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The Performing School: The Effects of Market & Accountability Policies

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Abstract: Market and accountability educational reforms have proliferated around the globe, along with high expectations of solving countries' school quality deficits and inequities. In this paper I develop an analytical framework from a *critical sociology* angle for analyzing the effects of these policies within schools. First I discuss conceptually the configuration of this quasi-market schema and develop the notion of the 'performing school'. Additionally, I study the effects of these policies within schools, based on a literature review of 130 papers, and focused particularly on a smaller body of critical sociology research (56 papers). The aim is not to produce a comprehensive overview of policy benefits and disadvantages, but to understand school transformations within the current policy scenario. Schools, in this context, are placed within a competition-based schema, where managers and teachers continuously have to compete, marketize and perform 'successfully' according to external criterion. These policies are not only changing school practices and triggering 'secondary' effects, but, moreover, they are transforming school life, ethics and teaching profession subjectivities in complex and deeply-rooted ways. In this paper I attempt to challenge policy assumptions and a technocratic view of policy implementation, and invite readers to rethink the nature and consequences of these policy formulae.

Keywords: school markets; accountability policies; performativity; critical sociology; literature review.

La escuela performativa: Los efectos de las políticas de mercado y de responsabilización con altas consecuencias

Resumen: La introducción de políticas de mercado y de “responsabilización con altas consecuencias” en el sistema escolar han proliferado en distintos países, junto a la expectativa de resolver las desigualdades educativas y los déficit en la calidad escolar. En este artículo desarrollo un marco analítico desde la perspectiva teórica de la sociología crítica con el fin de analizar estas políticas y sus consecuencias. Primero discuto conceptualmente la configuración de este modelo de quasi-mercado y desarrollo la noción de la "escuela performativa". Además, estudio los efectos de estas políticas al interior de la escuela en base a una revisión bibliográfica de 130 artículos, y me focalizo especialmente en un cuerpo más pequeño de investigación que se desarrolla desde la tradición de la sociología crítica (56 trabajos). El objetivo no es producir una descripción exhaustiva de los beneficios y las desventajas de la política, sino que entender las transformaciones de la escuela en el escenario de la política actual. Las escuelas, en este contexto, se sitúan dentro de un esquema basado en la competencia, donde los administradores y equipo docentes tienen que continuamente competir, “marketearse” y desempeñarse “exitosamente” de acuerdo a criterios externos. Estas políticas no sólo están cambiando las prácticas escolares y provocando “efectos secundarios”, pero más aún están transformando la vida cotidiana de la escuela, la ética de la gestión y las subjetividades de la profesión docente. En este trabajo cuestiono los supuestos de la política y la visión tecnocrática de su implementación, e invito a los lectores a reconsiderar su naturaleza y consecuencias.

Palabras-clave: mercados escolares; políticas de responsabilización con altas consecuencias; performatividad; sociología crítica; revisión bibliográfica

A escola performativa: Os efeitos das políticas de mercado e de responsabilização com altas consequências

Resumo: A introdução de políticas de mercado e de "responsabilização de altas consequências" no sistema escolar têm proliferado em diferentes países, com a expectativa de atender as desigualdades educacionais e déficits na qualidade da escola. Neste artigo, faço o desenvolvimento de um quadro analítico da perspectiva teórica da sociologia crítica, a fim de analisar essas políticas e suas consequências. Primeiro discuto conceitualmente a configuração deste modelo de quasi-mercado e desenvolvo a noção de "escola performativa". Além disso, estudo os efeitos dessas políticas dentro da escola baseada numa revisão da literatura de 130 artigos, e particularmente me concentro num espaço menor da pesquisa desenvolvido a partir da tradição da sociologia crítica (56 pesquisas). O objetivo não é produzir uma descrição exhaustiva das vantagens e desvantagens da política, mas entender a transformação da escola no cenário político atual. Escolas, neste contexto, estão localizados dentro de um esquema baseado na competição em que os gerentes de escolas e os professores devem continuamente competir", se introduzir no mercado " e trabalhar " com sucesso" de acordo com critérios externos. Essas políticas não estão somente mudando as práticas escolares e causando "efeitos colaterais", mas também estão transformando ainda mais a vida cotidiana da escola, a gestão da ética e a subjetividade da profissão docente. Neste artigo, questiono os pressupostos da política e a visão tecnocrática da sua implementação, e convido os leitores a reconsiderar a sua natureza e as consequências.

Palavras-chave: mercados escolares; prestação de contas político com grandes consequências; performatividade; sociologia crítica; revisão de literatura.

Introduction

In recent times educational policies have evolved in complex and sophisticated ways. The welfare state has declined as the unique provider and manager of a centralized and universal schooling system. In multiple ways, neoliberal policies have been implemented and combined, opening educational services up to the market, diversifying school providers, generating competition between the private and public sectors, and offering ‘free choice’ (and exit) to parents. Conversely, these devolving policies are fused with state centralization tactics, introducing, for instance, national standards, assessment systems and school rankings, which are tied to individual and institutional rewards and sanctions.

The state distances itself from educational management and daily processes, as it becomes a contractor, target-setter, and performance monitor, demanding school accountability (Ball & Junemann, 2012). School management is devolved and ‘made private’, while school aims, standards and evaluations are centralized and nationalized, that is, ‘made public’. Thus, paradoxically, the state strategically steers national school priorities and outcomes, while policy discourses promise ‘free choice’, ‘school autonomy’ and ‘diversity’. This mixed policy configuration has been denominated in ways that attempt to capture its dual nature. For instance: ‘quasi-markets’ (Le Grand & Bartlett, 1994; Levačić, 1995), ‘public-markets’ (Woods, Bagley, & Glatter, 1998), ‘controlled school markets’ (Bunar, 2010), the ‘de/centralized model’ (Falabella, 2007), and the ‘post-welfare model’ (Gewirtz, 1996, 2002).

In this paper I analyze these policy patterns in education and discuss their consequences on the basis of an overview of the literature, particularly focused on ‘critical sociology’ literature (see chart 1, appendix). The review involves a search of scientific papers indexed in the Web of Science and Scopus between 2002 and 2012. The selection criteria, in first place, were essays and empirical research related to the consequences of accountability policies (i.e., high-stake tests) and market policies *within* schools (hence, I do not address the debate about how these policies impact on school test results). In total, I reviewed 130 papers, 23 of which are policy analysis essays, 2 are meta-analysis reviews, and the rest (109) are empirical research papers. Additionally, 20 key books (related to the authors of the papers) were reviewed, as well as research reports (8), and doctoral theses (2). The literature reviewed mainly referred to the United States and England as exemplary countries that have implemented these kinds of policies, although research findings also emerged from other countries, such as Australia, Chile, and New Zealand.

In this paper I am particularly interested in developing an argument from a *critical sociology* angle, analyzing the effects of the ‘double pressure’ on schools from both accountability and market policies. The aim is not to offer a comprehensive review, hoping to assess the benefits/disadvantages of these policies. In effect, there are available reviews on the impact of market-oriented policies (Waslander, Pater, & van der Weide, 2010) and accountability policies (Anstorp, 2010). This paper focuses particularly on critical policy literature (56 papers and 12 books). This research perspective is particularly concerned with studying the relationships between neoliberalism, social structures, and the production of school discourses and subjectivities. It employs mostly qualitative data, and is strongly influenced by critical and post-structuralist theory, including those outlined by intellectuals such as Bourdieu, Foucault, and Gramsci.

In brief, I argue that the market + state-accountability model configures the *performing school*, in which managers and teachers continuously have to compete, marketize and perform ‘successfully’ within a prevailing competition-led schema. Contrary to policymakers’ assumptions, I find that this model has not met the expected outcomes, such as encouraging continuous school improvement, diversification of educational provision, and increasing equity. The identified policy consequences

entail impoverished teaching practices, triggering of exam-oriented methods, the intensification of pupil segmentation and exclusion, stronger hierarchical school environments and managerial systems of control, and an increased management focus on school marketing and quick and visible solutions, leaving thorough and long-term changes aside.

This paper not only offers an overview of these effects, but also contributes to the interpretation of the results. From a critical sociology perspective, these effects are not only concrete changes in school practices or 'undesired' or 'collateral' consequences that can be limited or discouraged by 'correct incentives'. The described mixed policy formula is changing the way schooling and teaching are understood and experienced. They involve an overall *ethical transformation*, as performance and competition become overriding purposes, marginalizing critical thinking, social inclusion values, and democratic principles.

The paper is divided into four sections. Firstly, I develop an analysis of the prevailing policy configuration, addressing a post-welfare educational model and the multiple pressures and regulations under which the *performing school* operates. Secondly, I examine the research findings, referring to the effects of market and accountability policies within schools. Thirdly, I examine a conceptualization of the *performing school* in the new policy scenario, and finally, I present a summary of the paper and concluding thoughts.

The Performing School in the Post-Welfare Era

Educational reforms around the world have entailed the almost synchronous emergence of similar discourses and rationales.¹ Although there are variations in policy at the local level, influenced by specific settings and country history, it is possible to identify shared trends.² To varying degrees, market-logic has been introduced into the social provision of education, entailing public-private partnerships, self-managed schools, parental choice programs, and competing-fund systems (e.g., vouchers or per capita plan). Diverse entities from the public and private sector come into play, providing educational services and competing with each other in order to attract 'clients' and sell their services as a product in a market.

At the same time, many countries have created new ways to maintain state power and regulation over a dispersed market network of public and private school managers. The state, for

¹ See, for example, Ball, 1998; Ball and Youdell, 2008; Burbules and Torres, 2000; Daun, 2004; Falabella, 2007; Maroy, 2004; Whitty, Power, and Halpin, 1998; van Zanten, 2002.

² However, it is important to note that these are solely general policy trends; the combination of these policies and their aims, extensions and philosophies vary significantly between countries. So, for instance, countries such as Belgium, Holland, and Sweden have expanded parental choice policies with low levels of state curriculum standardization, while countries such as the United States have strongly emphasized high-stakes tests with slower expansion of the private sector (although charter schools have increased, encouraged by 'No

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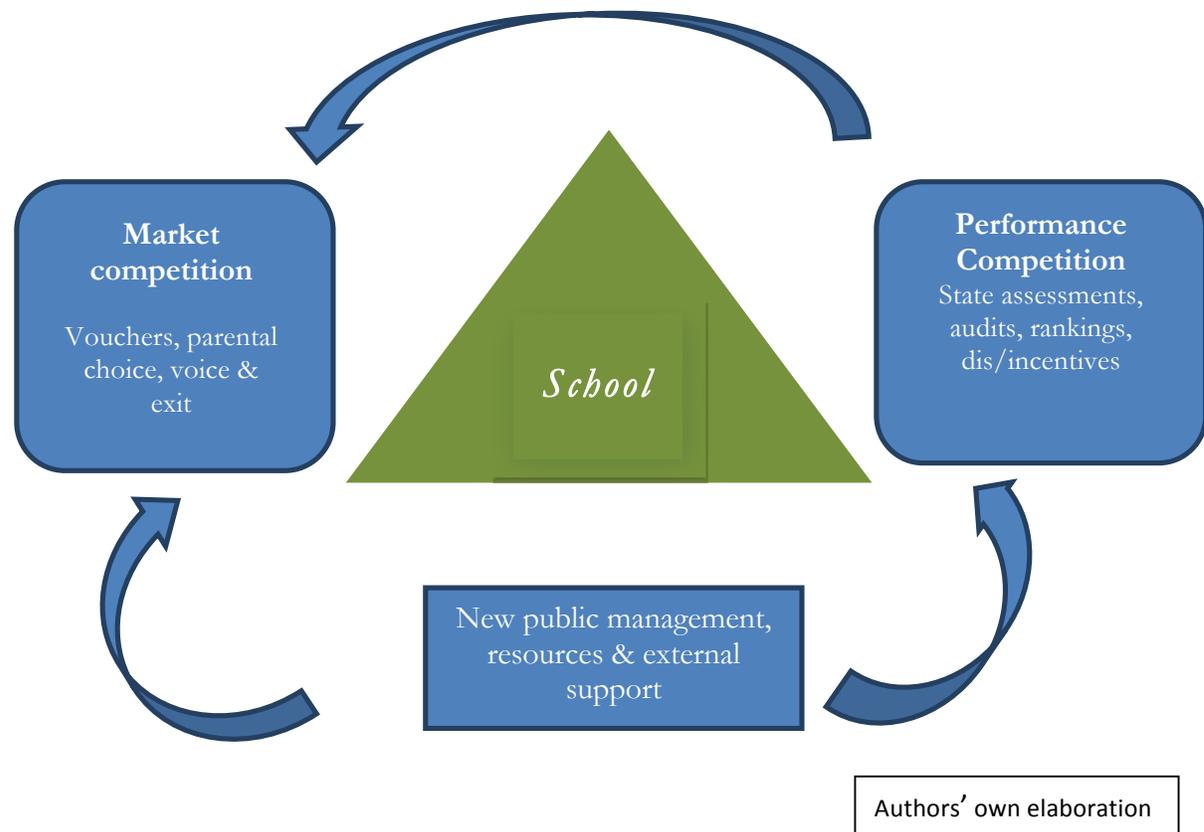
instance, controls national curriculum and standards, sets school targets, and delivers school assessments and inspections. Meticulous specifications of school processes and outputs are established, maintaining a bureaucratic and controlling state locus. Moreover, countries increasingly publish school rankings, offering apparently neutral and irrefutable information for parents. Schools and teachers are held accountable to the state for performance outcomes, and these results are linked to school dis/incentives, such as performance-based salaries, dismissal of school staff, or closure of schools.

The meaning and role of schools dramatically change in this new market-accountability policy configuration. Schools are positioned in a 'local competitive arena', as Woods et al. (1998) call it, or among 'local spaces of competitive interdependencies' as conceptualized by Maroy (2009). In this setting, policy regulations are diversified, not only emanating from the central state, but also from the market, local state, and private sector. Institutions are continuously constrained by the threat of withdrawal of financial and staff resources if they do not attract students. Meanwhile, they are publicly watched, assessed, classified and ranked according to measurable and comparative state standards.

Hence schools have a double task; to compete in order to attract parental preference and, at the same time, to compete in terms of state performance rankings in order to position themselves favorably in relation to other schools, in addition to delivering daily managerial-bureaucratic obligations required by the public and/or private sector (see Diagram 1). It is believed that this dual pressure, market + state, when added to external support (e.g., teacher training, curriculum materials, professional support), will enhance quality provision, and that low-performing schools will assumedly disappear because of low enrolment ('natural selection') or owing to state regulations and penalties.

This configuration has given rise to the *performing school*, with the mission to constantly act and perform for others in order to compete, remain attractive, and position itself advantageously in the marketplace (Ball, 2001, 2003; Gleeson & Husbands, 2001). Under this model, an entrepreneurial rationale is injected into public educational service, placing cost-benefit analyses and 'quality measurable evidence' at the center of schools' attention.

DIAGRAM 1
The Performing School



This educational arrangement involves a complex policy nature that cannot be reduced to a market neoliberal hegemony. The prevailing reforms and discourses shift from a welfare model to a 'post-welfare model' (Gewirtz, 1996, 2002), or from a 'bureaucratic–professional' scheme to a 'post-bureaucratic schema' (Maroy, 2004, 2009; Vandenberghe, 1999). On one hand these new denominations are an attempt to express that education is still a welfare service and remains subject to state control and bureaucracies (laws, rules, decrees).³ However, on the other hand, these conceptualizations also indicate that the relationship between the state and schools has been transformed significantly. The state has changed its role from being a direct universal provider of education to being a school subsidizer and evaluator.

³ In effect, school education is compulsory for all pupils, is mostly financed by the state, and it is a key arena for countries' economic development and cultural formation, which makes the educational market unique in comparison with other markets.

This combined policy formula of market devolution and state governance has emerged as a common rationale for a variety of governments, interest groups and political parties, including right-wing and ‘renewed’ left-wing policymakers. The underpinning rationale is not the idea of the state assuring welfare services for all in a homogeneous manner, nor a free market without any state intervention. Both the ‘state monopoly model’ and the ‘mean market’ schema are criticized. The prevailing policy discourse, instead, has suggested an ‘ideal balance’, referring to a ‘synergy’ between the market and the state, the public and the private, the local and the global (see, for example, Arregui et al., 2006; di Gropello, 2004; World Bank, 1995).

It is a model that is assumed to maintain the benefits of the market, and, at the same time, create solutions for its failings through state interventions and regulations. Thus, on the one hand, the market schema is expected to encourage school diversity, parental free choice (in spite of housing location), efficiency, and individual ‘effort’ and responsibility. On the other hand, state regulations are equally seen to assure national quality standards, to offer public and standardized information about school quality, and to generate ‘positive action’ programs for those in disadvantaged positions. This is the ‘dualistic nature of the neoliberal project’, as Gordon and Whitty express it (1997, p. 455).

These are shared policy trends, although certainly, according to specific local settings, there are different policy combinations and emphases among liberal market formulae and state performance-accountability tools, as well as welfare and universal policies. However, the common axis of a post-welfare model in education (what makes it different from a welfare model) is that the fusion of these policies places schools in a predominantly unstable and competition-led field. The aim of the policy schema is not to make all schools produce the same service and achieve the same benchmarks, but is rather the contrary; that is, to generate an ongoing system of differentiation and ranking in order to trigger competition and thus make the model work. This perspective assumes that a market + performance competition-based schema will motivate and put pressure on school professionals to provide a ‘good quality school’. These competition mechanisms are believed to be key *driving* forces for triggering continuous educational improvement.

In this model, state governance or governmentality, in Foucault’s terms, modifies its *power technologies* from direct and centralized mechanisms to control in indirect and omnipresent ways (Foucault, 1991). In other words, there has been a move from ‘government control’ to ‘governance by results’ (Newman, 2001, 2005), also conceptualized as the ‘evaluative state’ (Neave, 1988), or ‘governing by numbers’ (Ozga, 2011). The state shifts its efforts from supplying school inputs, prescription and interventions, to controlling measurable outcomes.

This new setting does not imply that the state has weakened or diminished its power.⁴ The policy configuration makes evident that the neoliberal dream of a free and diverse market together with a minimal state has not existed in practice as, for instance, Friedman (1962), Chubb and Moe (1990), and Tooley (2000) have advocated.⁵ Instead, the state has preserved or even increased its power. As Newman (2001) argues, policies of privatization and devolution do not signify the ‘hollowing-out’ of the state. Rather, the state takes on new forms of power and influence, related to governance and managerialism, attempting to ensure its control ‘at a distance’ over multiple

⁴ Harvey (2005) provides evidence that, under neoliberal capitalism, the state has performed a key role in enhancing capital accumulation. In his words, the state is “actively interventionist in creating the infrastructure for a good business climate” (p. 72). Subsequently, the author emphasizes that the belief that neoliberalism leads to freedom, democracy and a reduced state is a false expectation.

⁵ For instance, Tooley (2000) is critical about state standardization policies and claims that education should be ‘returned back’ to the private sector. Also, Chubb and Moe (1990) claim that ‘bureaucratic control’ should be ended along with any forms of state evaluations so schools can dedicate themselves ‘to please their clients’.

educational providers (such as the local state, the entrepreneurial sector, religious entities, NGOs, or individual owners).

Clarke and Newman (1997) claim that the state has even expanded and deepened its discursive power within today's dispersed networks, as it coordinates an extensive pool of public and private institutions. The state permeates civil society and non-state agents, such as the entrepreneurial sector, religious institutions and voluntary organizations. Consequently, devolution policies enable the state to increase and spread its control into new sectors, since new technologies of power are extended to a much larger segment of the society. As the authors state, the phenomenon of dispersion "engages more agencies and agents into the field of state power, empowering them through its delegatory mechanisms and subjecting them to processes of regulation, surveillance and evaluation" (p. 30). This is the exercise of 'meta-governance', since the state sets "the rules of the game within which networks operate and steers the overall process of coordination" (Newman, 2005, p. 6).

In this setting there is a paradox. Neoliberalism offers a political rationale in which subjects appear as empowered 'autonomous choosers', 'self-managers' and 'responsible' for their decisions. Meanwhile, schools and teachers are constrained by state audits and judgments, market competition and managerial work. Consequently, even though schools are supposedly autonomous, they are driven by subtle, yet permanent, ways of control and regulation. So, in spite of devolution policies, educational institutions must be subject to external commands and constraints. As Peter et al. (2000) suggest, schools "will not only be governed but also, and more important, be *self-governed*. They will be self-governed because they believe that they are autonomous choosers" (p. 120). This form of control is the most economic and pervasive effect of governance on institutions and subjects.

It is important to note that within this post-welfare model, involving market and accountability policies, the institutional responsibility of education shifts from the central state to the school. Therefore, the *performing school* has to demonstrate and account for good market attainments and state testing outcomes, yet in a constrained context over which it has little control and real autonomy; meanwhile, this policy setting obscures the responsibility of state policy and intervention. In the words of Whitty et al. (1998), this is 'devolution of the blame' (p. 113). Also, as Ball (1994) comments, "The state is left in the enviable position of having power without responsibility" (p. 81), while schools manage broad responsibilities with little power. This paradox is maybe the most stressful aspect of this policy setting, producing what Blackmore (1997) calls 'institutional schizophrenia'.

Policy Effects: Encountering the Expected Challenges?

There have been heated debates about the benefits and implications of market and accountability policies in education. In this section, the analytical focus is on the consequences of these policies within schools, and therefore, how the *performing school* is practiced and experienced. I explore what, in the literature, has been called the *living markets*, developed by *critical sociology*-informed scholars, such as Gewirtz et al. (1995) and Lauder and Hughes et al. (1999). This concept suggests that educational markets do not function in predefined ways according to neoclassical dogmas. Markets are socially, economically, politically, and even emotionally imbricated in the social space in which they take place. Therefore, it is fundamental to study, in concrete and comprehensive manners, how educational markets and accountability policies work in practice.

In this framework, core research questions arise within educational research concerning: how schools respond to market and accountability policies, the kinds of school practices that are commonly triggered by these policies, and whether or not these policies motivate schools to

improve the quality and equity of teaching and learning. In order to answer these questions, as explained previously, I mainly bring into account *critical sociology* literature, although when relevant I refer to other pieces of research that concur with similar findings (in the conclusions I attempt to make some distinctions between the literature). The literature reviewed is focused on in-depth qualitative studies and mixed-method research, looking at institutional practices that provide evidence of what happens ‘inside schools’ within a competition-based schema.

In this section, the consequences discussed refer to: i) educational quality and diversity; ii) social justice; and iii) organizational school life and teachers. The research outcomes reviewed mostly elude to both market and accountability reforms; however, reference is also made to the specific consequences of each separate policy.

Educational quality and innovation

Relevant studies examine whether testing and standardization, parental choice and school privatization actually enhance educational quality, innovation and diversity. Lubienski (2009), looking at research from over 20 countries, yet focusing especially on the US, concludes that schools are not responding to incentives based on competition, as expected. Rather than innovating within classrooms, schools are reinforcing traditional and uniform practices. Changes are mainly found in marketing and management strategies, but not in improving teaching and learning processes. Moreover, schools *fear* innovation because of the *risk* of diminishing enrolment. Surprisingly, innovation and diversification occur when government intervention takes place, that is, not through competition and choice. In the words of the author:

Based on evidence reviewed in this analysis, it appears that there is no direct causal relationship between leveraging quasi-market mechanisms of choice and competition in education and inducing educational innovation in the classroom. In fact, the very causal direction is in question in view of the fact that government intervention, rather than market forces, has often led to pedagogical and curricular innovation. (Lubienski, 2009, p. 45)

Extensive and insightful studies carried out in England by Gewirtz (1996, 2002) and a longitudinal study (Bagley, 2006; Woods et al., 1998) show that a market + accountability schema triggers a privileging of academic and traditional pedagogic regimes and the reinforcement of authoritarian styles of teaching and management, giving less prominence to personal and social care.⁶ In Gewirtz’s (2002) words, schools are adopting “a more utilitarian, exam-oriented approach to teaching, with less emphasis on responding to the interests of the children, the cultivation of relationships and the *process* of learning, and more emphasis on learning *outcomes*” (p. 81, original emphasis).⁷ This occurs within an atmosphere that praises tested cognitive skills (mainly language, mathematics, and science), narrowing the meaning and aims of education. Meanwhile, qualitative

⁶ The first research conducted by Woods et al. (1998) was based on school and parent responses in three local markets over three years. Ten years later, this research was followed up by further research, by Bagley (2006), in one of the three market areas.

⁷ Gewirtz (1996) notes that a traditional approach is not only market-generated, but as she says “welfarism did enable pockets of progressivism to develop and thrive ... what our evidence does indicate, however, is that post-welfarist structures and discourses have produced a climate which is extremely hostile to progressivism” (p.19).

processes and unmeasurable achievements are left aside. Subsequently, increased curricular uniformity and homogeneity occur, contrary to expected educational liberty and diversity.

Researchers using different research approaches who have examined school responses to the American accountability policy ‘No Child Left Behind’ (NCLB) and ‘Race to the Top’ (R2T) converge with similar results. Extended and robust research prove that while these accountability policies may have produced positive effects in limited cases, they have broadly triggered ‘teaching to the test’ methods (see, for example, Booher-Jennings (2005), Firestone, Schorr, & Monfils, 2004; Hamilton et al., 2007; Linn, 2000; Looney, 2009; Popham, 2001, 2002; Menken, 2006; Stecher, 2002). Test examinations tend to dominate daily teacher and student practices (especially in schools attending poor communities), leaving aside more progressive and creative teaching (Firestone et al., 2004). Hence, for instance, teachers increasingly employ textbook-driven methods, drilling exercises, rote learning, and frequent assessments similar to standard examination formats. Also, teachers, in order to increase examination scores, reallocate time and resources, reduce non-assessed subjects, and coach students in test-taking skills.⁸

Chile has one of the most deregulated educational schemas in the world, led by market-oriented mechanisms (with a private sector that covers more than half of school enrolment).⁹ Since the late 1990s, a set of accountability policies have been introduced gradually (e.g., school rankings tests, teacher salary-performance-payment, and school sanctions for low performance).¹⁰ My own work in the country (Falabella, 2013), using case study methods in four public schools, confirms similar results. I find that accountability policies within an open market schema impoverish teaching practices, pushing them towards mechanical, repetitive, and directive methods, together with a kind of obsession for constant pupil assessment; while teachers leave aside creative, reflexive-thinking and enriching learning experiences. These policies have a saturating effect on school staff, and, as I have noted, “Boosting test outcomes occupies an overriding priority in individuals’ minds” (p. 279). Moreover, these kinds of policies stimulate an *instrumental rationale*, in which school actors tend to calculate their strategies and ‘teaching investments’ in order to attain the test-score targets.

In a following study (Falabella & Opazo, 2014), based on seven public and private schools, the authors conclude that the effects of accountability policies work differently depending on how institutions are positioned in the marketplace, the ‘school ethos’, and the type of policy interpretation and mediation delivered by the local government. As a result, schools perceive and respond to pressure variously, according to these factors. While advantaged schools hardly sense external pressure and are positively reinforced by them, schools with ‘alternative’ curriculum plans and, especially, disadvantaged schools serving poor areas, are in much greater tension between responding effectively to external demands and attending local necessities and collective projects.

These two studies, together with other insightful pieces of research carried out in the country (Acuña, Assaél, Contreras, Peralta, 2014; Carrasco, 2010), show that teaching effects are particularly problematic in disadvantaged schools, which serve pupils with a greater range of learning

⁸ Well-known US education intellectuals such as Darling-Hammond (2004, 2007, 2010), Hargreaves and Shirley (2009), Lipman (2004), MacBeath (2006, 2009), and Ravitch (2010), have also critically analyzed these policies, arguing that top-down curriculum prescriptions and high-stakes testing are inappropriate for promoting professional development, classroom quality, and attention to pupil diversity.

⁹ Similar effects are also found in other countries around the globe, such as in Holland (Ehren, Machteld, & Swanborn, 2012), Australia (Klenowski & Wyatt-Smith 2012), Macau, (China) (Morrison and Tang 2002) and New Zealand (Thrupp 2013).

¹⁰ Currently, the creation of a new institutional schema is taking place in the country, which is made up of a ‘Quality Agency’ and a Superintendence of Education, responsible for setting standards and inspecting schools.

abilities¹¹. Teaching-staff tend to speed-up pupils' learning processes and have difficulties teaching and assessing pupil diversity. Test preparation demands work on the basis of abstract exercises, while it is precisely these pupils that require concrete learning tasks linked to meaningful and context-based situations. Carrasco notes, "reform is inspired by principles of homogenisation, standardisation, control, and targets, in cases where schools facing challenging circumstances actually need differentiation, more identification, flexibility, and contextualised responses" (p. 266).

In relation to market effects among schools in particular, English and American research finds that schools spend more time, energy, and money on promotional and marketing activities (see, for example, Gewirtz, 2002; Lubienski, 2009; Whitty et al., 1998). Bagley (2006) shows that these efforts become more intense and sophisticated over time, with a more receptive response to parents, yet employing a stronger 'consumerist style'.¹² Subsequently, rather than concentrating on substantive teaching curriculum changes, school managers have intensified their focus on school reputation, image and use of symbols (e.g., performance results, school uniform, the school façade, marketing materials).

Ball (2006) suggests that this market atmosphere "encourages organizations to become more and more concerned with their style, their image, their semiotics, with the way things are presented rather than with the way they actually work" (p. 12). This 'semiotics shift' cannot be reduced to adding more school propaganda. These shifting efforts and desires profoundly change head teachers' and teachers' lives and the way they understand and constitute themselves. It involves a concern with calculating and investing in easy and visible targets, practicing a 'quick-fix mentality', as Gewirtz (2002) notes, while paying less attention to *real work* (e.g., pupil needs, teachers' pedagogical questioning, misbehavior concerns) and long-term aims.

In sum, literature focused on inner changes in schools, triggered by market and accountability policies, shows that there is no conclusive evidence to prove the positive effects on educational quality and diversity. Whilst there may be specific positive results, such as more responsiveness towards parents or higher expectations for pupil academic achievements, these are limited in general. Meanwhile, there is a substantial body of research that identifies problematic consequences, such as: curriculum uniformity and reduction; intensification of academic and traditional pedagogical approaches; expanding employment of 'teaching to the test'; major investment in school image, reputation, and quick and visible solutions, instead of profound and long-term changes.

Furthermore, scholars, such as Ball (2006) and Gewirtz (2002), emphasized that these changes within schools do not only involve institutional and classroom practices, but in the ways individuals *think of themselves and the school*. Policies entail a discursive power, transforming the ways school actors constitute the 'good', the 'desirable' and the 'failing' school, teacher, and also student. For instance, test scores, parents' school preferences, and official school quality classifications, represent the value of educational providers, working, in Foucault's terms, as a *regime of truth* (Foucault, 1977). These prevailing discourses significantly impact school priorities, behaviors, meanings, and most importantly, individuals' subjectivities; although they are undoubtedly not free of tensions, doubts, and resistance, as demonstrated by Ball and Olmedo (2012).

¹¹ In effect, Acuña et al. (2014) use the metaphor of "the sick body" for these kinds of schools, as policy places an alarm on the "illness", understood as an isolated problem. Meanwhile, the conditions under which teachers work within these institutions and the inequities of the whole system are made invisible.

¹² The study, carried out in England, shows that school staffs are being more welcoming and attentive to families in general and are more responsive to parental concerns, such as safety and transport. However, it is argued that these are formal or superficial changes rather than substantive ones.

Social in/justice matters

A second matter, and probably one of the most problematic matters of the market + accountability formula, is related to social justice issues. The key point is that the model is based on a *competitive rationale*, which accepts, and moreover, requires the existence of a hierarchical unequal field with institutions that are differently positioned. As Lazzarato (2012) explains, markets require the production and nourishing of inequity. In the author's words: "only inequality has the capacity to sharpen appetites, instincts and minds, driving individuals to rivalries" (p. 117). School rankings are, for instance, a core policy technology that incarnate this policy ideology; schools are hierarchically ordered and thanks to these differences they are called upon to compete and supposedly improve. If all schools were to attain the same benchmark, the model would not work. Perpetual differentiation is the key source of competition and is thus necessary to make the market-performance project function.

In terms of social justice matters, under a competition-based model a first policy consequence is that children and their families become strategic resources for school competition. Ball, Maguire, and Macrae (1998) call this phenomenon the 'economy of student worth'. Schools attempt to shape their student social intake towards upper/middle class parents and more 'able' pupils, while excluding those 'disruptive' pupils coming from more underprivileged backgrounds. This has produced a 'pupil commodification'. Rather than being seen as subjects with needs, interests and potentials, children are valued, recruited, selected and excluded according to their ability to produce positive school outcomes. As Gewirtz et al. (1995) write: "The emphasis seems increasingly to be not on what the school can do for the child but on what the child can do for the school" (p. 176).

In effect, educational markets, based on a competitive schema with a standardized parameter, penalize schools that receive mixed ability pupils, and award those that exercise selective practices ('cream skimming'). This practice turns out to be one of the most powerful contemporary school improvement strategies. Selective schools guarantee good test results and institutional reputation in a more efficient and rapid manner. On the other hand, unpopular schools attract the remaining, non-selected students. Consequently, researchers find that market environment exacerbates differences between schools on the basis of pupil class, race and ethnicity, but does not encourage diversity in terms of student intake, curriculum or pedagogy. As Whitty et al. (1998) claim, these policies reinforce "a vertical hierarchy of schooling types rather than producing the promised horizontal diversity" (p. 42). What predominate are not pedagogical divergences, but class, race, and test result differences, based on a homogenizing curriculum and comparative evaluations on a one-dimensional scale.

Basing his evidence on an analysis of school marketing materials in two US urban areas, Lubienski (2003) finds that schools employ subtle symbolic forms of institutional differentiation, targeting more 'capable' students coming from middle-class families. Hence, within a market-scheme model curriculum diversification and school innovations are too risky and costly, as Lubienski (2009) argues. So schools distinguish themselves through symbolic representations of social class designed to shape enrolment demographics into "a safer and more certain route to strengthening their market position" (Idem, p. 339).

Other pieces of research have shown that segregation not only occurs among schools, but also within schools. Senior managers and teachers reproduce and intensify competition and selective policies within the microsphere of the school. Students, for instance, are habitually examined, sorted, publicly ranked and labeled. For example, Gewirtz (2002), and Broccolichi and van Zanten (2000), referring to England and France respectively, indicate that mixed pupil ability grouping has

diminished, and has been replaced by pupil ability grouping, along with courses for ‘gifted’ and ‘talented pupils’. These school groupings disproportionately place minority groups and working class pupils in those groups classified as underachievers. This exclusionary strategy is used to concentrate efforts on enhancing school test outcomes in a more focused and directive manner, and as a way to attract upper/middle class parents to public schools with mixed social intake.

Another phenomenon identified is that educational managers strategically classify and rank schools, classrooms or students in terms of the possibility of them succeeding on national tests and in educational markets in general. As Youdell (2004) suggests, in an atmosphere of competition and sense of scarcity, individuals constantly calculate where and when to invest in order to boost school performance.¹³ The author, based on ethnographic school research in England, finds that three groups are set within classrooms (named as the ‘educational triage’). This classification serves to decide the kind of investment and effort delivered in each group. The order is: the ‘safe cases’, that is, with high performance, non-urgent for investment; ‘underachievers’, that is, with borderline performance, suitable for investment; and those ‘without hope’, that is, with low performance, unsuitable for investment. Hence, school staff usually give priority to intermediate level achievers near the proficiency score, while giving less attention to those with learning difficulties, as well as those who attain state benchmarks. Similar results are also found in other pieces of research in Chile (Falabella, 2013), England (Gewirtz et al., 1995; Levačić 2001; Woods et al., 1998) and the United States (Hamilton et al., 2007; Vasquez & Darling-Hammond, 2008). Overall, these micro-policies show that individuals move towards calculative and strategic thinking in order to effectively increase their school’s market and performance advantage, while matters related to social commitment and equity are marginalized.

The converging evidence outlined above refers to general policy effects that appear in the literature. Nevertheless, it is vital to take into account that schools act and experience educational markets in different ways according to their position in a hierarchical field. In effect, authors such as Ball and Maroy (2009), based on a mixed-method European comparative study, note that market pressure tends to reinforce institutional differences, offering pupils unequal experiences and learning opportunities. According to schools’ market positions, schools are *likely to* produce certain kinds of school ethos (although in complex and hybrid ways). So, whilst some schools carry out exclusionary practices within a challenging academic environment, other schools are designated to serve diverse pupil social intake and the most underprivileged sectors of the population, giving prominence to caring relationships with lower academic expectations.

Research using case study methods, such as in Chile, Carrasco (2010); Falabella (2013); Sweden, Bunar (2010); England, Gewirtz (2002), Reay (1998), Woods and Levačić (2002), and Lupton (2005, 2006); France, van Zanten (2002); and New Zealand, Thrupp (1999, 2013), confirm that schools that do not control pupil intake, serving more mixed or underprivileged pupils, have greater difficulties and limitations for responding competitively, improving school attractiveness, and implementing innovative changes. These institutions experience the impact of contextual influences and market hierarchies, facing accumulated pupil learning, behavioral, and social problems, in addition to poor market reputation and stigmatization. Moreover, under a performance competing schema, schools serving poor communities are usually punished by state labels of ‘failure’, reinforcing their disadvantaged position, rather than being motivated to improve. Meanwhile, key school contextual features are neglected by state judgments and classifications, such as broader school inequities and pupil social and ethnic composition. Power and Frandji (2010) claim that these school labeling policies are an ‘injustice of misrecognition’.

¹³ See also Gillborn and Youdell (2000).

In brief, the findings reviewed evidence that market and performance-accountability policies have not only failed to reduce inequities and social segmentation, but have even produced and intensified it. Schools placed within the market-oriented scenario tend to sort, select and exclude pupils as a core strategy for competing. Additionally, the effects of social inequity and segmentation among institutions reinforce schools' advantaged or disadvantaged position in the marketplace and therefore reduce pupils' educational opportunities.

Organizational school life and teachers

A third matter emerges from the literature review regarding the transformation of school organization, including heads' management style, internal staff relationships, and teachers' professional autonomy. In general terms, diverse pieces of research conclude that there is little evidence of more democratic relationships and redistributed power resulting from market-oriented reforms. On the contrary, scholars, such as Wrigley (2003), referring to the English system, point out that inspection, competition and public comparison policies are deeply undemocratic, entailing teacher surveillance, a low-trust culture and superficial school responses. Similarly, from the American context, Darling-Hammond (2004, 2007) claims that these policies are based on 'hierarchical accountability' and reduce professional autonomy, creativity and community reflections and debates.¹⁴ Overall, the author states that the policy logic of the model is *based on threat*, rather than on professionalism, vocation, and moral responsibility. It reflects an overall deep distrust of those who work in schools and assumes that they will only perform satisfactorily due to ongoing potential punishments or rewards.

Studies, such as Gewirtz (2002) and Reay (1998), examine the micro-politics within four London public schools positioned in the educational markets (based on parental free choice, per-pupil funding, and league tables). These pieces of research show diminishing collaboration and socialization within school communities, while individualism, competition and fragmentation are enhanced among senior managers and teachers, and among departments. Staff relationships are predominantly vertical, with a growing division between teachers and senior staff. Gewirtz (1996) explains that accountability and market regimes produce 'labor intensification' and pressure schools to act quickly, in 'responsive' ways. This scenario mitigates teachers' collective reflection and participation, exacerbating instrumental thinking and the division of labor among senior managers and teachers. Findings also demonstrate a shifting focus as school managers emphasize administration and financial aspects, and focus less on learning and teaching matters. Nonetheless, these are not straightforward changes. Gewirtz (2002) refers specifically to the stress and dilemmas head teachers have to face, caught between school social contexts (e.g., local demands, pupils' needs, teachers' views) and having to respond to market, performative targets and bureaucratic pressure.

Additionally, studies have reported damaging effects on teacher identity and work in Australia (Klenowski & Wyatt-Smith, 2012), England (Ball, 2001, 2003; Elliot, 2001; Fielding, 2001) and the United States (Finnigan & Gross, 2007; Valli & Buese, 2007). It is argued by various scholars that these policies are leading towards stress, demotivation, de-skilling and loss of professional autonomy. Woods and Jeffrey (2002) developed a profound study based on in-depth interviews with English teachers and observations gleaned from national inspections (delivered by OFSTED¹⁵). The study concludes that inspection and standardization policies have produced feelings of insecurity

¹⁴ Similarly Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) refer to the 'soulless standardization' reforms that push schools into 'performing training sects'.

¹⁵ Office for Standards in Education.

among teachers and a sense of powerlessness and moral decline, in addition to exhaustion, irritability and overwork. Moreover, the researchers provide evidence that the ‘technologization of teaching’ has fragmented and weakened teacher identity and motivation. Teachers perceive that these policies are producing less creative teaching jobs, reducing their skills, and deteriorating their vocation and the attractiveness of the profession. They also state that, previously, a holistic teaching approach, involving warm and caring relationships with pupils, meant core values tied to the meaning of their profession, yet they recognize that current pressures have led to a less emotional, sensitive and empathetic practices. This reconfiguration of teacher identity is described by the authors:

The teacher’s personal identity in the new order is partial, fragmented, and inferior to that of the old in that teachers retain a sense of the ideal self, but it is no longer in teaching. The personal identity of work has become a situational one, designed to meet the instrumental purposes of audit accountability. Teachers’ real selves are held in reserve, to be realized in other situations outside school or in some different future within (p. 238).

All in all, market and accountability policies are transforming school life and the teaching profession in complex and profound ways. Contrary to policy assumptions, these arrangements have not led to more empowered, creative and democratic organizations. The literature provides evidence of diminishing collaborative work and staff participation, along with an increase in the number of control systems and competition within schools, and heavier workloads for managers and teachers. Nevertheless, it is important to note that research results show a ‘space of indeterminacy’, as Woods and Jeffery (2002) put it. School actors confront these policies in different ways, employing reactions and strategies of resignation, struggle, adjustment and negotiation, regarding personal ethics, school targets, and management pressures.

The Performing School: An Ethical Transformation

These identified policy effects are not merely changes in the daily routines of school managers and teachers, they are practiced and justified along with a profound ethical transformation of the way schooling is understood and experienced. As Gewirtz (2002) claims, “the market revolution is not just a change of structure and incentives. It is a transformational process that brings into play a new set of values and a new moral environment” (p. 47). This has entailed a shift from a comprehensive culture towards an instrumental efficiency rationale, concerned with individual competition, efficiency and performance indicators, over pedagogical criteria and issues of social justice matters. This atmosphere and institutional ethos is also conceptualized by Apple (2007) as the proliferation of an ‘audit culture’ that colonizes school life, shaping consumer-driven and overly-individualistic cultures, while eroding collective values and ‘thick’ democratic organizations.

These transformations within schools show the pervasive and extensive effects of market and accountability policies. Following Foucault (1991), these policies function as governmentality tactics over dispersed public and private providers. Policy discourses and technologies steer institutional priorities and practices, penetrating into institutional daily life and individuals’ rationality, conducting their ‘freedom’ within a neoliberal era. As Rose (1992) notes, the most powerful effect of this kind of policy technology is that, rather than repressing individuals, it shapes ‘political mentalities’.

The prevailing model is a new mode of social and moral regulation, as Ball states (2001, 2003), which outlines a new practice oriented towards performativity. The author states that, “Performativity is a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation, or even a system of ‘terror’, in

Lyotard's words, that employs judgments, comparisons and displays as means of control, attrition and change." (Ball, 2001, p. 210). Performativity occurs when individuals or organizations focus their main aims and daily work on calculating, planning, and investing their efforts and resources in exhibiting themselves successfully. Schools and their staff are pressured to devote their best efforts into satisfying external standards, criteria and tasks in order to produce a favorable and profitable image, thus creating the *performing school*.

Ball (2001) asserts that there is a profound 'process of exteriorization', where "professional judgment is subordinated to the requirements of performativity and marketing" (p. 222). Individuals have to calculate, construct and advertise themselves in an efficient way and according to a predefined project of 'excellence'. Institutions are pushed to be eager to compete, demonstrate 'their best', and position themselves favorably in comparison to others, shaping individuals into 'enterprising selves' (Rose, 1992) and 'greedy organizations' (Blackmore & Sachs, 1997)¹⁶.

Ball (2003) argues that these practices produce opacity and inauthenticity instead of the promised transparency and objectivity. It is, according to the author, a 'paraphernalia of quality' (1997, p. 260) and an 'investment in plasticity' (2003, p. 10). Teachers do not perform as they are; they perform in a way in which they suppose they will be positively judged. As Blackmore and Sachs (1997) point out: "Performativity is as much about being seen to perform—like a simulacrum in that the actual substance or original is lost" (original underline, sec.2). Schools and teachers, in Ball's terms, 'fabricate' themselves in artificial ways, leaving aside the professional priorities and contextual needs. The effects of these occurrences are complex and profound. Anxiety, insecurity and guilt grow among school staff.

We become ontologically insecure: unsure whether we are doing enough, doing the right thing, doing as much as others, or as well as others, constantly looking to improve, to be better, to be excellent. And yet it is not always very clear what is expected (Ball, 2003, p. 5).

These policy effects are profound, "it changes who you are" (Ball, 2003, p. 215). However, these are not simple and linear changes; they produce intense professional and moral dilemmas, between market pressure, performance competition and cost-benefit norms, and, on the other hand, school members' educational projects, professional criteria, contextual needs, and personal beliefs. It is a "struggle over the teacher's soul" (Idem, p. 217).

Final Thoughts

Market and accountability policy combinations are shaping the *performing school*, as school staff must continuously compete, advertise and perform in order to assure a thriving institutional and professional future. The new policy model places schools within a competitive schema, altering school life and the teaching profession in profound ways. The studies reviewed, which look at inner school processes and changes using mostly qualitative and mixed-method studies, show that there is scant evidence of the expected benefits of these policies, such as continuous school improvement, educational innovation and diversity, and high standards for all. On the contrary, there is a growing body of studies carried out in different parts of the world that converge on similar results showing harmful consequences, such as: increasing use of an exam-led curriculum and a traditional pedagogical approach, rather than providing enriching, diverse and innovative learning experiences;

¹⁶ See also Webb (2006) who, following a similar approach, studies the *fabrications* and the practices of *pedagogic simulation* in two 'low-performing' USA schools.

greater educational inequalities and social segregation between and within schools; management focus on marketing and visible results, employing ‘quick-fix’ thinking; and a decrease in school collaboration and teacher autonomy and participation.

These changes are produced within a *performative school ethos*, as institutional practices and political rationales are shifting towards an instrumental-efficiency discourse and performative competition purposes, leaving aside comprehensive welfare ethics, and civic and community engagement. In effect, the enhancement of social justice matters, innovative and constructivist pedagogical approaches, and a democratic management style conflict with the dominant model. These educational aims act against an institution’s ability to compete in the market and acquire privileged positioning.

This paper invites readers to rethink dominant *policy doxai* and to interrogate the *market + accountability formula utopia* for solving countries’ educational problems. In no case do I argue that public policies such as state standards, national tests and parental choice inherently bring damaging effects. The key issue is to study how these policy devices are laid out and combined in different settings. The problematic effects identified are not produced because of separate policies in isolated terms. It is the policy concatenation and interlocking functions between testing, dissemination of results, and institutional and individual awards/sanctions based on a market-led formula that generate harmful consequences for both school quality and equity.

The literature review developed in this paper and the overall analytical understanding of the *performing school* provides arguments against scholars who have advocated that market solutions and high-stake tests bring greater provisional liberty, quality, diversity, and equity (see for e.g., Bruns, Filmer, & Patrinos, 2011; Hanushek & Woessmann, 2010; Mourshed, Chijioke, & Barber 2010; Winkler, 2006). I do not discuss the specific data results of these mostly quantitative-based studies (for this debate see Dupriez & Dumay, 2011; Waslander, et al. 2010), yet I raise conceptual and empirical arguments from a different angle.

I also interrogate the claims of authors that show problematic policy effects (e.g., ‘teaching to the test’), suggesting that these are ‘undesired consequences’ that vary among teachers, and depend on professionals’ commitments and abilities (see for e.g., Hamilton & Stecher, 2006; Hamilton et al., 2007; Koretz, 2005; Looney, 2009; Popham, 2002). Although the research findings converge with other critical reviewed studies, I question the interpretation of these results. These scholars neglect that schools’ ‘unexpected responses’ are consistent and effective strategies for competing and surviving within the prevailing model. The authors place the problem at the individual level, and it is believed to be solved through emending ‘incorrect’ policy incentives; or from the perspective of school improvement theory, the policy matrix needs to move towards a ‘balanced accountability’ (Hopkins, 2008, 2010) or a ‘positive pressure’ (Fullan, 2010).

This previous analytical framework tends to separate the ideological nature of the policy and the ‘implementation problems’. From the critical perspective developed in this paper, the whole meaning of education, colonized by a neoliberal rational, must be rethought. It is fundamental to interpret the research findings addressing the meaning and implications of the market and accountability technologies and discourses that place schools within a hierarchical field, dominated by a competition-based logic. In this sense, I do not wish to take a deterministic perspective or to deny teachers’ agency. The research challenge is to understand how school members rework policies in the local sphere in both disciplinary and creative ways, and the ways in which individuals confront everyday tensions between market and state pressures, contextual needs, professional criteria and personal beliefs.

In terms of policy recommendations, devising solutions for low-performance and inequities in schools is undoubtedly a complex task.¹⁷ However on the basis of the research evidence I argue that the maintenance of today's market and accountability policies will not solve these educational problems; on the contrary, they may intensify them. Although, the reduction of testing and sanction measures may lessen the 'undesired effects', this does not necessarily remove the competing paradigm that is at the heart of the studied model.

From a more radical perspective, a holistic change is required that entails an alternative non-competitive educational model that situates schools within a different philosophical and ethical paradigm. The policy horizon under this schema is comprehensive quality education for all, where market competition and rankings are removed. The suggestion is that state curriculum, assessment tools, and parental participation serve to support and improve schools, rather than working as market technologies for intensifying school differentiation and competition.

Following Ranson (2003), the policy challenge is to shift the understanding of *consumer-performance accountability* to *communicational accountability* in order to build a democratic public sphere within schools, enabling participation, open discussion, collective argumentation and decision-making. From this perspective, schools are *accountable to the public* based on reciprocal engagement between institutions, professionals and the school community in general. The core issue here is the construction of trust and responsibility based on collaborative, critical and dialogical relationships among members of the school community. As Ranson (2003) writes: "*responsibility is primarily a moral, not a technical or contractual notion, it both elicits and requires a felt and binding mutuality*" (p. 700, my emphasis).

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¹⁷ Some interesting examples of countries that seem to have developed positive assessment formulas are Belgium (Dumay, Cattonar, Mangez, Maroy, 2013), Scotland (Ozga & Grek, 2012), and Finland (Sahlberg, 2007, 2011). In addition, Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) refer to the 'fourth way' educational scheme, in countries as Finland, Singapore, and the province/state of Alberta and California. Some common features of these alternative models include: prioritization on teacher professional development, promotion of peer collaborative work, inclusion of assessments designed by local governments together with teachers' participation, emphasis on internal school data analysis and self-assessment, and prohibition of test outcome dissemination and rankings.

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APPENDIX

CHART 1:
Comparison between Research Approaches that Study School Accountability Policies

Research Approach	Pro-Accountability	School Improvement	Critical Sociology of Education
Research Objective	Measures policy ‘efficiency’, i.e. the impact of accountability policies on student test results.	Studies the benefits and disadvantages of accountability policies over internal school improvement processes.	Studies the effects of accountability policies among schools with different market reputation and student admission/selection practices. Analyses how these policies are practiced at the local level (‘micro-policy’).
Research Focus	Policy efficiency, test score increase, parental information and choice.	The fortification of internal school improvement factors, such as instructional leadership, capacity building, and effective teaching practices.	Critical analysis of neoliberal policies, special concern for social in/exclusion, democracy and transformations of public schooling.
Methodological strategies	Quantitative studies, comparative studies between countries based on standardized test scores.	Mixed quantitative and qualitative studies.	Mostly qualitative studies (case studies and ethnographic studies).
Vision of Market Policies	Favorable or no reference to these policies.	Ambiguous; these policies are usually considered less frequently.	Critical vision, market and accountability policies are studied together.
Main Findings	Positive impact on student test scores; ‘secondary effects’ are recognized as an implementation problem.	Over-testing and high stakes policies produce negative impact on school quality. If school management is robust and mature these effects are less marked or null.	School-staff are tensioned by market/competition rational. Policy effects are transforming not only school practices, but also institutional values and ethics.
Policy Recommendations	Pressure from both parents and the state (“double accountability”); improvement in parental information; amendment of negative incentives.	External data must be complementary to internal data serving school improvement. Balance between professional development, support, & external pressure (‘intelligent’ or ‘balanced’ accountability).	A holistic reform is required to remove competition mechanisms as the basis of the school system. Fortification of public/comprehensive schooling and local management.
Theoretical Sources	School Effectiveness Research, Rational Choice Theory	School Improvement Management Theory, Action Theory	Post/ Critical sociology (e.g. Bourdieu, Buttler, Gramsci, Foucault)
Examples of Authors	Barber, Di Gropello, Mourshed, Woessmann, Winkler	Darlind-Hammond, Fullan, Hargreaves, Hopkins, MacBeath, Mintrop	Apple, Ball, Gewirtz, Lipman, Maroy, Ozga, Thrupp

Authors’ own elaboration

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