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International Organizations and Educational Change in Spain during the 1960s

Organisations internationales et changement éducatif en Espagne dans les années 60

Organizaciones internacionales y cambio educativo en España durante los años 60

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Article abstract

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International Organizations and Educational Change in Spain during the 1960s¹

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Abstract

From the end of the 1950s, Spain's political leaders felt the need to promote changes in the educational system that would bring it up to date and give more space to practical content and technical training. International organizations played a leading role in the propagation of these new ideas and organizational practices for the training of human capital and its contribution to economic development. The reports and guidelines of the OECD and UNESCO disseminated prior experiences on educational planning carried out in Latin America, at the same time that they functioned as channels for the transmission of knowledge and teaching methods throughout the 1960s. The modernizing sectors of the Francoist elite (the technocrats) were the main liaisons with those international organizations. They were convinced that it was necessary to reform an obsolete and class-based system to adapt it to the demands of a society that was undergoing a strong process of economic growth. Such schemes, likewise, proved useful to the political project of authoritarian modernization that was propping up the Franco dictatorship. This text will examine the relationship of the Spanish state with the international organizations that provided advice and funding to undertake a set of changes in education, changes that would culminate in the General Education Law of 1970 at the start of the following decade.

Keywords: Spain, international organizations, education, technocrats, human capital, 1960s

Organisations internationales et changement éducatif en Espagne dans les années 60

Résumé

À partir de la fin des années 1950, les dirigeants politiques espagnols commencèrent à admettre la nécessité d'introduire des changements au sein du système éducatif national afin d'y développer la formation technique et des méthodes plus pratiques d'enseignement. Les organisations internationales jouèrent un rôle moteur dans la propagation de ces réformes, qui devaient conduire à la formation du capital humain indispensable au développement économique de l'Espagne. Les rapports et directives de l'OCDE et de l'UNESCO favorisèrent la diffusion d'expériences préalables de planification éducative à destination de l'Amérique latine. Les deux organisations devinrent, tout au long des années 1960, les courroies de transmission de connaissances et de méthodologies pédagogiques nouvelles. Les secteurs modernisateurs de l'élite franquiste (les technocrates) furent les principaux interlocuteurs de ces organisations internationales. Ils étaient convaincus qu'il était indispensable de réformer un système obsolète et élitiste, afin de l'adapter au rythme des demandes d'une société désormais fermement engagée sur la voie de la croissance économique. Cette approche allait dans le sens de leur projet politique. Il s'agissait, en effet, de mettre en marche une modernisation autoritaire du pays afin de soutenir la dictature franquiste. Cet article étudie les relations entre l'État espagnol et les organisations internationales qui apportèrent soutien financier et conseils techniques à la mise en œuvre d'une série de réformes qui aboutiront à la promulgation de la Loi Générale de l'Éducation de 1970.

Mots-clés: Espagne, organisations internationales, éducation, technocrates, capital humain, années 1960

Organizaciones internacionales y cambio educativo en España durante los años 60

Resumen

Desde finales de los años 50 los dirigentes políticos españoles fueron asumiendo la necesidad de promover un cambio en el sistema educativo que lo actualizase y concediese mayor espacio a los contenidos prácticos y a la formación técnica. Las

organizaciones internacionales tuvieron un papel protagonista en la propagación de esas nuevas ideas y prácticas organizativas para la formación de capital humano y su contribución al desarrollo económico. Los informes y orientaciones de la OCDE y la UNESCO difundieron experiencias previas sobre planificación educativa elaboradas para América Latina, al tiempo que actuaron como circuitos de transmisión de conocimientos y métodos de enseñanza a lo largo de los años 60. Los sectores modernizadores de la élite franquista (los tecnócratas) fueron los principales interlocutores con esas organizaciones internacionales. Estaban convencidos de que era preciso reformar un sistema obsoleto y clasista para adaptarlo al ritmo de las demandas de una sociedad que emprendía un fuerte proceso de crecimiento económico. Tales esquemas, asimismo, resultaban funcionales a su proyecto político de modernización autoritaria que apuntalase la dictadura franquista. En este texto se examinará la relación del Estado español con las organizaciones internacionales que prestaron su asesoramiento y financiación para acometer un conjunto de cambios en la enseñanza, que culminarían al iniciarse la década siguiente con la Ley General de Educación de 1970.

Palabras clave: España, organizaciones internacionales, educación, tecnócratas, capital humano, años 60

Introduction

The period from the early 1950s through the late 1960s has been characterized by students of the history of education in Spain as a period of transition: “from national-Catholic totalitarianism to authoritarian technocracy” (Viñao, 2004, p. 69). At the end of the Spanish Civil War in 1939, with the victory of the insurgents and with General Francisco Franco at the head of government, teaching was conceived above all as a vehicle of ideological indoctrination at the service of the new regime, with the Catholic Church as indispensable collaborator and main beneficiary (Cámara Villar, 1984; Mayordomo and Fernández Soria, 1993). This educational system, however, was ineffective in supporting the economic development process promoted in the late 1950s and especially in the following decade. Therefore, various measures were taken to reform it, modifying a substantial part of the prevailing theoretical and pedagogical approaches. Along this line, teaching methodologies and criteria were introduced that were closer to those of the countries of the Euro–North American axis of which Spain sought to be a part, at the same time that the task of national and Catholic indoctrination in teaching decreased (without disappearing completely) and greater space was given to curriculum related to the training of human capital for a scenario of capitalist expansion.

In the mid-1950s, primary education was deficient even in facilities (lack of classrooms), and its priority was the inculcation of the values of the established political order. The renewal of the teaching profession that had taken place in the years of the Second Republic (1931–36) was aborted by the purge of teaching staff undertaken after the Civil War, which expelled from the teaching profession those who had defended progressive ideas and reserved positions in education for those faithful to the Francoist cause. The Catholic Church exerted an omnipresent influence both in schools and institutes and in teacher-training centers. The professional preparation of teachers was deficient and very much marked by the demand for propaganda to legitimate the political regime. Teachers' low salaries were also a disincentive for the performance of their work. Vocational training was almost nonexistent, apart from measures such as the creation in 1949 of the labor baccalaureate (*bachillerato laboral*), which had a very limited impact.

In the reactionary, national-Catholic, and agrarian mentality of the political leaders of the Franco dictatorship, professional and technical training was essential only for certain and not very broad groups, especially so with the industrial sector subject to the restrictions of autarkic economic policy. Access to the middle and higher levels (secondary and university education) was subject to class criteria. Only a few, mostly men and mostly those who had sufficient financial means or were part within the social control structure woven by the dictatorship, had the resources to undertake such studies. Furthermore, secondary education was largely in the hands of religious congregations, with the state in a subsidiary role. At the universities, there was a manifest deficit of scientific and technical specialties. Education, in short, fulfilled a function of justification for political power and reproduction of the established order, with little interest in the advancement and social mobility of those in the more modest strata (Gracia García and Ruiz Carnicer, 2001, p. 112).

What happened after that for the state to assume a more active role in education? Why did the government seek to encourage instruction with a greater scientific-technical content and to reach broader layers of the population? The essential factor in this process was the change adopted in the country's economic policy and the rise within the Franco regime's nucleus of power of a technocratic elite, individuals who had greater international connections and had received some of their own education abroad, mainly in the United States and other Western countries. Since the end of the 1950s, this new ruling group promoted an economic program that would end the previous autarkic policies of the dictatorship and bring the country onto the path of prosperity of the countries of the Western bloc. Similarly, the signing of the military agreements with the United States in 1953 allowed the Spanish government to end the international ostracism imposed since the end of the world war, beginning a progressive opening towards the outside. Since then, the Euro-North American axis constituted the anchor point of the Franco dictatorship with the development and modernization process deployed during the 1960s (Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla, 2018,

pp. 271–284), from which emerged the educational reorientation towards a model to support this process.

Technocrats, Economic Growth and the “Global Architecture of Education”

In 1959, Spanish economic policy underwent a radical turn after the approval of the Stabilization Plan. The drivers of this economic turnaround were the technocratic teams, which in one of the Spanish dictatorship’s most critical moments managed to reverse the deteriorating internal economic situation and the foreign trade deficit, factors that at that time were causing a worrisome exhaustion of foreign trade and a shortage of vital supplies. The credibility of the technocrats as new wielders of power was reinforced thanks to foreign support for their reforms, as Spain obtained technical and financial collaboration from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the Organization for European Economic Cooperation (OEEC), in addition to the decisive support of the United States (Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla, 2001; Cavalieri, 2014). The liberalization of foreign trade, though incomplete, was reflected in the rapid and sustained growth experienced in the 1960s.

Those technocratic cadres aspired to give Francoism a new legitimacy to smooth the way for its full integration into the Western bloc. Thus, they adapted to the Spanish reality some of the main postulates of modernization theory, which had its origins in United States and was in vogue at the time: the need to facilitate the transition from a traditional society to a modern one, progressively provide the population with essential basic services (health, education, housing, etc.), promote the expansion of the middle classes, and advance the opening of the country, bringing it into line with contemporary Western practices—except in the political field, of course. The Spanish technocrats applied elements of the authoritarian versions of modernization theory, which justified the expedience of proceeding in a stable and controlled manner to prevent any disorder that could pave the way for communist subversion (Martín García, 2015, pp. 42–45). Faithful to the dictator and the preservation of the established order, the technocrats aspired to become the agents of a project of change “from above,” from the state apparatus.

Their authoritarian modernization strategy turned them into the “mandarins of the future” (Gilman, 2003, p. 23), under whose direction a traditional society such as Spain’s could lay the foundations for the take-off that would transform it into a modern, orderly, and anticommunist society. The reforms they proposed were aimed at promoting economic growth, improving living conditions, and expanding the consumer society. In this manner they tried to establish the continuity of the Franco dictatorship on a new foundation, which in turn implied a commitment to the rationalization of the state bureaucratic structure, industrial development, and business training.

Simultaneously, they proposed to favor a degree of social mobility in order to provide labor for industrial centers and satisfy the expectations of improvement of the emerging urban middle classes and industrial workers. All this was for the sake of the political-social stability of the dictatorship, and it excluded any attempt at democratization.

One of the chief ways that the technocrats were able to shore up their influence was by establishing themselves as liaisons with the outside world, in the context of seeking international collaboration to accelerate economic development. In fact, they frequently used international assistance and recommendations as a battering ram to overcome internal resistance, which was not insignificant. The combination of reforms “from above” supported “from outside,” with the goals of economic development and modernization, helps to understand why education, previously relegated to an instrument of indoctrination and control, became part of the agenda of Spanish officials from the end of the 1950s and especially in the course of the following decade.

During the 1960s, Spain achieved strong economic growth accompanied by profound social transformations. The structuring of production changed with the expansion of the industrial and service sectors. The distribution of the population responded to this evolution with significant demographic movement from the countryside to the city and from the center to the periphery. Rural life diminished proportionally as urban concentration gained, which favored an increase in the possibilities of advancement and also the progressively greater access of women to the working world. To encourage economic progress, it was necessary to improve the training of the workforce, an action that was associated with the educational demands of increasingly broad layers of the population who considered it a lever of social mobility. Possessing higher qualification through the acquisition of knowledge and skills, whether gained in the school setting or learned on the job, meant the possibility of obtaining better positions in industry and services, breaking the determinism of social class (Echeverría Zabalza, 1999, pp. 363–365).

All this led to a questioning of the elitist educational system that had been in force until then. Education reform was becoming an essential challenge to improve the productive capacities of the country, as well as to keep pace with the rate of social change. The debate on the modernization of education has been going on since the mid-1950s. There were important obstacles to overcome: scarcity of budgetary, material, and human resources; deep-rooted socioeconomic discrimination that prevented those in the less well-off social layers from accessing secondary and higher education; and the influence of the Catholic Church, which stood as the bulwark of the values of the regime. The first steps towards real transformation were taken in the fields that seemed most urgent to boost the industrial machinery of the country: primary education and technical studies. The action at both educational levels initially consisted in building new facilities and increasing staff size.

In 1956 an ambitious program for construction of elementary school buildings was launched, with plans to create 25,000 classrooms and one million teaching positions in compulsory primary education (covering ages 6 to 12, the shortest period in Western European countries). It represented a step forward from the previous situation, but its scope was not as expected due to insufficient funding, to which was added a lack of pedagogical material in many centers and a significant rural dispersion. The following year, the Law for the Regulation of Technical Education was enacted, which increased investments in the creation of technical schools, renewing the study plans and modernizing the equipment and facilities. This measure favored an increase in the number of students taking these courses and introduced improvements in the training of technicians, although the allocation of resources and vocational classes continued to be insufficient due to lack of personnel. Furthermore, centers of higher education were still concentrated mainly in Madrid, and there was hardly any connection between these seats of learning and the scientific facilities and industrial centers (Millán Barbany and Sánchez Tarifa, 1964).

The progressive acceptance of the Franco regime abroad helped strengthen the ties with international organizations in educational matters. Spain joined UNESCO in 1953, and from that date a flow of information on models and practices began to reach the country, dealing with areas such as programmed instruction, literacy campaigns, revision of school manuals, and teacher training. Such educational approaches differed from the mindset instilled by the prevailing national-Catholic ways of teaching, and incorporated new curricular proposals. The main specialized Spanish journals (*Revista Española de Pedagogía*, *Revista de Educación y Bordón*) contained within their pages an increasing number of articles by authors who were part of these new currents. After the founding of the Centro de Documentación y Orientación Didáctica de Enseñanza Primaria (CEDODEP) in 1958, its magazine (*Vida Escolar*) also echoed the pedagogical conceptions of UNESCO to modernize the teaching and learning processes based on positivist and functionalist premises (González-Delgado and Groves, 2017 and 2020). Through these channels, ideas and pedagogical methods were received that were applied in other countries with the sponsorship of UNESCO and with which Spanish teachers became familiar. In the following decade, this collaboration was strengthened through the participation of the Spanish government in projects that were assisted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, formerly OEEC). Spanish access to OECD began in 1959, the same year the Stabilization Plan was approved.

As with the changes in the economic trajectory, the education reform projects relied on assistance and recommendations received from abroad to overcome corporate and ideological obstacles from within, obstacles posed by actors in the educational system itself as well as by other groups of the Francoist elite. The aforementioned international organizations developed a normative discourse and guidelines for action that prescribed the need to make investments in education to promote economic growth.

To assure such growth, it was necessary to have the professionals and technicians required by the productive, educational, and research sectors. This work had to be planned globally, as both an economic and an educational project, utilizing the new statistical tools created by the social scientists of the time.

These conceptions, associated with the theories of modernization and human capital, forged a doctrinal and operational corpus disseminated by UNESCO, the OECD, and later the World Bank (WB). The objective was to respond to the expectations of social change generated in developing countries and, at the same time, to serve as an antidote to the advance of communism in the so-called Global South (Cullather, 2004; Dorn and Ghodsee, 2012; Latham, 2012; Sharma, 2017). The result was a “global architecture of education” (Jones, 2006, pp. 48–49), which also involved national governments, official agencies, philanthropic foundations, and other nonstate actors. They all assumed an educational paradigm linked to the generation of specialized labor stocks that would support the processes of economic expansion and, in addition, social progress (Fiala and Gordon, 1987; Jones and Coleman, 2005).

The Spanish technocratic elites, like those of other countries in the developing world, embraced the prescriptions of that global architecture of education, with the understanding that such was the way to build a modern society with the legitimacy provided by the international organizations that served as a frame of reference (McNeely, 1995, p. 502). According to the recommendations made by international experts, the modernization of the country should be accompanied by a change in mindset, for which it was also necessary to sow the seeds of a “development mentality,” especially in the business world (González-Fernández, 2016). Education had to play a part in that process.

The connection of the Spanish technocrats with these international organizations facilitated the expansion of the circle of individuals in Spain who had access to the communication channels where the new “semantics of modernization” were being formulated and disseminated (Schriewer, 1997, p. 28). Educational leaders and high-level Spanish officials strengthened their contacts with international experts who, working with UNESCO and the Organization of American States (OAS), had applied educational planning to promote primary education in Latin America (Ossenbach and Martínez Boom, 2011; Martín García and Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla, 2020). The launch in 1962 of a course colloquium on the comprehensive planning of education in Madrid, with the collaboration of UNESCO, epitomized the will of the Spanish government to incorporate into its development plans a greater investment in education and training of human capital (*La educación y el desarrollo económico-social*, 1962). It also spotlighted the leading role in that venture of individuals like Joaquín Tena Artigas and Ricardo Díez Hochleitner, both of whom were part of the nucleus from which emanated projects and initiatives for the reform of education in Spain.

Tena Artigas was commissioned to UNESCO in 1954 as an international civil servant to prepare a study on public expenditures in education around the world. He took charge of the Statistics Division at the beginning of 1956. That same year, he was appointed by the Spanish government as Director General of Primary Education and President of the Central Board of School Construction in the Ministry of National Education (MEN). From then on he was the main interlocutor with UNESCO in educational matters, attending without interruption as Spain's delegate to all its general conferences until the 1970s, and serving on Spain's National Commission for Cooperation with UNESCO. In addition, he was responsible for coordinating the Spanish team in the first phase of the Mediterranean Regional Project (MRP), which was promoted by the OECD.

Díez Hochleitner, after acting as an advisor to the OAS in the 1950s, held leadership duties for educational planning and administration at UNESCO. In 1962, he was appointed Executive Secretary of the Special Commission on Education in charge of preparing a ten-year plan for Latin America, as part of the Alliance for Progress program. Later, he assumed the directorship of the World Bank's Department of Investments in Education and of UNESCO's Department of Planning and Financing of Education. Before the end of the 1960s, he returned to Spain as Technical Secretary General and then Undersecretary of the Ministry of Education and Science (MEC), positions from which he undertook the preparation of the General Education Law Project of 1970.

The work of those two personages, as well as of others who also moved in the same circles but were less well-known, enabled them to function as intermediaries with international organizations. Their identification with the normative discourse of the global architecture of education and their knowledge of the mechanisms for obtaining outside assistance and financing made them informal governance actors (Knudsen, 2016, pp. 8–13). Such ability proved very profitable at a time when the idea that economic development should go hand in hand with the promotion of teaching and research was gaining ground among Spanish leaders. Because the country suffered from lack of qualified personnel and investments in training and facilities, it was necessary to create more and better schools, institutes, and universities and to prepare technicians, professionals, and researchers. Working with the OECD and UNESCO brought access to information about other countries' experiences and both educational and organizational models, facilitated dialogue with international experts, and served as an orienting guide and, not infrequently, an endorsement for the reforms proposed in the Spanish scenario.

The Training of Human Capital: Priority and Weakness

The population in school in the early 1960s was around 5 million students. Classified by levels, 84.5% were in primary education, 17.5% secondary, and 2.5% university (Formation et fonctions, 1968, p. 76). The state of primary education had improved since the schools construction plan, although its progress had not been as expected and illiteracy had not yet been eradicated. In the main arena of secondary education, the general baccalaureate, the situation was rated as unsatisfactory by the OECD, with the particularity that most of the centers that taught it were private and they belonged to the Catholic Church (only 17% of students attended official centers). Much lower was the number of those enrolled in vocational training or the labor baccalaureate, which were supposedly designed for more direct entry into the labor market. Neither the creation of industrial vocational training nor the labor universities, both established in 1955, had had a significant impact on this situation. In most cases, learning for work took place outside of the classroom, in small and medium-sized companies that constituted the greater part of the country's economy, where employees received training tailored to a firm's immediate needs.

Since 1957, the technical schools had attracted greater attention from the state and an increase in number of students, showing significant potential for growth. However, the performance level of university instruction was generally considered very low. Medicine and law continued to be two disciplines in high demand, while the number of students studying scientific and technical subjects (physics, chemistry, biology, geology, and mathematics) and engineering (with a preference for the industrial field) had increased slightly. Something equivalent had happened in arts and humanities (*filosofía y letras*), where a large proportion of secondary school teachers were trained (Las necesidades de educación, 1963; Enseñanza y formación profesional, 1964; Memoria, 1965, pp. 105–113).

In short, the general educational level of the workforce was very low. Most of the laboring population had not passed primary school. Income inequalities (not ability or talent) determined access to secondary and higher education, a classist order of selection, made manifest in a secondary education system with little state funding, as it was largely in private hands. Those factors reduced the possibilities of social advancement for the poorest layers and even the middle class. Meanwhile, as those at the higher levels got ahead, a decrease was seen in the presence of women, who at the university level were concentrated in a handful of specialties (humanities, philosophy, chemistry, and pharmacy). Added to this was the lack of adequately trained and well-paid teachers, alongside a high proportion of school dropouts. These elements all come together to hinder the indispensable transformation of the educational system (The Mediterranean Regional Project, 1965).

OECD assistance proved essential in the 1960s for determining what measures could be applied to the Spanish educational system to generate the human capital

needed for the country's economic development (Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla, 2020). The Spanish technocrats and international experts regarded the attraction of foreign capital, investment in capital goods, and actions favoring the formation of industrial and service enclaves as essential ingredients in promoting modernization. But they were not enough by themselves to guarantee the continuity and solidity of the desired economic take-off. Both Spain and other countries in the Mediterranean basin had a common problem: the existence of archaic and elitist educational systems, which hindered the modernization of their productive apparatus. Aware of this, the OECD decided to launch an initiative aimed at these countries to bring their training capacity into line with the demands of economic development. Thus was born in 1961 the MRP, which in addition to Spain included Italy, Greece, Portugal, Turkey, and Yugoslavia.

These countries shared a common unfavorable situation: low budgets dedicated to education, large segments of the population having no more than primary education, low technical and practical content in the subjects taught, and a precariously situated corps of teachers, poorly paid and enjoying little social recognition. The result, for the most part, was a poorly trained workforce, which could pose a serious obstacle to achieving rapid and sustained economic growth. How to act to overcome that? In the first place, the MRP had to analyze the forecasts of the evolution of the productive sectors, their needs for qualified personnel, and the training capacity of the educational systems. Based on such studies, it would be possible to identify the levels of education and the specialties that were a priority to provide the necessary human capital for economic development (The Mediterranean Regional Project, 1964).

According to the reports prepared by the MRP, in Spain the principal medium-term changes in the productive structure would be driven by the expansion of the various branches of industry, with the consequent demand for senior and middle-level technicians, scientists, administrative staff, managers, and executives. A similar path was expected in the services sector, in areas such as commerce, transport, banking, and education. Agriculture would lose some of its laboring population, so that sector would need above all qualified personnel and technicians to achieve an increase in productivity. The experts who collaborated with the OECD estimated that the human capital that the Spanish educational system needed to generate was of such magnitude that it could only be assured through improved instruction at all levels. Likewise, the preference to be given to scientific-technical training at the university level and to the extension of technical training in secondary education (including vocational training) was also highlighted.

The reports of the MRP also warned that the country's educational system had stagnated at rates typical of the 1930s, while its industrial development was advancing rapidly. To overcome this gap, the OECD made calculations on spending for educational investment. The expenses had to go from about 14 billion pesetas in 1962 to 66 billion in 1975, which meant raising the percentage of the GNP devoted to education from 1.8% in 1961 to 4% in 1975. It was an ambitious but fundamental goal

to make up for lost time and have trained personnel available in a relatively short period (The Mediterranean Regional Project, 1965). The will of the Spanish government to undertake such objectives was made manifest with the appointment to the head of the MEN in 1962 of Manuel Lora Tamayo, a professor and researcher connected with the group of technocrats. Under his mandate, the joint actions with international organizations intensified.

In April 1964, the Lora Tamayo ministry raised the age of compulsory schooling to 14, to which was added the Primary Education Law the following year. This law favored, among other actions, the increase in the construction of schools in cities that had gained in population density due to internal migration, in addition to the establishment of more school canteens. New legislative measures were also adopted in 1964 and 1968 for technical education, which led to the creation of more centers for training of engineers and technicians. The OECD supported this trend and collaborated in the design and implementation of the School of Industrial Engineering in Seville, conceived as a pilot center for other facilities (Design for technological education, 1967; Baldó, 2010, pp. 253–257). The same purpose encouraged the Law of University Education of 1965, which sought to make teaching structures more effective and improve teacher training, and the introduction that same year of initiatives to revamp the content of the educational curriculum through the approval of the National Teaching Questionnaires. The awareness that it was necessary to give more possibilities of advancement to groups with fewer economic resources was also translated into the greater endowment allocated to the National Fund for the Promotion of the Principle of Equal Opportunities, which had been founded in 1959.

On the other hand, the international transfer of innovative knowledge that had its beginnings in the previous decade continued to promote the diffusion of new pedagogical methods and organizational concepts. UNESCO programs and initiatives gained a following in the centers where changes in teaching were taking place, as well as in the country's leading educational publications. The experiences of other countries, particularly the United States, reached Spanish teachers most readily as they participated in greater numbers in training and exchange programs, and in meetings of specialists where educational challenges and possible solutions were discussed. Through these channels, the concern for revitalizing teacher training and introducing into the classrooms more effective models of instruction and more experimental modes of learning gained ground. The process was not collectively supported by all teachers and in some sectors it provoked firm resistance, but elements such as graduation, the instructional unit, evaluation, performance control, and the use of objective tests started being applied in the school system (Viñao, 2004, pp. 74–75; González Delgado and Groves, 2017 and 2020; Corrales Morales, 2019, pp. 331–364).

At the same time, the use of audiovisual media as learning resources began. Televisión Española (TVE), in collaboration with the MEN, launched programs to fight

for the eradication of illiteracy. In 1963 the National Center for Media Education by Radio and Television was created, better known as the RTV Baccalaureate. This measure, like other programs such as *Classroom TV*, *English Lessons*, *French Lessons*, *Images to Know*, *School Television*, and *University TV*, had its origin in the suggestions and information transmitted from UNESCO and other international organizations for modernizing the Spanish educational system. This task was joined in 1964 by the Ministry of Information and Tourism with the National Network of Teleclubs to bring TV to rural areas (González Delgado, 2020).

Another area in which this openness to the outside was reflected was in the teaching of English. Throughout the 1960s, spurred by both the Fulbright Commission and the Ford Foundation on the American side and the British Council on the English side, training opportunities for teachers of this language began to expand. The fact that it became a required subject in technical schools and that it gained ground in science programs, as well as the growth it experienced as an elective language in secondary schools, contributed to its progressive expansion. In addition, knowledge of English was the key to access to the know-how of many foreign companies that were established in Spain, and to the technical and scientific knowledge displayed by international organizations such as the OECD and the WB. English was thus conceived as an essential tool for moving towards the modernization of the country (Martín García and Rodríguez Jiménez, 2015).

The reports from the international organizations reflected the transformations that were taking place in the educational arena, but they also insisted that the changes insufficient to overcome the gap between the training of human capital and economic development. By the end of the decade, primary education had already reached almost the entire population of that age group, going from an enrollment rate of 84.5% in 1959–1960 (3,224,926 students) to one of 99% (3,305,226). Secondary education had almost tripled its scope, from 12.72% in 1960–1961 (474,057) to 30.88% (1,224,800), although it was far from the projected goal of 50% for 1975 set by MRP. Technical and vocational training had more than doubled their enrollment, from 129,062 in 1960–1961 to 282,100. In university degrees, there was also a noticeable growth of students, from 77,123 to 207,426, with an increase of graduates in science and technology specialties. Female participation enlarged at all levels, despite Spain being the country with the least such growth among member-nations of the MRP. In the field of teaching personnel, progress was generally much lower (Formation, recrutement, 1969, pp. 19–35; Viñao, 2004, p. 79) Was this evolution adequate, as was intended by the OECD, to the requirements of the economic evolution? Did it reflect the expectations of social advancement of broad sectors of the population?

Spanish GDP registered annual increases of around 7% throughout the 1960s, driven above all by industrial production and a policy of substitution of imports of intermediate goods (Cebrián and López, 2019, pp. 136–146). Education must have been a factor supporting economic development; it was at least depicted as such in

the reports of the international organizations. These aspirations found their way into the Development Plans that were drawn up during the period. However, the allocation of the envisioned resources did not live up to the MRP proposals, nor were the already-modest official forecasts met. The average annual increase in spending on education did not reach 3%, according to OECD calculations. It was a proportion that did not conform to the recommended effort to make up for lost time (Examen du développement, 1972, p. 31).

In sum, during that period, some measures were applied to revamp the educational system and improve the training of human capital, but there was a stark contrast between what was proposed as needing to be done and what was put into practice. Economic expansion was dependent on the massive importation of foreign technology (via direct investment and transfer contracts). Having trained personnel to reduce this dependence and move towards a model of greater capacity for innovation at home was a secondary concern, and with much delay in its implementation. The educational establishment was not in a position to contribute to this desired change, as it continued to manifest serious dysfunctions between teaching levels. Nor did it have sufficient means to absorb the influx of students arriving in increasing proportions at colleges and universities. In addition, it showed a clear deficit of teaching staff with adequate training and continued to be largely anchored in outdated methods and anachronistic facilities. Thus the training of human capital, though treated as a priority on paper, remained a serious weakness in practice.

A Reform with Broad International Support and Strong Internal Opposition

The educational changes undertaken in Spain throughout the 1960s culminated in the profound and ambitious reform contained in the General Education Law (*Ley General de Educación-LGE*) of 1970. This reform received significant support and assistance from various organizations and international actors. However, their preparation, approval, and implementation took place against a backdrop of growing student protests that questioned the supposed benefits of the Spanish model of development. Since the mid-1960s, complaints about the lack of channels for student representation and the poor quality of an increasingly massified education had taken on political connotations, targeting the government and causing the resignation of Minister Lora Tamayo in 1968.

The response of the dictatorship consisted in the use of repression. But treating these uprisings as a mere matter of public order did not bring about any solution and only increased the disaffection of young people with the regime. In order to stop the student rebellion, even as the coercive actions by the government continued, the educational authorities believed that it would be a good idea to undertake reform in the

universities. To this end, three Autonomous Universities (Madrid, Barcelona, and Bilbao) and two Higher Polytechnic Institutes (Barcelona and Valencia) were launched, with the objective of reducing overcrowding in the universities and shifting the campuses to the outskirts of the cities, what would also be to keep student demonstrations under control. At the same time, a new head of the MEC, José Luis Villar Palasí, surrounded himself with a team of associates with proven technical capacity and multiple links with international organizations. Among these associates was Díez Hochleitner, from UNESCO, who joined that department as Technical Secretary General.

Díez Hochleitner convinced the minister that addressing the university issue separately, rather than linking it to a comprehensive transformation of instruction in Spain, would not work. Thus began the project of undertaking a complete reform of the educational system, a national challenge that had remained unaddressed since the Moyano Law of 1857. The preparation of the draft of this reform involved a number of Spanish functionaries who worked as experts in international organizations (José Blat Jimeno, also at UNESCO) or had had a continuous relationship with them (such as Tena Artigas, Adolfo Maíllo, José M. Paredes Grosso, and Arturo de la Orden). In addition, working groups were set up to visit other countries to examine how they had dealt with their modernization in this area. Advice and funding were also sought from UNESCO, the OECD, the WB, and other international entities. The suggestions received through all those channels were collected in the so-called White Book (Education in Spain, 1969), which laid the foundations for an in-depth reform of the entire instructional framework, from primary education to university.

The intent was to forge a model with more interconnection between the different levels, raising the age of compulsory schooling to 16 and incorporating innovative teaching methodologies and practices from two new stages of instruction: Basic General Education (*Enseñanza General Básica-EGB*) and Polyvalent Unified Baccalaureate (*Bachillerato Unificado Polivalente-BUP*). The Spanish authorities also aspired to synchronize the teaching and research in the universities with the economic and social needs of the country. Simultaneously, they sought to mollify student discontent with measures designed to bring the Iberian country closer to the educational schemes of the surrounding democracies. In this sense, the reform implied an important transformation of a traditional educational system, conceived to satisfy the needs of a privileged minority, into a modern system that would promote greater opportunities for social mobility, although without questioning the prevailing sociopolitical order. From the official perspective, it was intended to connect technocratic educational reform with economic development and social mobility, essential elements of modernization and stability within a framework in which democratic freedoms were absent. Another key facet was the training of the teaching staff and their familiarization with educational innovation through new technologies. Responsibility for these tasks would rest with the National Research Center for the

Development of Education (*Centro Nacional de Investigaciones para el Desarrollo de la Educación-CENIDE*) and the Educational Sciences Institutes (*Institutos de Ciencias de la Educación-ICEs*) created in 1969 (La Ley General de Educación, 1992; Gracia García y Ruiz Carnicer, 2001, pp. 325–329; Viñao, 2004, pp. 80–91).

During the early stages of implementing the reform of the educational system, international support was stimulated in several ways. An International Cooperation Committee, sponsored by UNESCO, advised Spanish officials and provided external legitimacy to the venture. Among the renowned experts who participated in this assistance were P. H. Coombs, G. Betancur, H. Becker, C. Kerr, J. Bousquet, and R. Poignant, along with other senior officials from reputable international educational institutions. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) agreed on a project (for an amount of \$1,227,838) aimed at financing external consultants who would participate in designing the structure and contents of CENIDE and the ICEs, as well as in training their members. UNESCO and the OECD also promoted other missions of national and international experts with a similar purpose. The Ford Foundation joined this work with a donation of \$400,000 dedicated to scholarships for Spanish educators, who traveled to the United States and several European countries to learn first-hand about their pedagogical and organizational experiences, as well as visits by foreign specialists who assisted CENIDE and the ICEs in the development of educational reform. At the same time, an agreement was negotiated with the WB whereby a \$12 million loan was granted to cover a portion of the cost of a program for the construction and equipping of centers for EGB, BUP and ICE, along with the hiring of technical advisers for CENIDE. To that agreement, another would be added later, although that collaboration only partially materialized (Corrales Morales, 2019, pp. 396–425, and 2020; Rodríguez Jiménez, 2020).

Along the same lines, the involvement of the US government in support of educational reform was sought and obtained, within the framework of the renewal of the bilateral defense agreements negotiated in parallel with the preparation of the LGE. The United States agreed to allocate a significant sum (\$3 million) to educational and scientific cooperation in return for the presence of its military bases in the Iberian country. A good part of these funds was dedicated to programs connected with the implementation of educational reform (training of university administrators and English teachers, endowments for scientific centers and projects, along with grants for research and extension of studies for Spanish students in the United States). The Fulbright Program between both countries was also used to support the educational reform, giving preference to two areas of exchange: educational development and technological development (Corrales Morales, 2019, pp. 364–395; Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla and Pardo Sanz, 2019; Delgado Gómez-Escalonilla and Hoz Pascua, 2020).

A good part of the aforementioned initiatives were aimed at extending the principles of the educational reform and training the teachers who would be at the forefront of its implementation. The CENIDE-ICEs network was fundamental in this regard, given the

conviction that it was essential to have the cooperation of educators. However, such approaches collided with the day-to-day reality of the majority of the country's teachers, whose reactions ranged from skepticism to rejection. In some cases, it represented a defense of corporate interests or conservative values with which the changes would conflict; in others, it reflected a demand for a democratic educational alternative. More overwhelming was the opposition to the reform in the university community, which considered it an imposition of authoritarian and technocratic power, viewing international aid as a sign of the alliance between the Franco dictatorship and US imperialist capitalism. Nor did supporters of the regime respond favorably to a law that, albeit minimally, opened the possibility of greater citizen participation in the educational realm and advocated increasing the social mobility of the middle and working classes. Before its implementation, the reform program suffered cuts in its most innovative aspirations and in the budgetary means to put them into practice, while facing the opposition or indifference of students and teachers (Milito Barone and Groves, 2013, pp. 141–144; Groves, 2014; Martín García, 2020).

Conclusions

The educational reform of 1970 came late and in a context of growing erosion of Francoism. The measures taken in the course of the previous decade had had limited effects and fell far short of achieving the objectives projected by the MRP. In the mid-1960s, the educational level of the population was still considered very low. Significant progress was made in primary education and in the eradication of illiteracy, but in secondary school (including vocational training) and higher education the pace of change was much slower, with human resources remaining virtually unchanged. In the 1964 labor force survey, the proportion of those who had not gone beyond primary education amounted to 90%, and the percentage who had completed both secondary and higher education did not reach 5% of the total. The training of working women continued to be considerably lower than in the case of men. These results were not in line with the anticipated need for human capital to consolidate economic growth.

The rapid expansion of the industrial sector meant a greater need for senior and mid-level technicians. It was possible to increase the number of engineers, especially industrial, but the high proportion of manual laborers with low professional training and the shortage of high-level experts, mid-level technicians, and qualified managerial personnel remained. The preponderance of small companies that provided little added value to their services complicated the recruitment of these managers to a significant extent. In contrast, the increased presence of foreign investment and the establishment of foreign companies in Spain introduced some dynamism. If Spain was incapable of generating its own innovation, it could favor the transfer of technological and scientific advances developed by other countries to improve its productive capacity. But such a

process, likely to favor an improvement in the training of human capital, had a limited impact in global terms. Nor did the acceleration of economic growth in the services sector bring with it a sufficient volume of well-trained personnel. In agriculture, the training of labor was even slower, which in turn slowed down changes in the mechanization of the countryside, improvement in methods of cultivation, and stimulation of exports (Las necesidades de graduados, 1966; Cebrián and López, 2004; Cubel et al., 2012; Puig and Álvaro, 2015).

The determined involvement of international organizations was a spur for introducing changes in the educational sphere. Such changes proved incomplete and were subject to the interests of the cadres of technocrats who promoted them. But, at the same time, they brought the designs and contents of the global architecture of education to Spain. Beyond the specific motivations of political leaders and their educational advisers, the positive effects of this process were reflected in the new ways of conceiving and organizing instruction. Its impact was perceptible in the will to adapt pedagogical innovations, technological advances, and experimentation in the classroom to the Spanish reality. Also, in the concern for improving the preparation of teachers and the facilities that supported them, although obtaining a true official endorsement in that direction would have to wait for the LGE. Foreign assistance played an important role in the renewal of education (however limited it may be considered), and in bringing it into line with what was happening in neighboring countries.

Despite this foreign assistance, the launch of the LGE against a backdrop of student radicalization and intensified government repression contributed to its delegitimization among broad sectors of the university and educational community. In its initial formulation, the law marked the culmination of a trajectory of cooperation of international organizations focused on consolidating economic development, which meant improving the training of human capital and, by extension, favoring upward social mobility. Such objectives were also used by the Francoist technocratic elites as an instrument to legitimize the dictatorship in terms of modernization, social welfare, and stability. However, the delays, the hesitations, and the insufficiency of means for putting into practice the changes recommended by the international organizations are clear proof of the secondary place assigned to education by the Franco regime.

Note

1. This work has been carried out within the framework of the following research projects: *Modernization, development and democratization: The role of western European powers and international organizations in political and social change in Spain* (PGC2018-097159-B-I00), *Foreign assistance and industrial and scientific-technical*

modernization in Castilla-León: Analysis of local potentialities and options global, c.1950-present (SA241P18), and *Exploring the Agents of the Spanish Innovation System: Learning and Knowledge Dissemination Strategies during the Economic Transition, 1959–1986* (PGC2018-098057-A-I00).

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