


## Introduction

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Education, and particularly the provision of quality education, has been at the forefront of global development agendas for the last thirty years, becoming a priority for governments, bilateral, multilateral, and civil society organisations.

The growing demand for more diversified educational opportunities and the failure of governments to provide quality education for all citizens in the context of increasing educational demand have been considered two driving forces behind the expansion of education privatisation, a phenomenon which has gained increasing attention in development discourse and research. The private sector has always been involved in education, with families, religious institutions and philanthropic organizations playing an important role in its funding and provision. However, current forms of privatisation, which have emerged as a result of the acceleration of globalisation and of the expansion of the neo-liberal ideology, have led to a greater market involvement in the sector (Rizvi 2016). In this context, international and regional organisations have been playing an active role in building a global education architecture and in promoting the emergence of a global education policy space (e.g. Hill 2003; Ball, Junemann, and Santori 2017; Verger, Fontdevila, and Zancajo 2016). This global architecture, however, includes a myriad of organisations that interconnect agendas inspired by contrasting principles, such as freedom choice or education as a right, which may have a significant impact on the expansion of policies promoting privatisation (Adrião 2018; Antoni Verger, Fontdevila, and Zancajo 2016).

Privatisation *of* education has been defined as an increase in the ownership of education by ‘external actors’, increasing the proportion of private actors involved in an education system. There is also privatisation *in* education, which corresponds to introducing methods, principles, and approaches from the market sector into education (Ball and Youdell 2008). At the same time, reference can be made to the commodification of education, which involves the transformation of education into a

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market product that generates profits (Verger, Fontdevila, and Zancajo 2016; Verger, Novelli, and Altinyelken 2018; Lubienski, Yemini, and Maxwell 2022).

For this book, we share the perspective of Belfield & Levin (2004) regarding education privatisation, who analysed how this phenomenon has been occurring in the United States. For the authors, privatisation:

Is an umbrella term referring to many different educational programmes and policies. As an overall definition, ‘privatization is the transfer of activities, assets and responsibilities from government/public institutions and organizations to private individuals and agencies’. Also, privatization is often thought of as ‘liberalization’ – where agents are freed from government regulations, or as ‘marketization’ – where new markets are created as alternatives to government services or state allocation systems. (2004, p.19)

Globally, education privatisation arises in different forms, such as low-fee private schooling, public-private and multiple stakeholder partnerships, supplemental private tutoring (shadow education), school vouchers, and targeted subsidies which enable private or government-assisted private school choice.

This book examines the phenomenon of education privatisation with a particular focus on sub-Saharan Africa. Although much has been written about education privatisation in this region, this book aims to contribute to filling the gap concerning the several factors and rationales, as well as the different forms in which non-state actor (UNESCO 2021) or ‘external actors’ (Lubienski, Yemini, and Maxwell 2022) have been involved in education in sub-Saharan Africa. We also pay particular attention to education privatisation in this specific region by focusing on Francophone and Lusophone countries which have so far been underrepresented in Comparative and International Education literature, particularly in English. Although there has been a general increase in privatisation, in addition to the lack of literature in these regions, research has shown that the available data is not sufficiently reliable or exhaustive to provide an in-depth understanding of this phenomenon (ReFPE, 2022). Hence the need for new knowledge about this part of the world. This is what our book sets out to achieve.

The effort to bring authors who are non-native English speakers has been challenging. This process increases time and effort in reading and writing in English and often dissuades the authors from accepting to participate in these types of projects.

English is the first language of only one author who contributed to the book. In some cases, the mother tongue of the authors is different from the official language of the countries they are nationals of. Considering this challenge and English as lingua

franca, as editors, we have worked to make English accessible, but decided to leave some unusual but informative, conceptualisations unedited. Consequently, language constructions may seem peculiar to those for whom English is their first language. However, these are instructive conceptualisations and promotes diversity and a more equitable participation. It also promotes the author's and readers' appropriation of English as a lingua franca.

The collection is comprised of eight chapters, which examine different forms of approaching education privatisation phenomenon and the role of non-state actors in education in different parts of the African continent. It is organised in three main parts: the editors' introduction and concluding chapters and the guest authors' eight chapters. The Introduction sets out the aim and scope of the book and a summary of the chapters to follow. The Conclusion outlines the key themes emerging across the chapters and the gap it intends to fill.

In Chapter 1, Rui da Silva and Theresa Adrião sought to map the research terrain around education privatisation in sub-Saharan Africa. Based in a search in academic databases from 1990-2020 the chapter shows that there is clearly a split between pro and con education privatisation articles, with a more persuasive critical analysis of this phenomenon.

Mark Bray (Chapter 2) focuses on private supplementary tutoring in sub-Saharan Africa, widely called shadow education. The chapter examines this phenomenon, focusing in particular on fee-charging provision, emphasizing common points with other regions in the world but also the sub-Saharan Africa specific drivers.

Then, Chapter 3, by Anna Cristina D'Addio examine the role of non-state actors in early childhood education and care using indicators from the countries Profiles Enhancing Education Reviews (PEER profiles) on non-state actors in education and other indicators from the World Inequality Database on Education database and the Global Education Monitoring Report. The author prides a bird's-eye view concerning the issues on provision, governance, and regulation in early childhood education and care.

Chapters 4 to 8 take up a particular look of this phenomenon in different countries examine more closely the education privatisation phenomenon. The first of these chapters, authored by Hilaire Hounkpodoté and Thibaut Lauwerier analyses data from the PASEC2014 and PASEC2019 surveys, which provide data from primary schools in ten Francophone African countries. Through a comparative analysis of PASEC data the authors contribute to the understanding of the dynamics of education privatisation from the perspective of education quality in Francophone Africa.

Alberto Ngulube and Isaac Paxe (Chapter 5) examine Angolan private higher education expansion after the 27 year civil war in 2002 highlighting the blurred line between the private and public, where private actors are simultaneously public managers. Also concerning Angola, Chocolate Adão Brás and Camila Maria Bortot (Chapter 6) examine the teacher training programme in Angola and how this programme introduced in a mercantile rationality in Angola. The chapter shed light how a teacher training programme promoted endogenous privatisation, and a technical rationality in the education system in Angola.

Virginie Briand, Sabine Kube-Barth and Mathilde Nicolai (Chapter 7) examine the impact of the major non-state actors in education delivery and quality on Democratic Republic of Congo. The authors problematize the rise of low fees private schools in the country, especially in densely populated urban and peri-urban areas. Chapter 8, by Marie-France Lange provides us with an interesting account of education privatisation in Burkina Faso and the challenges pose by this phenomenon to the country inequalities in access to education and academic achievement.

In the final chapter of this book (Chapter 9), Abdel Rahamane Baba Moussa presents the conclusions of this book with an analytical overview and also a thoughtful reflection on the need to rethink the governance of education systems and, in particular, the relationship between public authorities and the private sector.

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