

Lima, educating city

Lima is a mixed city combining the widest variety of formal education, artistic richness, and cultural exchanges. The diversity is associated with poverty, inequality, and discrimination in education as well. This paper argues there is not a unified city project that could address the transformation in education.

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1. THE CITY AS INTERCULTURAL MEETING PLACE

Lima is a big city. Home to 30% of the population of the country, it has a weak Metropolitan Government, mainly devoted to infrastructure. The gaps left are covered by the National Government's direct intervention in the management of the city, affecting democratic governance for citizen participation is left away. In addition, ministries with shared functions still have the city of Lima as an area of work.

Its city project does not dialogue with the global nature of city life, with aspirations and, social and cultural dynamics. Furthermore, it ignores inequalities reproduced in education.

Thus, the city is a conglomeration of high concentration of population, a place of diversity, exchanges between people, cultures, and different social sectors. Privileged space of multiculturalism and citizenship. Degregori (1986) recognizes multiculturalism is alive. Reflecting on immigration, he believes Lima and large cities are not the result of a standardized homogenization, but are closer

to the "unity of diversity", in an all-blood-Peru Arguedas longed.

According to the Barcelona Council (1999: 18): "The city is primarily the space for the public, the access to socialization, equality and freedom, public goods, work, social relationships and trade, culture and leisure, participation, solidarity, the pursuit of democracy. In the cities vanguards are generated, traditions validated and social and intellectual movements emerge, where utopias they born".

The multiple experience of democracy is part of education, as it is the aesthetic experience and learning in different social spheres.

In the city of Lima, cultural offers, artistic interventions, ornamental, and recreation have increased and there has been a limited recovery of the historic centre. Public parks have been rehabilitated and the Magic Water Circuit. Business is growing, and the institutions that offer education and recreation, and self-employment have increased. Commercial dynamism of the north, south, and east areas of Lima is remarkable, in addition to new high education services, especially private universities and their affiliates.

In parallel, forms of inequality in the quality of life and spatial segregation are renewed. Neighbourhood insecurity is a factor that separates and impoverishes social bonds.



2. CITY GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL POLICY

A government with autonomy should be a constructed socially in the struggle for the country's decentralization and, social and educational inclusion. The incorporation of Lima in the process of decentralization is important for the overall decentralization of the country.

However, the Mayor's office has not taken over regional government, which authorities are aware of (Iguñiz, 2010), because of political decision and for the public seems to accept the absence of a unified project for the city.

The difficulties of the decentralization process have, first and for most, a centralist political base, and in a far second place, a very poor and inadequate legislation already enacted. The Government systematically ignores decentralist-oriented laws.

Decentralization has among its meanings, the expansion of social participation and leadership. Building an inclusive city demands a growing social participation. Borja (1990: 58) says that the citizen is a person who participates in the conquest of the city, the one who takes it over.

The participation of non-state institutions in public policy takes many forms, from the provision of services, policy formulation (concerted plans and participatory budgeting), and monitoring. Networks of human rights, youth, children, and care for the disabled, elderly, health, education, and environment were formed. In addition, we have the campaign "Never again", which seeks to implement the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), as well as those on external debt and meetings with political parties during election campaigns about proposals in education, health, childhood nutrition. Likewise, the Compromised Board for the Struggle against Poverty (MCLCP in Spanish) is a space of coordination between the State and civil society, focused on the articulation of social policies.

3. EDUCATIONAL DIMENSION OF THE CITY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (CDP)

Having a development project in the city, surpassing its fragmented management is essential to an education project.

Given the multiple and interconnected causes of school failure, public policy must be articulated to achieve the great objectives of poverty reduction and human deve-

lopment. The fulfilment of social objectives is possible with intersectorial interventions. Thus, education benefits directly of the realizations of the other social sectors, and vice versa.

The CDP of the city of Lima democratically developed and implemented, can clarify and can make the contribution of education to the city explicit, both in and out of school. Along the same line, it is very important to highlight the Plan of the City of Bogotá on education significance in democratic politics:

“Some of the policies of the Development Plan of the city, for its relevance, contribute to the development of education, among which some are distinct: integral nature of public action; encouragement of social integration; investment in equity; the prevalence of the rights of children; focus on women and gender; participation in decision making; social control and accountability; food security; and, employment and income generation.” (Mayor of Bogotá, 2004)

We also remember José Antonio Encinas’ idea whereby municipal autonomy is the first lesson in civics. Good governance of the city is educative for citizenship.

4. RECOGNITION OF THE SPECIAL REGIME OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF METROPOLITAN LIMA (MML)

With the reform of the Constitution regarding decentralization, the MML assumes the dual role of local government and regional government. It can distribute its functions with the National Government with a simpler scheme, based on the laws of decentralization and the General Law of Education (GLE). The intergovernmental work, which is new and complex, should therefore go further in Lima.

The MML has to make up for lost time and assume the functions of regional government to promote governance and management of city districts as a whole. On that basis, it should gradually transfer the national programs and activities of the Ministry of Education (MINEDU) for the population of the city.

The Mayor’s office continues to suffer from weak coordination with the districts, and the Metropolitan Assembly is gone. “Autonomous municipal authorities”, such as the one that manages the Beach Circuit of Lima, which has facilitated the abrupt interference of the Government, are weak.

A good number of district municipalities in the city are especially significant in population and institutional development to take expanded roles in support of social inclusion and education. Affirming Lima’s metropolitan government is not centralism. This, rather, must contribute to the enhancement of district municipalities.

The variety of forms of local management comes from the diversity of local realities. Even in the city of Lima, it is necessary to identify various types of municipalities. We must overcome the fact that even the very designation of district or province means assuming complex functions such as education, and remember that the size - or scale - of a jurisdiction plays its role, although not decisive in all circumstances.

5. THE EDUCATING CITY

Let us go forward some criteria for addressing the education sense in the life of a city. As pointed out by Borja (1990: 52), the city offers a way of starting life and education:

“Discovering the city [...] the adventure, individual or the band initiative, the confrontation with the people and the rules, knowing the prohibitions and transgressions, advancing into the unknown and discovering new territories and new characters.

[...] The city, however, provides enough power of eroticism, that is, of mystery and prohibition (Bataille) for the adventure is possible. That is, the initiation into life. The education.”

In the same line, Acurio said on TV (27/07/2009), when talking about his youth living in the residential district of San Isidro, (l) “...found that adventure, the revelation was in Lince”¹.

The General Law of Education says that society becomes an educator for cultural creativity and civic values. Children and youth are involved in many areas of socialization, from family, church, peer groups, sports, arts activities, and so on. In the city of Lima, the widest variety of formal education, artistic richness of the country and international cultural exchanges via the Internet combine.

The diversity of actions is also associated with poverty, inequality, and discrimination in education, where the quality of cultural experience depends a lot on income:

¹ Lince is a neighbour district of San Isidro, which is poorer and less aristocratic than San Isidro.

“The educating city is the one that wants to change through education, keeping the balance between trade and economic growth on the one hand, and cultural improvement of its citizens, on the other. The educating city is not the instrument but the means: it involves the openness of the potential of the city fully, using all the resources in order to be close to all its citizens. The purpose of an education project cannot be other than the appropriation of the city by the citizens” (Barcelona Provincial Council, 1999: 19).

6. PROPOSALS FOR THE 2021 EDUCATION PROJECT

Start from national policies adopted democratically. The obligations of the State are clearly stated in the National Agreement, the GLE, the National Education Project (NEP), and the Report of the TRC. They have the responsibility to demand human development, to address inequalities and discrimination in society and in the education system, citizenship education, and the policy of multiculturalism. The prospect of the right to education will be supported also by international agreements made by the country, such as Education for All and the current consultation on the 2021 Goals.

Expand knowledge for the implementation of projects. Many regional and some local governments have gone ahead with the participatory formulation of long-term educational projects. In turn, this is putting ahead the implementation as a challenge in politics, resources and of change theory.

Think with the regions, not on their behalf. If the authorities and the citizens of Lima thought their specific situation and drafted their own city, that would help not to continue extrapolating policy making and regulations designed from Lima without taking sufficient account of the diversity of the country, but which are raised as national.

The Education Project is for everyone. In the design we have been outlining, education is the joint effort of many actors. The City Project comprises all citizens

and not just those directly served in public schools. To do this we must call for the participation of the education community, with the Participatory Local Education Councils (PLEC) to consensus building, citizen monitoring and the preparation of Local Education Project (RM 009-2005-ED, items 51° to 53°) in Lima and its districts.

The Local Government must have a political willingness and a project to sift, guide, and align the programs and actions of all actors, by formulating shared visions and mobilizing strategies of all the democratic energies and justice. It is not just a service for those who cannot afford it. Education is a public function and a public good, in its three different management forms, i.e., public, mixed, or private.

It involves the openness of the potential of the city fully, using all the resources in order to be close to all its citizens. The purpose of an education project cannot be other than the appropriation of the city by the citizens.

Specify the distribution of functions.

The allocation of powers and functions in the State is in laws of constitutional development and the organic laws of regional, local and national governments.

With this assignment, a matrix chart to visualize the gaps or crosses of functions can be made. With the powers and functions already approved and the basic matrix, it is sufficient for the adoption of the Law on Organization and Functions (LOF), with decentralization meaning. However, there is political resistance.

The GLE designs a decentralized system in which the three levels of government and schools have shared responsibilities, but carried out differently.

What is now appropriate, based on the matrix and the experience of recent years, is to identify changes needed in the laws and make proposals. This means advocating for the implementation of the Intergovernmental Coordinating Committee (ICC).

For example, a large group of scholars agree that in order to enhance the diversity of forms of local management, changes in the GLE and the Organic Law of Municipalities must be done, overcoming in the latter the extreme rigidity in the distribution of equal functions in the province municipalities and the different districts.

Approving the LOF would have the virtue of helping to develop a second level of distribution of specific functions, which means that the three levels of government and schools specify how each is involved in the implementation of each function. To do this we must start from existing regulations and rules, and review the experience of these years.

Again, this specification is not a prerequisite for the development of the LOF of MINEDU, as this law does not go into enough detail and the basic matrix is enough, which only arises from the laws already enacted and therefore cannot be returned to approve.

In the case of the MML, a distribution of functions between the provincial and district level has to be invented. In addition, make room for northern, central, south and east, as commonwealths.

Recognize the Provincial Municipality as a special constituency. The standards must recognize the special characteristics of the MML constituency, which is capital of the republic.

7. MML MEDIUM-TERM PLAN 2011-2014

To implement the Regional Education Project (REP) of the city requires a medium-term plan:

For its formulation, there is political orientation from the long-term project. Its purpose and its diagnosis can specifically address the educational transformation.

The Plan has a shorter time and would be articulated with the Multiannual Social Setting 2010-2012 and a Multiannual Sectoral Strategic Plan 2007-2011 (MSSP) of MINEDU, to specify the first challenges to confront and the quantitative and qualitative goals to be achieved in a strategy of change.


Having a plan involves the transfer of the present Regional Direction of Education. It must be accompanied with an agreement of transfer of resources and restructuring. This will mean the beginning of educational policymaking and not a mere de-concentration.

The transfer of programs is an important part of a new city government. Among the recent claims, the one of Andres Cardó Franco in the Region V National Meeting (5-6 November 2009) is important to consider.

Since the city is not homogeneous, poorer districts with lower quality education are prioritized.

In parallel, medium-term district plans are elaborated or redefined among municipalities, Local Education Management Units (LEMUs) and PLECs. The suspension of the Pilot Plan of Municipality Education will help to make the municipal contribution to education according to the decentralization policy and not atomization.

The city receives its schools to advance their importance in the formal system, with the renewal of the Institutional Education Projects and Ordinary Budgets to make decisions.

It is the constitution of the Intergovernmental Council of Education of Metropolitan Lima, with MINEDU, the Regional Direction of Education of Lima, the LEMUs and Municipal Directions of Education of the districts. 

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