possible to evoke something of the debt-driven political economy of education even through the limited means utilized here.

The two most important factors concerning regimes of Latin American debt driving the present argument are a) a consideration of substantial portions of foreign public debt as 'illegitimate' or 'odious', and b) a consideration of the 'strangling' effect of heavy indebtedness on social expenditure, including that on education.

With respect to the first factor, an increasing host of critics in various citizen-driven critical social movements have contributed to mounting the convincing case that the public debts in question themselves ought to be considered as illegitimiate or 'odious' (cf. Mandel, 2006; Nacpil, 2005; Hanlon, 2002). The BWIs themselves were initially intended to solve short-term balance of payments problems in the post-WWII context. With the U.S. dominating lending to post-war Europe under the Marshall Plan, the Bank and Fund, particularly beginning under Robert McNamara in the 1970s, began a program of lending to poorer countries. Several exogenous economic shocks, however, contributed to the precipitous ballooning of the debts of these new recipient countries – among which the oil shock of 1973 and the interest rate fluctuations of the early 1980s deserve special credit, raising the level of total external debt among developing countries from U.S. $70 billion in 1973 to approximately $540 billion by 1982. Today the global figure has mushroomed to approximately $2.8 trillion USD for the world's developing countries (Ferraro & Rosser, 1994; World Bank, 2006; CETIM, 2006). As a consequence, the estimated $100 billion (an optimistic figure) in debt relief that has been disbursed to recipient countries during the years 1989-2005 does not even equal half of the amount hemorrhaged from sub-Saharan African countries alone in the form of debt service payments between 1980 and 2000, for example, an estimated $240 billion USD (Dembele, 2005).

In Latin America, we can consider the fact that the total external debt amounted to 32.5 billion (current) USD in 1970, whereas in 2004 this figure had ballooned to approximately 778.9 billion (current) USD. The amount siphoned from Bolivia, Honduras and Nicaragua in debt service payments alone over this time – 26.2 billion USD – comprises nearly 81% of the total external debt of the entire Latin American region in 1970 (USAID, 2006), and dwarfs the principal owed by Bolivia in the same year (588.3 million USD), as well as that of Honduras (110.6 million) and Nicaragua (202.8 million). When one considers – as does a recent report (Mandel, 2005) – that the 'odiousness' and illegitimacy of such transfers and debts not only stems from unpredictable exogenous shocks but also from the actions of occasional money-hoarding, corrupt dictators (we may consider Somoza in Nicaragua and Banzer in Bolivia among such a group, and many others who enjoyed support from the BWIs in their time), the validity of these debts in the eyes of the publics of affected countries can be roundly called into question. At the time of writing, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) had formally agreed to go ahead with a cancellation of its share of multilateral debt to go along with debt relief commitments as a part of the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative announced at the G8 meeting in 2005. As reported by the European Network on Debt and Development, the deal – which came about due to severe pressure from civil society movements and coalitions – will see the cancellation of 380 million USD for Bolivia, 717 million USD for Honduras, and 505 million USD for Nicaragua (as well as promises for Guyana and a conditional promise for beleaguered Haiti – upon its meeting of HIPC conditions) (EURODAD, 2006). These are no small sums, however, juxtaposed with the amounts hemorrhaged from these three countries under the tutelage of neoliberalism, as noted above, they are a token. Critics – and particularly those who advocate for the 'illegitimacy' of these debts – call not only for total debt cancellation (including of related private and bilateral debts), but for reparations to be paid to southern nations by the usurious northern banks and governments who are responsible for the era of 'structural adjustment' and now its transformation into 'poverty reduction strategies'.

The social consequences of heavy indebtedness and burdensome debt service priorities/obligations has been linked to systemic neglect for proper funding and involvement on the part of the state in education. The orientation of the state away from social investment and public services and toward BWI-driven export economics and financial/trade liberalization constitutes the fundamentals of the neoliberal shift required by the Washington consensus. What social movement activists and citizens have been arguing for years, in the meantime, has finally been realized on print through some of the multilateral lenders themselves. Lora and Olivera (2006), for example, confirm in their working paper for the IDB that higher levels of indebtedness as well as the burden of debt servicing obligations have contributed to a trend of declining social expenditures in Latin America as a region, leading to an incidence of marked lower contributions as measured in percentage of GDP in Latin America as a region as compared with other parts of the world. They note that a particular shortfall occurs in education expenditures comparatively, with the gap between education expenditures as a percentage of GDP in the region as compared with “developing countries of East Asia, Europe and Central Asia, and Africa” totaling 1.2 percent (Lora & Olivera, 2006, pp. 14-15). These authors additionally argue that default on external debt in this context could be beneficial in removing the 'debt burden' from the shoulders of states to be able to allocate funds to social programmes of various kinds. Along these lines, the authors note that resources directed toward payment of debt interest payments (debt service) average 2.8 percent of GDP across Latin America annually, and that this amount would be enough to increase total social expenditures by 25 percent (Lora & Olivera, 2006, p. 4) . Soederberg and Taylor (2004) highlight Argentina's case in advancing the argument that a new mechanism for 'sovereign default' needs to be introduced into the global financial architecture to deal with the untenable situation of heavily indebted states in Latin America (although the argument holds globally) toward their ability to escape the 'policy straitjacket' neoliberal conditions on debt have ensnared these states in. No such mechanism as yet exists, however. Across Latin America as a whole, debt servicing obligations as a percentage of GDP rose from 4.0 to 7.8% just from 1990-2004 (UNDP, 2006), while education expenditures as a percentage of GDP in Bolivia, Honduras and Nicaragua outstrip debt service payments in 2004 by only a slim margin (UNDP, 2006).

A brief sketch of some features of unequal education in Latin America and its HIPCs

In Latin America, more than two decades of neoliberal-driven education policy has resulted in exacerbated social polarization across the region. As we move into the 21st century, Latin America continues to be the most unequal region of the planet. Current trends suggest that in many Latin American countries this situation is not improving, and in some countries it is actually getting worse. Though Argentina and Brazil have, with their large populations, affected averages in terms of the region's nominal decrease in within-country inequality, the bulk of the region's poorer countries (with a few exceptions, e.g. Costa Rica, Uruguay, Cuba) have experienced rises in in inequality in tandem with their implications in regimes of debt and conditionality. In Latin American countries more than 30% of total income is concentrated in the richest

10% of households, and in many countries the former figure is over 35%. In contrast, the share of total income corresponding to the poorest 40% of households falls between 9% and 15% (ECLAC, 2002). The statistics are even sharper for the three Latin American HIPC countries of concern here. According to the most recently compiled statistics from a joint World Bank and Argentine university-maintained database tracking various demographics including household wealth and social polarization (including the use of equivalized income scales), 61.3% of all wealth was concentrated in the most wealthy 20% of Bolivian households in 2002, whereas the bottom 20% held just 1.6% of the share of household income. In Honduras in 2001 the same comparison finds 56.5% vs. 2.8%, and in Nicaragua in 2004, 56.9% vs. 4%. In conventional per capita income terms, Bolivia's Gini coefficient measured 0.601 in 2002, while Honduras' was 0.545 in 2004 and Nicaragua's 0.544 in 2001 (SEDLAC, 2006). ECLAC has repeated in recent years that the pronounced and globally distinctive levels of inequality in countries of the region must be addressed in order to realistically work toward 'reducing' poverty (ECLAC, 2006; ECLAC/UNDP/IPEA, 2002). For large sectors of the region's population, this rampant inequality is expressed in high levels of unemployment, underemployment, malnutrition, high rates of disease, and overall poverty, well reflected in comprehensive measures such as those reflected in the UNDP's Human Development Index, where Nicaragua ranks 112th out of 177 countries, Bolivia 115th and Honduras 117th.

In this context, while statistics in some cases show school enrollment and access has kept up a growing pace since the 1980s across the region in general (UNDP, 2006; UNDP, 2001; Carnoy, 2002; Winkler & Gershberg, 2000), at the same time aggregate funding cutbacks as well as wider issues of social inequity and poverty across the region have arguably compromised the 'quality' or the type of educational experiences teachers are able to provide for students (Carnoy, 2002, Borón and Torres, 1996), concerns that reflect types of 'measures' for education that are frequently omitted or ignored in conventional instruments emphasizing enrollment and retention (Stomquist, 2004). Further, indicators such as gross or net enrollment must be complemented with those addressing dropouts or 'school survival' in order to get a fuller picture of the state of education in the region and in some of its poorest and most heavily indebted states. In particular, the region's ignominious distinction as the most unequal on the planet is borne out forcefully in statistics attesting to the inequality of educational attainment (or 'school survival') levels in Latin American countries, as shown in a three separate figures from a recent report by ECLAC on progress toward the MDGs (included in Appendix 1). The first of these figures relates to the incidence of failure to complete a basic/primary education program correlated with highest and lowest income quintiles. In Nicaragua, for example, one of the region's official HIPC countries, nearly 60% of those in the lowest income quintile had failed to complete a primary education in 2002, whereas only 12.5% of those in the highest income quintile, in contrast, failed to complete this level of education in the same timeframe. In Honduras, the same comparison obtains 54.1% vs. 6.9%, and in Bolivia, 38.9% vs. 5%. Related figures track the inequalities between place of residence along urban/rural lines, finding pronounced differences showing the disadvantage of the rural poor. A background paper for the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report for Latin America reported that the average years of schooling for adults aged 25-39 was 9.2 for urban Bolivia as opposed to 4.0 for rural Bolivia, with similar discrepancies for Honduras at 7.5 vs. 3.5, and Nicaragua at 6.9 vs. 3.1 years (Umayahara, 2005). Finally, indigenous peoples are shown to suffer pronounced inequality in primary completion rates and indeed across most educational indicator categories, with differences most pronounced between them and non-indigenous young people in Bolivia when it comes to educational attainment/school survival (ECLAC, 2005, p. 90-91). These figures witness to the fact of what Stromquist (2004) refers to as inequality as a 'way of life' impacting on social class and education across the region. When unpacked further, systemic discrimination along gender and identity/ethnic lines shows itself, particularly when it comes to the state of indigenous peoples' as well as Afro-descendant peoples' educational opportunities across the diverse region (Hopenhayn, 2005).

Funding cutbacks have been achieved under what Carnoy describes as the 'finance-driven' imperative for education reform in Latin America (2002, p. 296) which accords with the region's long history with neoliberal economic and social policy prescriptions and directives, oriented toward more fundamental goals of servicing debts, as alluded to above. Efforts at education reform in this context have been driven primarily and most significantly by an economic imperative to reduce aggregate social expenditures, whether as a measure of 'sound fiscal policy' or as conditions attached to programs and loans administered by the World Bank, International Monetary Fund or Interamerican Development Bank. Neoliberal education policies in Latin America have commonly taken the shape of 'decentralization' efforts, aimed at scaling down the role of central governments in direct responsibility for different aspects of education, toward increased provincial/regional, municipal and notably private involvement in education (Carnoy, 2002; Munín, 1998; Borón and Torres, 1996). All of these thrusts for neoliberal policy discourses have found expression in the mechanisms of adjustment from the BWIs, consistent from the era of 'structural adjustment' through to today's context of 'poverty reduction'. It is to the latter era, and the BWI's role as a neoliberal 'agitator' in education policy within this era, that we now turn.

Contested discourses and systemic dilemmas of educational development: PRSPs and the 're-branding' of neoliberal 'solutions'

Globally, education continues to be a key source of hope and institutional potential for reducing poverty and income inequality in poorer and wealthier nations alike. The 'big question' impugning the BWIs in this regard concerns whether currently-ascendant neoliberal methods and strategies for educational development and other types of social service provision adequately address this role, or this hope, for education. The states of Latin America boast the highest regional levels of within-country social inequality in the world. From the 'lost decade's impact to the acceleration of structural adjustment in the 1990s, the legacy of hegemonic neoliberal policies has served to entrench, sustain and exacerbate poverty and inequality, rather than ameliorate them. In order to put progress (or lack of progress) toward core goals for educational development in heavily indebted states in context, it is necessary to appreciate what I term the 'systemic dilemmas' of neoliberal development strategies that envelop and constrain efforts to realize the goal of 'education for all'. Once some of these central dynamics – revolving around debt, aid and conditionality as mechanisms levered by the BWIs and richer donor countries – are understood as a limiting framework for educational development, the frustration of reaching even modest goals (as those embodied, for example, in the Millennium Development Goals or MDGs) can be better understood as an ongoing set of tensions around the continuing pre-eminence of neoliberalism as a hegemonic discourse in international development.

Following the extremely 'bad press' of the era of 'structural adjustment' conditionality attached to multilateral loans from the BWIs during the 1980s and 90s, the Bank and Fund proceeded toward a course of action any lagging business might hope to embark upon to revive one's image. The discursive shift toward a 'poverty reduction strategy' (PRS) as the nominal focus for development loans, introduced under Wolfensohn's tenure at the Bank in 1999, led to an effective 're-branding' of the process of multilateral lending to the world's poorest countries, along with a 'change in clothes' of the structural conditions accompanying these loans, the same conditions that have come under increasingly strong and accurate criticism from all quarters for their deleterious social impact.

The PRSP is a required adjunct of the newly re-branded mode of lending created with the accompanying shift in discourse in 1999, namely the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility (PRGF), formerly the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF). Heavily indebted countries hoping to be eligible for further development loans and funding were invited to submit strategy papers that attempted to map out cross-sectoral strategies for development. All countries eligible and participating in the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative, for example, were required to develop PRSPs in order to access any further program funding, a matter this paper will return to below. The central 'spin' of the PRSP as a novel way of mediating structural adjustment processes is based principally in its nominal focus on 'participatory' processes as well as 'country ownership'. Designed to encourage consultation between IFI country leaders, government workers/leaders and various stakeholders in various sectors, PRSPs are meant to focus development strategies into a coherent inter-sectoral agenda that bilateral donors should adhere to (although unsurprisingly, no formal mechanism exists to ensure such acquiescence). With respect to education, there have been many and varied types of experiences with these participatory ventures. While intended to foster a sense of national 'ownership' of development agendas and programs mediated through the BWIs, final veto of any plan for a PRSP-mediated development approach lies with the Bank and Fund, and in many cases both the 'process and product' of PRSP processes – including the parameters of any consultative processes – have been heavily steered and constrained by the BWIs. This proverbial axe held over the head of the poorest and most needy countries is of course the most salient factor explaining the power in 'global governance' (if we are to pay homage to this catchphrase) that the BWIs have accumulated for themselves through their trusted lever of conditionality. The element of structural conditionality in providing development loans and assistance has remained consistent across the discursive shift to 'poverty reduction'. Focused on trade liberalization across a variety of key sectors, fiscal austerity and cutting social spending, privatization, deregulation and a refocusing of economies toward monetary stability and export earnings earmarked for debt service obligations, conditionality remains the principal tool whereby IFIs and donor countries exact from the poorest nations of the world an acquiescence of their dependent role within a globally polarized and asymmetrical world. This neoliberal toolkit for development, termed the Washington Consensus in honour of its central protagonists, is the consistent policy mechanism that hides beneath the re-branded wineskin of the BWIs 'poverty reduction strategy'.

Ironically, the focus on macroeconomic measures such as trade liberalization and privatization as parts of a standard neoliberal 'toolkit' has also been repeatedly called into question for its negative effect on both social polarization as well as economic growth and overall poverty levels (SAPRIN, 2004; Chossudovsky 2003; Bond, 2004; Soederberg, 2004; Kiely 2004). Such criticisms relate to the enmeshing of poor countries in a globally inequitable system that sees many subject to violent fluctuations, for one example, of key export commodities as well as interest rates on illegitimate or odious debts and loans. While the principle of comparative advantage underlying orthodox development planning dictates that countries must focus on key export commodities for profit and foreign exchange, this type of macroeconomic focus is all too rarely considered in IFI circles for its contribution to the lack of domestic production and capacity that is so heavily implicated in the sustaining of unacceptable levels of poverty and deprivation present the countries whose need is greatest.

The notion of 'participation' and ownership suffusing the discourse of the PRSP is one of the first that must be treated in any review of the effectiveness of these programs. In their own review conducted in 2002, the IMF and International Development Association concluded that stakeholder participation in development planning through the PRSP faced serious challenges. Groups as various as directly-related NGOs, CSOs such as women's and poverty groups, and even local government officials as well as representatives of involved countries' private sectors all reported serious obstacles and lack of access to 'participatory' PRSP processes. In the case of critical CSOs/citizens' groups, documented concerns centred on the lack of a forum for questioning the social impact of macroeconomic measures of privatization and trade liberalization (IMF/IDA 2002: 8), as well as the pervasiveness of critical limits to 'consultation' processes concerning substantial matters impacting poverty. This theme will be returned to in the latter part of this paper, in integrating a consideration of these dynamics with Craig and Porter's thoughts on 'inclusive neoliberalism'. Dijkstra (2005) explores several of the controversial aspects of the exclusivity of PRSP processes in Bolivia, Honduras and Nicaragua. Citing a set of similarities across each national context, he points out that each PRSP was donor-driven, heavily Washington and Bank-influenced – particularly in floated-in macroeconomic plans – and most interestingly, politically galvanizing. Least surprising, perhaps, but salutary in unpacking the reality of PRSPs is Dijkstra's enumeration of conditions attached to PRSP-related financing: 115 in Bolivia, 213 in Honduras, and 141 separate conditions in Nicaragua (Dijkstra, 2005, p. 457). Regarding their controversial nature to citizens beholden to the plans, Dijkstra places in context the fact that in each case of the initial PRSP process, governments initiating the process lost power to new parties who vowed to distance themselves from the original PRSPs. Bolivia and Nicaragua are striking examples of these shifts, as the governments of Morales and Ortega have taken power with the promise of implementing policies that give advantage to impoverished majorities in their countries, in the midst of strong reactions against BWI-mediated programs of neoliberal development. We can think of the 'water wars' of Cochabamba in 2000, for instance, or the related unrest in La Paz in 2003, as stirrings of resistance against regimes of debt and neoliberal conditionality that have shaped these nations' recent histories so substantially. Also interesting is Dijkstra's argument that in each case, parallel consultation processes were set up alongside 'official' BWI and government-driven processes, where constituent citizen movements and even foreign NGOs were critical of the scope of the emerging 'consultative', 'country-driven' processes that were to be embodied in the PRSPs. Inevitably in each case, core macroeconomic policies were off the consultative agenda, with the extreme case in Honduras of a last-minute Bank-driven inclusion of a macroeconomic framework in that country's PRSP that was taken directly from its last structural adjustment loan documents in 1999 (Dijkstra, 2005, p. 451).

Such critical and doubtful perspective concerning the PRSP's 'participatory' nature is borne out at the global level in other PRSP countries, in particular by critics in civil society/NGO circles (cf. Wood 2004). Again, the lynchpin of these criticisms remains the element of conditionality, constant across the discursive shape-shifting of the IFIs. The continuance of the basic mode of neoliberal conditionality as a mechanism for development loans and aid is borne out through several points of contradiction and tension within the IFI agendas through the PRSP process. Alexander (2004) highlights several of these in her critical work, for one. Focusing on the impact of PRSPs upon critical public services, Alexander points out a number of such points of contradiction and tension, including the centrality of other forms of country assessment of development eligibility and direction (such as the WB's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA)). In addition, Alexander and others have argued that this tension is also obvious in the centrality of the Private Sector Development (PSD) strategy in the World Bank's operations, when compared with rhetoric surrounding development and social development and services in particular.

While the BWIs have always endorsed neoliberal measures of education restructuring – including financial decentralization, and devolution of powers/standards of education management and funding as a cost-saving measure, as well as increased privatization in education – such measures have been roundly called into question for their effect on equity of access to education and in turn, on social polarization and poverty in vulnerable countries. In a 'toolkit for poverty reduction' derived from the WB/IMF 'sourcebook' for PRSPs dating from 2000, the authors rehearse a familiar litany of measures designed to improve 'efficiency' of educational expenditure, which include 'cost recovery' (i.e., increased tuition) in higher education as well as competition and privatization measures in education such as vouchers, contracts and increased participation of private schools (Marope et al 2000). These types of privatization measures in education – from increased reliance on user fees (for 'cost recovery') to increased private provision – have been criticized for negative impact on equity in education. Meanwhile, proponents of this neoliberal toolkit for education continue to argue (disingenuously) for its effectiveness based on equity goals, again using the discursive 'wrapping' of equity to dress up neoliberal policies for education, a tactic analyzed previously other critical scholars (Schugurensky 2000). It is with reference to this set of 'foreground' debates in neoliberal discourses and policy practices in education that we now turn, to help unpack various examples of the impact of these trends.

A trend toward further unequal education and the 'privatization of education by default'

The BWI preference for a focus on neoliberal-inspired education policies of 'decentralization' and forms of privatization and competition in social sectors represent a panacea offered by the Bank, Fund and related institutional actors toward purported 'efficiency' in public expenditure, which almost always works down to a bottom line of spending reductions or reduced financial transfers from a central government, and increased reliance on private expenditures and family contributions to the costs of education. The Bank is one interesting actor to interrogate in this regard. Both in general documentation as well as specifically through the IFC and its 'Edinvest' service [2] , the Bank has sought and continues to seek to encourage the growth of private, including for-profit, educational initiatives in developing countries globally through strategic loans [3] , while the impact in terms of accessibility – or lack thereof – due to fees or 'family contributions' continues to be a bone of contention for the institution in the eyes of a host of civil society movements and critics. The central contradiction lies in the fact that while the BWIs enthusiastically support neoliberal education policy discourses as purportedly working toward equity in education, the policy practices engendered by these discourses encourage the growth of an 'educational private sector', the mandate of part of which may indeed be to provide paid access to 'basic' as well as other (including tertiary and adult) educational 'services'. The weakness of this position is highlighted further in another IFC document entitled 'Investing in Private Education: IFC's Strategic Directions' (IFC, 2001). In a subsection titled 'improving equity', the authors outline how fee-paying educational institutions, that is movement *away* from free education, might 'improve' equity:

Private education can indirectly benefit the lowest socioeconomic groups by attracting families who can afford some level of fee away from the public system, thereby increasing capacity and per student spending for the students who remain in the public system. Similarly, the emergence of private tertiary institutions allows governments to reduce funding in such institutions and instead to invest in lower levels of education, thus improving distributive efficiency (IFC, 2001, p.5)

Of course, much World Bank literature rejects out of hand that such an encouragement multi-tiered systems of education based on the ability to pay would have negative impacts on social or educational equity, a dynamic well attested to in comparative educational research (e.g., Carnoy, 2004; Borón & Torres, 1996; Schugurensky & Davidson-Harden, 2003; Reimers, 2000). The U.K. Department for International Development (DfID) commissioned a research paper on education that found that 'lack of money to pay school expenses' was a principal factor affecting children leaving school in their comparative study of developing countries (Boyle et al, 2002). Indeed, the Bank's own official position, having traversed from outright support of user fees in services including education to its recent vacillation and settlement on a stance against school fees, remains mired in the contradictions of different types of fees still be levied 'on the ground', due for the most part to a lack of adequate public finance and a concomitant reliance on private (family or student) finance for education. Nowhere is this hypocrisy of neoliberal hegemony better attested to than in the work of the recently deceased (and much missed) Katarina Tomasevski, former Special Rapporteur of the Secretary-General on the right to education from 1998-2004. Working from a framework that views school fees as an educational 'human rights violation', Tomasevski and several of her colleagues worked to track the status of various sorts of fees charged for basic and secondary education globally. Her most recent report, published in August 2006, documented incidences of different types of fees as still prevalent across Latin America as a region, and particularly in its heavily indebted states.

Commenting on the effect of neoliberalism on education in Latin America from a human rights perspective, Tomasevski writes:

> The period which became known as *la década perdida* (the lost decade) amplified substantive disagreements about governmental obligations in education. Were governments obliged to provide education or merely to regulate its provision? Were governments obliged to make at least primary education free or to levy charges so as to diminish fiscal deficits and facilitate debt servicing?

> The recipe was forged in the US capital, the headquarters of the US government, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and is thus known as the Washington Consensus.1049 This blueprint effectively denied the right to education by making corresponding governmental obligations impossible. Adequate and sustained funding for public education was undermined by prioritizing debt servicing, and the shortfall in budgetary funds was made up by levying fees and other charges. This victimised, in particular, children.1050 Also, it profoundly weakened public education. Both impoverishment and inequalities increased. Although the recipe was supposed to be about economics and human rights were not mentioned, the human rights impact of the Washington Consensus was – and is - profound. (Tomasevksi, 2006, p. 182)

Describing the resulting phenomenon as a “privatization of the financial responsibility for education”, Tomasevski documented in her August 2006 report the reality of PRSPs in all three Latin American HIPC countries discussed here ignoring the matter of the breakdown of the 'costs of education', or specifically, the reality of increased sorts of private and family (and student) financing of education, including at the basic/primary and secondary levels. Various types of school fees [4] , for example are common in Honduras, whose constitution contains a guarantee for free education that according to Tomasevski, is basically unenforceable, as it is in most other Latin American countries where such a guarantee is present. Such a shift is the natural consequence of the withdrawal of the state from a commitment to an adequate enough level of financing for education – from safe infrastructure, to materials, to the education of teachers and their remuneration, that of support staff, etc. – that might preclude families and students ('communities') from picking up the slack in the financing of education. In this context BWI and other neoliberal-friendly rhetoric around 'community participation' in decentralization initiatives in education must be translated into a tolerance, or outright encouragement, of 'community' (family, student) roles in 'demand-side' financing of education, to use one neoliberal catchphrase (Patrinos, 2006; Patrinos & Ariasingam, 1997). In a recent volume complimentary of trends toward increasingly privatized education in Latin America, Wolff, Navarro and Gonzalez note the ubiquity of fees in the region's education systems:

> ... nearly every public institution (even those that are officially and constitutionally “free”) receives some form of private funding, ranging from student fees and semi-voluntary parental contributions to service contracts with private agencies. Parents and students expend a significant amount of funds to attend public schools to cover elements such as textbooks, examination fees,

> uniforms, and gifts through parent-teacher associations (PTAs). For example, a World Bank study found that parents contributed an amount equivalent to 20 percent of the public costs of primary education in Peru (World Bank 1999). Assuming $50 per year per student for public primary and secondary schools and $100 per student for public higher education institutions, the total private expenditure on public schools could be as much as $5 billion annually. (Wolff, Navarro, & Gonzalez, 2005, pp. 10-11)

Rather than honour these types of findings as evidence impugning their enthusiasm for neoliberal 'solutions' for education, the discourse emanating from the World Bank and IFC on private education attempts to frame the introduction of the market mechanism into education as the 'best solution' to equity in developing countries. Within this contradiction lies the stark example of the charging of user fees of various sorts in educational settings, including in basic or primary education. While abolition of fees for schooling has led to dramatic improvements in school attendance across a variety of contexts, the logic of 'investing in private education' advocated by the IFC and World Bank on the other hand arguably agitates in the contrary direction, and toward educational governance mechanisms that have been shown to exacerbate equity by stratifying and limiting access to education. All of this is in the context of an official Bank shift to a policy explicitly *against* user fees in education/school fees, bringing out the subtle lines of hypocrisy in neoliberal policy discourses to the fore (cf. Hutton, 2004).

These types of policy directives again derive from the specious reasoning that overall equity is to be increased if more user fees and 'demand-side management' (Patrinos & Ariasingam 1997; Patrinos, 2006) are introduced into higher/postsecondary education, although occasionally basic and secondary education are not exempt from arguments encouraging increased privatization on nominal equity goals (cf. Tooley 1999a/b). This nominal logic of redistribution is refuted both by the effect of user fees on lessening equity of access to education at any level (cf. Boyle et al 2002), as well as for the lack of acknowledgement/redress of the systemic constraints presented by loan conditionality, both from previous multilateral lending and present PRSP programs. Bonal (2002) highlights this consistency of the IFIs by pointing out that the focus on 'poverty reduction' employs an exclusively compensationist strategy – emphasizing on targeted, limited help for those most in need in various settings – rather than a mode of engagement that considers any of the “progressive or regressive” redistributive impacts of neoliberal measures enshrined through mechanisms of structural conditionality. In the meantime, the arm of the WB dedicated to partnering with the global private sector for development financing – the International Finance Corporation (IFC) – retains a stalwart focus on implementing the thrust of the Private Sector Development strategy in encouraging further privatization of education (IFC 2001; IFC Edinvest 2001; IFC Health and Education Group 2001) regardless of any critical concerns with equity impacts.

Other critical literature analyzing this thrust of the BWIs has centred on the intersection of such an agenda with the goal of commodifying education through international trade regimes (e.g., Schugurensky & Davidson-Harden 2003), where the higher education 'services industry' poses the best chance for profit to those who seek it. Writing in a special issue of the UNESCO Courier in 2000, Guttman noted that private expenditure at that time comprised a fifth of the $2 trillion USD that comprises global public expenditures on education (Guttman, 2000). Despite setbacks in terms of more governments staking out protections against the 'liberalization' of educational 'services through trade agreements such as the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization, the momentum in this direction – given its potential profitability – stubbornly clings to whatever life it can muster, despite widespread resistance in global civil society/critical social movements and among a host of national and transnational education 'stakeholders'.

In sum, the systemic dilemmas of development providing the backdrop to frustration in progress toward educational development portray the current 'Janus-face' of BWIs and donor nations with respect to aid and lending for crucial social development, including in education. The two-sidedness is engendered by these actors' public commitment to development through focused targets such as the MDGs as well as the honouring of human rights instruments as keys to development, and concurrent focus on mechanisms of governance and investment (whether through conditionalities on lending or otherwise) that can be seen to directly exacerbate the problems of equity and access that so critically prefigure discussion of development goals. Whether 'conditionality', as in the case of the report offered by Greenhill and Sisti (2003), is to be focused on development and rights or macroeconomic stability predicated on monetarist fiscal policy and debt servicing obligations is the principal tension underlying these debates.

The presence of the ultimate fiat of IFIs in dictating modes of is accompanied by the persistent problem of a lack of predictable aid from richer countries, another point that is touched upon briefly by the authors in their survey of the future of educational development with respect to PRSPs. In interviews with managers and 'country leaders' involved in PRSP processes relating to education, the authors found a lack of proper answers to perennial problems plaguing educational development in poorer countries, including the volatility of bilateral aid and a lack of predictability and sustainability of funding earmarked for education. In addition, the realization of the PRSP process 'on the ground' has attested to the fact that even the truncated and delimited forms of 'participation' and 'domestic ownership' of PRSPs – touched upon above – suffer from a variance in the capacity of CSOs/NGOs in different country contexts to engage in PRSP processes. The 'strength' of civil society and education stakeholders in particular inevitably varies between countries and contexts, rendering the task of aiming at a substantially 'participatory' process challenging, even within the structural constraints dictated by the IFIs at the helm of the PRSP process. For instance, in Bolivia, CSOs voiced strong discontent with the nature of the PRSP process with respect to education.

Hegemonic attempts at 'inclusive neoliberalism', resistance and alternatives to systemic dilemmas in neoliberal development and its educational impacts

As this paper has argued, the specific problematics of education in the context of an agenda for social investment toward realizing goals of educational development are embedded in more broad, systemic dilemmas of neoliberal development strategies, hinging debt and the 'conditionalities' of international aid and loans. As touched upon above, the G8 finance ministers announced in June of 2005 a plan to cancel 100% of multilateral debt owed to the World Bank, International Monetary Fund and African Development Bank (Saunders, 2005), a plan that has since been modestly expanded to address debt relief for the four Latin American HIPC countries. Aid agencies and other NGOs as well as impoverished governments have welcomed these announcement as hard-fought, much needed and even precedent-setting steps. However, the same commentators have pointed out the limitations of the agreements, which are evident from their focus on existing lending infrastructure as a point of departure (cf. EURODAD, 2006b; Reilly-King, 2006). As such, this recent debt relief initiative and flashpoint, as it were, offer an interesting way-in to exploring both the systemic dilemmas facing heavily indebted states' difficulty meeting targets for educational development, and attempts on the part of BWIs and northern governments to entrench and expand the hegemony of neoliberal policy discourses and practices, both in and most importantly beyond education to poor or 'periphery' societies as a whole.

The first critical limitation to the plan announced by the G8 finance ministers as well as the IDB's subsequent plan relates to the anchor in the flawed Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative. That is to say, the 30 countries covered by the recent announcement (HIPC 'completion' and 'decision' point countries) are those that have completed the HIPC process along with its myriad hoops of neoliberal conditions. These required elements of structural conditionality, however, that have been roundly criticized from many quarters for exacerbating social conditions, are deemed necessary toward the affected countries eventual achievement of what is termed 'debt sustainability'. Some of the most strident criticism, therefore, of present arrangements for debt cancellation – while couched in welcome for the beginning steps offered – is rooted in the fact that many other heavily indebted countries (in Latin America we can think of Guatemala and El Salvador, for example) are not included in the HIPC initiative and therefore are not covered by the terms released in this particular G8-brokered deal. A Reuters news release at the time of the Gleneagles summit reported that aid agencies estimate that 62 poor countries require similar relief if they are to have any chance of realizing the MDGs in the working timeframe by 2015 (Reuters, 2005).

In addition, there are other perspectives one can take that provide some critical context for the limitations of the BWI and northern donor-driven HIPC modality for addressing the development needs of the world's poorest countries. A recent and innovative report tracks progress with HIPC goals for debt relief in the 42 countries that are officially classified under the HIPC criteria. Instead of utilizing the criteria for debt sustainability incorporated into the initiative itself – based on debt servicing availability as compared with export earnings – the report's authors use an alternative human development-based criterion for comparison. This mode considers debt servicing commitments with funding left over that is available to address MDG targets in line with countries' international human rights commitments in various areas. According to this criterion, the report finds that 27 of the total 42 HIPC-classifed countries (including 15 that had reached 'completion point' at the time of writing the report) were not 'debt sustainable' with respect to ability to achieve MDG commitments (Greenhill & Sisti, 2003). Such a problematic framework is compounded by other pressing economic factors such as the falling of primary commodity exports in such countries, another factor related to inequities not only with respect to social inequality at the domestic level, but in trade asymmetries at the global level. An even more embarrassing report tabled in May 2006 by the Bank's Independent Evaluations Group reported that half of all HIPC countries had regressed into levels of debt equivalent to what they were before they joined the initiative. The same report highlighted the fact that 11 of 13 countries studied had debt levels that had, in fact, risen.

Debt relief schemes such as the HIPC initiative and loans from IFIs and bilateral donor governments operate on the basis of a critical modality that is also heavily implicated in poorer countries lack of progress in investing capacity toward realizing MDGs. The notion of conditionality subsequently highlights the harmful effects that both bilateral and particularly multilateral lending have had on the world's poorest nations. 'Structural conditionalities', or imposed policy regimes tied to bilateral and particularly multilateral lending, have been thoroughly indicted for their effect in hampering development in the world's poorest countries. In addition, it must be understood that debt cancellation alone, for instance – however limited or expansive – is tied to a host of other systemic problematics in current approaches to development. The dominant thinking in terms of structural conditionalities, with their adverse effects for social sectors [5] , must be understood in a web of complex mitigating and frustrating factors affecting citizens of poorer countries, that run the gamut from unfair trade architecture protecting richer countries' markets, to rampant and deregulated foreign direct investment in vulnerable countries, delinked both from investment in local capacity-building and employment and from human rights or other social and environmental criteria.

It is in this complex web of asymmetrical and dependent development that the political economy of education tenuously sits. PRSPs, which are a required adjunct of the HIPC plan, can be seen in this context as a project attempting to extend a badly-needed legitimacy to the regimes of debt that have been so forcefully impugned for their destructive impact by global social movements and citizen movements in affected countries; what Craig and Porter describe as an 'inclusive neoliberalism' (2006). However, this attempted project has been arguably seen for what it is by many in affected Latin American states and beyond, as a neoliberal 'emperor without clothes', as it were. From the strong and vibrant social movements in Bolivia (inclusive of active teacher union members), active in the context of contesting the privatization of water and the intensification of neoliberalism from 1999-2003, to fusion between teachers and the Landless Workers' Movement in Brazil (Diniz-Pereira, 2005), to solidarity with the nonviolent campaign of the Zapatistas in Mexico, trends of resistance have flourished across Latin America in response to the continuing demands of neoliberal hegemony. Gentili, Suarez, Stubrin and Gindin (2005) note the growing militancy of teachers' unions in Latin America in the context of the late period of structural adjustment in the 1990s and the new 'era' of poverty reduction (2005), which has seen a precipitous rise in collective action on the basis of a variety of factors, but notably in solidarity with other social movements and concerning other issues than education per se. With the electoral reaction to ostensibly anti-neoliberal leaders in Bolivia and Nicaragua (although Ortega has been quite acquiescent so far to neoliberal constraints), publics in affected countries continue to tilt toward political options – both electoral and non-electoral – that can help realize the goal of alternative paths to development. Along these lines, arguably the strongest yet example of 'chipping' at the edges of global capital and its dictates in the region is encompassed in the Bolivarian Revolution advanced by Chávez and Venezuela, whose momentum toward constructing policy alternatives to neoliberalism continues to propel new, potential 'post-neoliberal' realities forward. In addition to its own bold advances in promoting equity in education (access to higher education is now enshrined as a constitutional right) (Muhr & Verger, 2006), Venezuela's advancement of alternative trade regimes for the region in the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) promises to be a grand 'post-neoliberal' experiment outside the hegemony of the U.S. in the hemisphere. Already ALBA members Venezuela, Nicaragua and Bolivia have withdrawn from the Bank-controlled International Centre for the Settlement of Investment Disputes (famously implicated in the Cochabamba water conflict). Honduras is also currently being 'courted' for inclusion in ALBA. Venezuela's (and Cuba's) remarkable wresting of economic capacity toward social investment has been an inspiration across the region and well beyond.

With respect to the context of education in regimes of debt, transnational social movements and conferences such as the World Social Forum and its constituent World Education Forum have been an important venue for enunciating a defense of the idea of education as a public service and a common good, rather than a tradable commodity or 'personal investment' as per the rubrics of hegemonic neoliberalism. In these settings, with their extensive and grounded links with critical citizen-driven movements across Latin America and the global south in general, we see the germ of what Craig and Porter refer to as a Polanyian 'double movement', a powerful response and the beginnings of a pendulum shift confronting the excesses and destructive legacy of the 'dis-embedded' market society and its impacts for education. The author of this article participated in such movements in activism and writing around the potential impacts of the GATS for education in Latin America and in Canada; the resulting tide of attention and concern, as well as the eventual concession on the part of most governments to 'protect' public education from the potential consequences of the agreement, were the fruits of the labour of global social movements, advancing their own 'hegemony', of alternative visions of educational development to the neoliberal norm. These alternatives, whether rooted in the discourses of human rights to education, or 'education for all' and their related existing instruments [6], have been articulated both as defenses against advancing neoliberal discourses and policy practices and as pillars of alternative social policy paradigms.

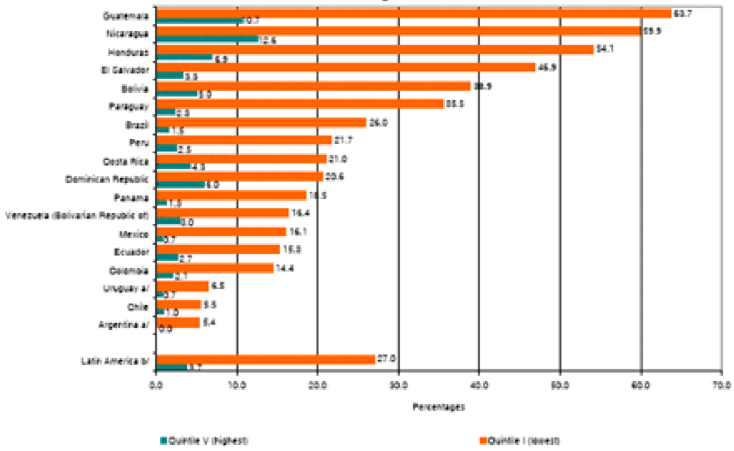
Either modality speaks to the potential of what Craig and Porter describe as 'territorialized' forms of governance to re-emerge against the 'dis-embedded' and market-driven neoliberal model currently on offer through institutions of 'global (mis)governance' in the BWIs, the WTO, and the host of related development banks and trade agreements that reinforce hegemonic neoliberalism. The questioning of the legitimacy of the PRSPs and the ongoing trend to privatization in education in the Americas and beyond are but the sharp edge of the sword when it comes to hypothesizing any potential 'double movement', in Craig and Porter's terms, in reaction to the primacy of neoliberal policy discourses and their attendant contested practices. Meanwhile, the drama of a 'material-discursive dialectic' between neoliberal policy discourses and practices in education continues apace, with its hegemonic status always contested. What the next few steps in the 21st century will bring in terms of movements for different 'hegemonies' remains to be seen, or perhaps more accurately, remains to be attempted.

Appendix 1: Figures from ECLAC on inequalities in education based on social class, place of residence and indigenous ethnicity

Figure III.5

LATIN AMERICA (18 COUNTRIES): PERSONS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 19 WHO HAVE NOT COMPLETED THEIR PRIMARY EDUCATION, BY INCOME QUINTILES (NATIONAL TOTALS), CIRCA 2002

(Percentages)



Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Universal primary completion in Latin America: are we really so near the goal? Regional Report on Education-related Millennium Development Goals*, Santiago, Chile, UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, October 2004.

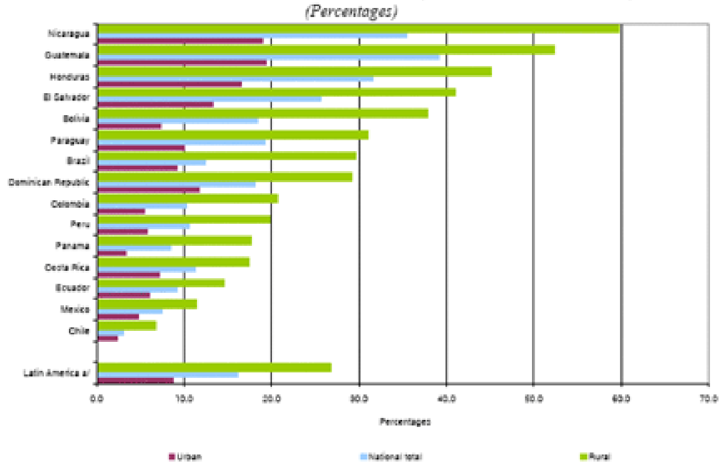
[a] Urban total.

[b] Simple average for the countries.

Figure III.6

LATIN AMERICA (15 COUNTRIES): PERSONS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 19 WHO HAVE NOT COMPLETED THEIR PRIMARY EDUCATION, BY AREA OF RESIDENCE, 2002

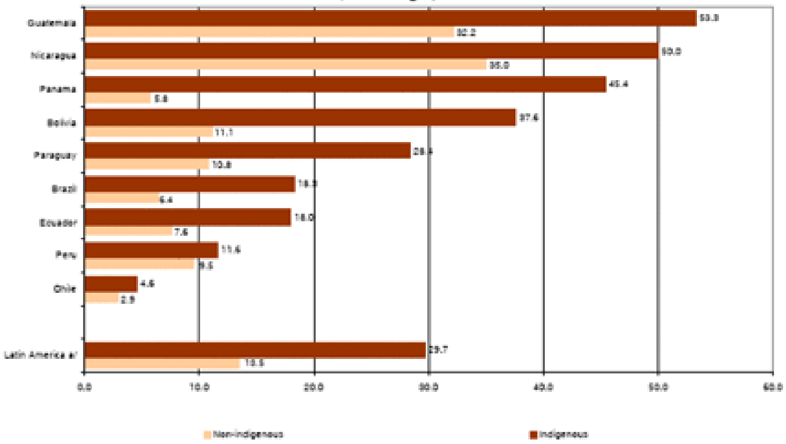
(Percentages)



Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Universal primary completion in Latin America: are we really so near the goal? Regional Report on Education-related Millennium Development Goals*, Santiago, Chile, UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, October 2004.

[a] Simple average of the countries.

Figure III.7
LATIN AMERICA (9 COUNTRIES): PERSONS BETWEEN THE AGES OF 15 AND 19 WHO HAVE NOT COMPLETED THEIR PRIMARY EDUCATION, BY ETHNIC OR RACIAL GROUP, AROUND 2002
(Percentages)



Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Universal primary completion in Latin America: are we really so near the goal? Regional Report on Education-related Millennium Development Goals*, Santiago, Chile, UNESCO Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean, October 2004.

[a] Simple average of the countries.

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Notes

[1] Citizen movements in Ecuador have been the first to implement this type of process, and momentum is building for related processes across Latin America. See http://www.choike.org/nuevo_eng/ifis/informes/443.html

[2] “Edinvest, the education investment information facility, is a forum for individuals, corporations and other institutions interested in education in developing countries. A service of the World Bank Group, Edinvest provides information for making private investment possible on a global scale.” (International Finance Corporation, 2002)

[3] Concurrently the IFC and the Bank in general has relied on the research a minority in the educational community who actively endorse privatized education as a development solution (e.g., Tooley, 1999a/b; Patrinos, 2006, 2001, 2000; Patrinos & Ariasingam, 1997).

[4] Tomasevski usefully highlights three categories for school fees: "*Direct* costs of education include various fees and other charges levied by schools or education authorities as well as textbooks and other learning materials. *Indirect* costs are food and clothing, which children would need whether at school or not. *Opportunity* costs are created when children are sent to school while they could be working. Eliminating charges is the first necessary step but this does not make education free. For those who cannot shoulder indirect costs of sending children to school education is still too expensive. The elimination of all direct and indirect costs does not suffice where families need children's work to survive." (Tomasevksi, 2006, p. 188, italics added)

[5] The scope of this paper cannot do justice to the realities faced on the ground by countries subject to the myriad forms of conditionality and their impact on domestic economies and social conditions. The reader is referred to others who have done good work documenting these trends for more information (e.g., Dembele, 2005; Chossudovsky, 2003)

[6] Such instruments include:

- *Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III) of 10 December 1948

- *Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, adopted by General Assembly resolution 2200A (XXI) of 16 December 1966

- *Articles 28, 29 and 30 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child*, adopted and opened for signature, ratification and accession by General Assembly resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989

- *The Dakar Framework for Action: Education For All: Meeting Our Collective Commitments* (Dakar, Senegal, 28 April 2000)

- *Convention against Discrimination in Education* adopted on 14 December 1960 by the General Conference of UNESCO at its eleventh session, held in Paris

- *Revised Recommendation concerning Technical and Vocational Education (2001),* adopted by the General Conference of UNESCO at its 31st session, November 2001

(UNESCO, 2002b)

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