The Trajectory of Global Education Policy

Community-Based Management in El Salvador and the Global Reform Agenda

D. Brent Edwards Jr.

EAST-WEST CENTER
COLLABORATION · EXPERTISE · LEADERSHIP

International and Development Education

The International and Development Education series focuses on the complementary areas of comparative, international, and development education. Books emphasize a number of topics ranging from key international education issues, trends, and reforms to examinations of national education systems, social theories, and development education initiatives. Local, national, regional, and global volumes (single authored and edited collections) constitute the breadth of the series and offer potential contributors a great deal of latitude based on interests and cutting edge research. INTERNATIONAL EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD Clementina Acedo, Webster University, Switzerland Philip G. Altbach, Boston University, USA Carlos E. Blanco, Universidad Central de Venezuela Oswell C. Chakulimba, University of Zambia Sheng Yao Cheng, National Chung Cheng University, Taiwan Ruth Hayhoe, University of Toronto, Canada Yuto Kitamura, Tokyo University, Japan Wanhua Ma, Peking University, China Ka Ho Mok, Hong Kong Institute of Education, China Christine Musselin, Sciences Po, France Yusuf K. Nsubuga, Ministry of Education and Sports, Uganda Namgi Park, Gwangju National University of Education, Republic of Korea Val D. Rust, University of California, Los Angeles, USA Suparno, State University of Malang, Indonesia John C. Weidman, University of Pittsburgh, USA Husam Zaman, Taibah University, Saudi Arabia

More information about this series at
http://www.springer.com/series/14849

D. Brent Edwards Jr.

The Trajectory of Global Education Policy

Community-Based Management in El Salvador and the Global Reform Agenda

palgrave
macmillan

D. Brent Edwards Jr.
Department of Educational Foundations
University of Hawaii
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA

Cover image: © aleksandarvelasevic / getty

Printed on acid-free paper

*To those in El Salvador and around the world who dedicate their
efforts to working toward more equitable, democratic,
and inclusive societies.*

Preface

The Education with Community Participation (EDUCO) program began in El Salvador in early 1991, near the end of the twelve-year civil war. It not only represented an extreme form of decentralization in that it transferred the responsibility for hiring, firing, and supervising teachers to rural communities, but it was also the first reform of its kind in Latin America. During the ensuing 20 years, the program has received tremendous attention. Indeed, within the country it became the central program through which the education sector was rebuilt and expanded in the postwar era of the 1990s and 2000s. Internationally, the program has been widely recognized as a successful and desirable example of community-level education management decentralization. In fact, the program has become a "global education policy" in that it has been and continues to be highlighted, cited, promoted, and adapted around the world.

To date, however, the majority of research on this program has been ahistorical in nature and has focused narrowly on whether the program "worked"— statistically speaking and with regard to such outcomes as student achievement. In contrast, in this book, I analyze the dynamics of how the policy was developed. I shed new light on the trajectory of the EDUCO program by employing the approach of critical international political economy and by combining this approach with an analytic framework centered on mechanisms and pathways of transnational influence. By utilizing these theoretical and conceptual tools, I am able to reveal how the program was developed, scaled up, and internationally promoted. More specifically, I am able to highlight the relevant political-economic structures that impinged on education reform, as well as the various

mechanisms and pathways of transnational influence that contributed to its advancement within and beyond El Salvador. As explained, international organizations were central to the policy development process in a number of ways.

Methodologically, I focus not only on the process of development itself, but also on the ways in which actors and forces from multiple levels (local, national, international) interact and intersect in that process. Theoretically, by choosing to analyze EDUCO's origins, I attempt to contribute to our understanding of how (i.e., through which mechanisms of transnational influence) and why certain policies come into existence and subsequently go global. That is, the book seeks to go beyond a presentation of findings on EDUCO and to contribute as well to (a) how we understand and investigate the phenomenon of global education; (b) the potential and pitfalls of community-based management; (c) the meaning of the current phase of community-based management in the history of decentralization trends; (d) the role of research in the politics and promotion of global education policies; and (e) the possibilities that exist for combating the emergence, circulation, and implementation of neoliberal education policies globally.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Any contribution this book might make is the result of the significant support I received along the way. Indeed, as a project that began in 2009, I have learned and benefited from the guidance, generosity, and encouragement of numerous individuals and organizations. To be sure, the EDUCO project would not have been possible without my former doctoral advisor, Steve Klees. Sincere thanks go to you for shepherding me through the manuscript's first incarnation, as a doctoral dissertation. I couldn't have asked for a more fitting advisor—critical, responsive, flexible, and always calm. The International Education Policy program at the University at Maryland provided an excellent space for this project to evolve. The other members of my doctoral committee—Mark Ginsburg, Nelly Stromquist, Linda Valli, and Antoni Verger—likewise provided inspiration, both personally and through their academic work. A special shout-out goes to Antoni Verger, Hulya Kosar-Altinyelken, and Mieke Lopes Cardozo for hosting me and welcoming me as a Visiting Scholar during the 2010–2011 academic year at the University of Amsterdam's Institute for Social Science Research, when this project was in its early stages of evolution. Paula Beckman and Frances Vavrus were also early supporters of this project to whom I owe a debt of gratitude. In particular, Paula Beckman is responsible for first introducing me to El Salvador. Without that first trip in January of 2009, it is unlikely that I would have gone down the rabbit hole that is EDUCO. Thank you for bringing this program to my attention.

To Cristina Starr, Pauline Martin, and Julián Antonio Victoria Libreros, thank you for making my time in El Salvador not just enjoyable but memorable. It's the people you meet along the way that make all the

difference. Each of you continues to inspire me in different ways. Your examples stay with me.

To Mauricio Trejo, thank you for making me feel welcome at the Universidad Centroamericana. Your support was instrumental in securing the Fulbright to come to El Salvador for data collection.

As is usually the case, data collection was only possible because of the help of a great number of people. In addition to the informants and interviewees, I owe a debt to Eduardo Salvador Cárcamo, without whom I never would have gained access to the invaluable trove of documents at the Escuela Superior de Maestros. I would likewise be remiss if I didn't thank Evelyn Ávalos, who transcribed no fewer than 45 of my interviews. Your consistency and diligence were much appreciated.

Financially, this dissertation would not have been possible without significant support from Fulbright, the Rotary Foundation, the Golden Key International Honour Society, and two fellowships from the University of Maryland—the Anne G. Wylie Dissertation Fellowship and the Dr. James W. Longest Memorial Award for doctoral research in the social sciences with potential benefits for disadvantaged communities.

Finally, above all, this book and all the work on which it is based could not have come to fruition with the incredible support that I received from my partner, Sachi Edwards, and from my immediate family. I am incredibly privileged to have grown up in Montgomery County, Maryland, to have benefited from the public education system there, and to have learned from the examples set by my parents. The challenge now is to remain aware of that privilege and to continue to use it for the benefit of others. This book represents one effort in that ongoing challenge.

CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations

ACE	Community Education Association (*Asociación Comunal Educativa*)
ARENA	Republican National Alliance (*Allianza Republicana Nacional*)
CDE	School council (*consejo directivo escolar*)
CIPE	Critical International Political Economy
EDUCO	Education with Community Participation (*Educación con Participación de la Comunidad*)
FEPADE	Business Fund for Educational Development
FMLN	Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (*Frente Farabundo Martí de Liberación Nacional*)
FUSADES	Salvadoran Foundation for Economic and Social Development
IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IPEPF	International Processes of Education Policy Formation
MINED	Ministry of Education
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

LIST OF FIGURES

List of Tables

List of Boxes

The Global Education Policy Field: Characterization, Conceptualization, Contribution

The Global Education Policy Field

While it is now commonplace for certain education policies or policy ideas to circulate widely around the world, it was not always this way. Rather, the emergence of "global education policies"—or those policies that are widely promoted by education reformers and frequently considered by policymakers—is a relatively recent phenomenon with origins in the post-World War II context. Certainly, prior to this time, there is evidence of the formal and informal study of education internationally (Sobe 2002), not to mention the dissemination of reform principles through such means as World's Fairs (Sobe and Boven 2014) and regional and international conferences (Chabbott 1998). However, it was only in 1945, in the post-World War II context, when governments were concerned with ensuring peace, stability, and prosperity by creating multilateral institutions, that the first international intergovernmental organization with an education mandate came into being, namely UNESCO, or the United Nations Education, Science and Culture Organization (Jones and Coleman 2005).[1] As Mundy et al. (2016) describe, the establishment of UNESCO, together with the development of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, placed education on the postwar agenda of multilateralism, which was focused on ensuring shared principles and values across countries.[2] Importantly, these authors furthermore note that, in this context, "while education would remain predominantly the preserve of

national sovereignty …, for the first time, the need for global standards and cross-national problem solving in education was recognized as an appropriate and important domain for multilateralism" (Mundy et al. 2016, p. 4).

In subsequent decades, as education became an issue of concern for more and more international organizations, these organizations represented a new aspect of international relations (Jones 2007). However, more than entities in and through which the interests of states were settled, the work of international organizations and their interaction with each other and with national and even subnational actors increasingly constituted a space—or field—of activity in its own right. In this field of activity, which has recently come to be known as the "global education policy field," many organizations are either semi-independent or completely independent of the interests of states, with the implication being that this field is also characterized by the priorities, preferences, and autonomy of numerous kinds of actors (Jakobi 2009).

The proliferation of actors that would make up the global education policy field accelerated in the 1960s, with the breakdown of colonialism, and continued after this time, with the emergence of new states as well as new organizations that would take an interest in their education systems. These actors can be divided into at least three broad categories (Berman 1992). The first is multilateral institutions such as United Nations organizations and regional development banks. The second is national aid agencies, that is, governmental bodies that provide development assistance to low-income countries, often, though not always, along lines of national self-interest and formerly colonial relationships. The third group can be labeled international civil society and includes nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), such as philanthropic organizations, think tanks, research organizations, Save the Children, Teach for All, the Global Campaign for Education, and Education International (the global federation of teachers' unions), to name a few. Of course, as there are uneven power relationships across organizations competing for influence (Edwards et al. forthcoming-b), and given that the field of global education policy is situated within larger geopolitical dynamics (Mundy and Verger 2015), it can be said that the "global architecture of education is … a complex web of ideas, networks of influence, policy frameworks and practices, financial arrangements, and organizational structures" (Jones 2007, p. 325).

Starting in the 1990s, in order to characterize the dynamics described above, scholars began to employ the term global governance (Mundy 2007), which can be defined as the "authoritative allocation (by a variety

of means) of values in policy areas that potentially affect the world as a whole and its component parts" (Overbeek 2004, p. 2). Not surprisingly, the emergence of this term coincided with the end of the Cold War and came on the heels of a new wave of economic globalization that began in the 1970s. The point here is to note that, when it comes to the global governance of education, in the context of a world capitalist system, there have been new pressures put on states by the combination of economic liberalization, financial deregulation, and periodic recessions, together with the prevalence of the logic of neoliberalism, new public management, and accountability (Bonal 2002, 2003; Carnoy 1999; Harvey 2005; Peck and Tickell 2002; Verger et al. 2016). More specifically, these economic and ideational factors create challenges for states (a) by pressuring them to compete economically, which entails a focus on making education systems competitive (in the case of economic liberalization); (b) by making it more difficult to collect tax revenue (in the case of financial deregulation); (c) by forcing policymakers to do more with less (in the case of periodic recessions, or in the case of budget shortfalls for other reasons); and (d) by shifting the common sense around reform such that policies based on competition and mechanistic notions of accountability are seen as being the most appropriate and desirable for improving the quality of education (in the case of logic of neoliberalism).

At the same time, politically, one can observe increasing involvement of international actors and increasing influence of globally promoted ideas in education-related affairs, both at the international and national levels. Perhaps the most prominent example is the Education for All initiative, which grew out of the World Conference on Education for All in Dakar in 1990. This conference was organized by four main, multilateral convening institutions, and the resultant education goals were agreed to by 155 countries.[3] This initiative served as a key referent in the discussion around education reform in low-income countries through 2015, the date by which the six goals were to have been met (King 2007). However, it should be noted that high-income countries have not been immune to global governance dynamics. Recent examples of the global impacting the national in high-income states include the results of international tests of student achievement (Grek 2009), as well as the work of multinational corporations and consultancy companies that are "firmly embedded in the complex, intersecting networks of policy-making and policy delivery and various kinds of transaction work (brokerage and contract writing)— much of which is hidden from view" (Ball 2009, p. 89; see also Ball 2012).

Recent work by scholars has focused explicitly on describing and theorizing the field of global education policy (e.g., Mundy et al. 2016; Verger et al. forthcoming). The thrust of this work has been to conceptualize the "international political space in which policy agencies compete for influencing the shape of national and international education policy" (Jakobi 2009, p. 477). Visually, this space can be depicted as in Fig. 1.1.[4] A key feature of this field is that it is inhabited by the three types of international actors mentioned above—that is, multilateral institutions, foreign aid agencies, and international NGOs—as well as national political actors, including policymakers, governmental agencies, and national and local NGOs, among others (Lingard et al. 2015). Given the developments of recent decades, to this picture should be added a fourth group of international actors that have become increasingly involved and influential in this field—namely, transnational corporations, consultancy companies, and philanthropic foundations (Ball 2012). Together, these four groups are the primary actors that compete and collaborate to define and advance agendas and policies for education at the global level and to insert them into policy reform at the national level.

Although Fig. 1.1 visually places countries in a subordinate position, it is important to note that it allows for a two-way relationship between the national and international levels. As can be seen, there is a bidirectional
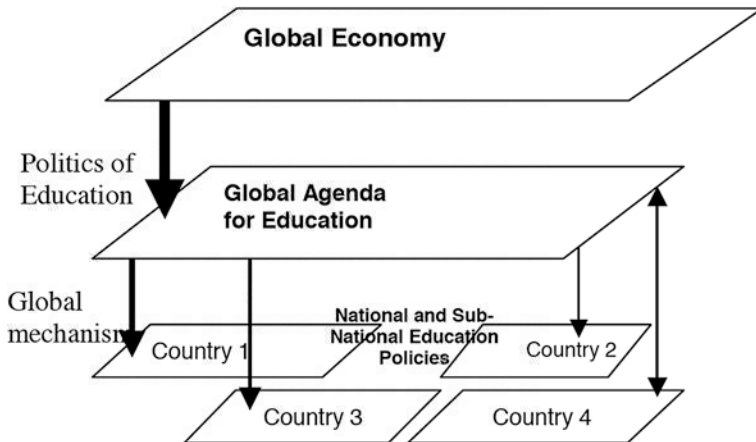
Fig. 1.1   The Global education policy field
Source: Novelli and Verger (2008)

arrow connecting country 4 with the global agenda for education. This is a crucial point, for while much scholarship on global education policy arguably focuses on the various ways that the global impacts the national and local levels, it is essential that we remain open to the ways that the local and national levels impact the global. Indeed, it is in this area that the present book seeks to contribute.

As both the preceding discussion and Fig. 1.1 indicate, scholarship in the area of global education policy is very broad because it can focus on many things. Examples include how and why policies travel, are borrowed, and are implemented; the actors who contribute to the production and movement of those policies, as well as the strategies they employ; the institutional and political spaces in and through which this traveling occurs; as well as the dynamics and topography of the field of activity more generally. These foci are reflected across the various intellectual and disciplinary approaches that scholars use to understand global education policies and the broader field of activity portrayed visually in Fig. 1.1, as further discussed in the next section.

Approaches to Global Education Policy

There are multiple streams of scholarship that examine global education policy (Verger et al. forthcoming), and these streams come from different disciplinary and theoretical traditions.[5] While various approaches to global education policy are distinguished here for purposes of clarity and in order to locate the present study in relation to existing scholarship, there is overlap across the perspectives and some authors fall within more than one approach. With this in mind, this section briefly discusses two well-known, macro-level perspectives on global education policy (World Culture Theory and international political economy), as well as a number of other approaches grounded in political, sociological, sociocultural, anthropological, and international relations perspectives. Not included here are evaluative studies whose only purpose is to determine the outcomes of a given policy. The reason for this is that in such evaluative studies the global nature or global circulation of education policies is irrelevant; that is, these studies do not concern themselves with policy origins, policy traveling, or issues of policymaking, but rather only with policy impact. As such they do not conceptually engage with any of the questions that are central to the present book or the field of global education policy.

World Culture Theory

One group of scholars approaches the issue of the origins of global education policy from the perspective of World Culture Theory. This tradition sees international actors such as United Nations organizations as carriers of ideas that are freely taken up by nations around the world (Chabbott 1998; McNeely 1995; McNeely and Cha 1994; Meyer et al. 1997; Ramirez et al. 2016). That is, from the perspective of World Culture Theory, through such avenues as international conferences and engagement with international organizations and their publications, policymakers at the national level are exposed to—and then adopt, out of a desire to be seen as legitimate—prevailing ideas around what education systems should look like (Ramirez and Boli 1987). This happens in the context of a "world society" composed of nation-states that have, especially in the post-World War II period, become increasingly dependent on seemingly rational, bureaucratic institutions, with the implication being that education is one among many sectors affected by this trend, a trend which, at foundation, is geared toward achieving "progress" and "modernization" through the spread and inculcation of liberal legal and cultural norms (e.g., primacy of the individual, consumption, faith in science, obedience, etc.) (Boli et al. 1985). When it comes to methods, World Culture scholars have tended to look for trends in global reform in the extent to which educational policies, curricula, and textbooks reflect the ideas embedded in the discourse that is circulated globally by international organizations (Chabbott 1998; Kamens and McNeely 2010). Differences between international ideas and globally circulated models, on one hand, and the forms they take at the national level, on the other, are attributed to institutional isomorphism and loose coupling (Meyer et al. 1997).[6]

International Political Economy

Another group of scholars approaches global education policy through perspectives grounded in international political economy, with its focus on structure, power, and the nation-state as a site of negotiation among competing political and (capitalist) economic interests. Roger Dale (2000), for example, in writing about what he labels the "globally structured agenda for education," sees the pressures generated by the capitalist world economy as central to the settlement of national-level decisions related to education policy. Indeed, when it comes to education, the important thing to

note from this framework is that education is at the heart of the process by which the government legitimates and generates consent for capitalist modes of production (see Tarlau forthcoming, for a recent example). International development banks are a favorite target for scholars preoccupied with global capitalism and the spread of neoliberal education policies. For these scholars, the World Bank (and other institutions with similar ideology) functions to promote (and to lobby for the acceptance of) policies that hold out the promise of improved educational quality and other outcomes of interest (like enhanced productivity, increased employment, national competitiveness, etc.) without challenging the capitalist system of which the education sector is a part (Bonal 2002). In trying to understand the origins and spread of global education policies, scholars grounded in the general paradigm of international political economy tend to examine the power dynamics, processes, and structures that characterize the interaction of international organizations with government counterparts, as well as the pathways through which international organizations are able to exert their influence (see, e.g., Dale 1999; Moutsios 2009, 2010; Rappleye 2011; Samoff 2009).[7] See Chap. 3 for an extensive discussion of these mechanisms and pathways, as well as for a more full discussion of the traditions of international political economy.

International Relations and Global Governance

A third group of scholars approaches global education policy through the lens of international relations and global governance (Barnett and Finnemore 2005; Jakobi 2009; Jones and Coleman 2005; Jones 2007; Mundy 1998, 2007). While there are multiple camps within international relations theory, the most basic two are idealist and realist in nature, with the former focusing on (or assuming) the inclination of nation-states to work together through organs of global governance (e.g., the United Nations) to make progress on liberal priorities (e.g., democracy, safety, health, universal education, etc.), while the latter has presumed independence and inherent conflict among states and, within the realm of global relations, "the pursuit of national interests in contexts of very uneven distributions," including through multilateral organizations such as the World Bank (Jones and Coleman 2005, p. 9). A third international relations perspective is neo-Marxist in nature and draws on world systems theory (Wallerstein 1984). These scholars depart from a preoccupation with the capitalist world system and the way that nation-states occupy

either core or peripheral positions within that system. From their privileged positions in this system, core nations use international organizations to their benefit and to extend the capitalist economic system (Mundy 2007). Notably, these three groups of scholars were not primarily interested in global education policy.

However, since the 1990s, following the end of the Cold War, there has been a shift in the discussion by international relations scholars toward global governance (Mundy 2007). The point is that, independent of nation-states, there is a "global polity" that is "an evolving set of process and interactions … that by definition involves heterogeneous private and public actors at multiple levels or scales of action: local, national, international, and transnational" (Mundy 2007, p. 343). This perspective on global relations aligns with the depiction of the field of global education policy in Fig. 1.1. For instance, scholars writing from the global governance perspective have remarked that "multilateral organizations are seen as world actors in their own right, behaving as distinct components of global power relations and not merely as functional extensions of the systems that gave rise to them" (Jones and Coleman 2005, p. 4; see also Barnett and Finnemore 2005). Research on the global governance of education often investigates the global-level processes, structures, rules, and interinstitutional dynamics that affect global education policies (see, e.g., Edwards et al. forthcoming-b; Robertson et al. 2002; Verger 2009). In doing so, this research focuses on the institutions that operate in the global education policy field and examines how "forms of international authority [grounded in norms and rational, bureaucratic organization] are socially constructed and historically contingent, rather than materially or historically fixed" (Mundy 2007, p. 351). Examples of this research include Jones and Coleman (2005), Menashy (2016), Menashy and Manion (2016), Mundy (1998), and Mundy and Verger (2015). Although there is overlap across international political economy and global governance in terms of their focus on processes and the role of institutions therein, international political economy places greater emphasis on the influence of global capitalism, structures, and material power.

Policy Sociology

Although work on policy sociology has long underscored the way that ideology connects with the political and economic dimensions of policymaking (Ball 1990; Carney 2008), recent scholarship has sought to understand

international institutions' production of ideas and the power that these ideas hold in the global education policy field. By drawing on critical constructivism (with its assumption that portrayals of reality reinforce actual power structures) and Cultural Political Economy (which is interested in how economic and political imaginaries are translated and institutionalized in structures), Verger (2014), for example, building on the work of Robertson and Dale (2015) and Jessop (2010), emphasizes that such actors as the World Bank are key in global governance because of their ability to project visions of the world, to define problems that need to be solved, and then to mobilize ideas and evidence around which models are appropriate for solving those problems. This approach has been utilized to explain how the World Bank has framed and sold the idea of public-private partnerships in education (Verger 2012; see also Samoff 2012; Shahjahan 2016). Similar work has been done on the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and other think tanks to show how their knowledge products are used to compare and rank countries, to identify problems, and to offer solutions (Auld and Morris 2014; Grek 2014; Lewis 2016; Lingard and Rawolle 2011). It should be noted, though, that such organizations and their knowledge products are not hegemonic in nature and are often used strategically by national actors to advance their own agendas (Addey 2015; Selllar and Lingard 2013; Takayama 2008).

A second strand within policy sociology also has a long history but with new developments. Specifically, while scholars have for many years focused, from a sociohistorical perspective, on the "international interconnections" that have facilitated the spread of ideas across academic fields and among organizations around the world (Schriewer 2000, p. 305; see also Schriewer, 1990), a number of researchers have begun to unpack these interconnections by looking closely at the role of networks. These scholars use actor-network theory in order to open up processes of policy transfer, that is, to "make visible the processes through which social change takes place" (Beech and Artopoulos 2016, p. 262). This area of research is useful in that it maps the—often invisible—networks of public, private, and nongovernmental actors that not only permeate policymaking processes but that also contribute to the global diffusion and strategic deployment of knowledge products, policies, and reform models (Ball 2012, 2016). Work in this area shows how reform entrepreneurs, think tanks, corporations, philanthropic foundations, multilateral institutions, universities, and governments are connected and how these connections cut across the local, national, and global levels of the global education policy field (Ball

2012; Hogan et al. 2015; Junemann and Ball 2015; La Londe et al. 2015). In so doing, this research accentuates an important aspect of the movement of global education policies.

Political Perspectives

What is included in this subgroup includes a number of perspectives. Although it may be a point of contention as to whether "political" is the best term to describe the diverse perspectives discussed here, what they do have in common is two characteristics. First, they represent (or make use of) midrange theories or perspectives; that is, they are not macro-sociological or macro-political-economic theories in the same way as World Culture Theory or the general approach of international political economy. Second, they zero in on the interaction of the global and the national levels as ideas spread, make contact with national-level political actors, are leveraged for various reasons, and are incorporated (or not) into policy.

Theorizing the processes and reasons for the adoption of policies from elsewhere is a central focus of authors writing within the political perspective (Edwards 2013). Whereas some scholars conceive of straightforward processes in which policymakers seek out and adopt the policies of other countries because of the belief that they are superior (Phillips 2004; Phillips and Ochs 2004), other scholars accommodate in their theories the possibility that actors in one country employ international rhetoric around reform or make reference to reforms in other countries simply in order to gain credibility for the policies they already preferred (Schriewer 2000; Spreen 2004). In the end, the international models may be similar to or different from that which results in the borrowing country, since international models typically undergo modification as they are translated to fit the local context, a process that has been labeled "internalization" (Spreen 2004) or "indigenization" (Schriewer 2000). In addition to being well-documented (Steiner-Khamsi 2004; Steiner-Khamsi and Waldow 2011), there is also a strand of research that brings a systems perspective to this phenomenon. This strand relates to work grounded in systems theory and examines the logic of both governmental entities (Steiner-Khamsi 2016a) and business actors (Steiner-Khamsi 2016b) as they work with, translate, internalize, or attempt to reject global education policies.

A recent contribution to research on policy adoption has been to focus more on the circumstances of national actors as they consider borrowing

global education policies (Verger 2014). Beyond the dimension of legitimation mentioned above, this research also suggests that scholars should be attentive to (a) the prevailing ideology of the government in question (e.g., social-democratic vs. neoliberal), (b) the administrative and regulatory viability of the policy being considered (in terms of legal and normative compatibility), (c) the political rules that govern the country (since countries can have power centralized, as in authoritarian contexts; fragmented, as in some parliamentary contexts in Europe; or decentralized, as in the United States), and (d) the extent to which the context is affected by crisis (since periods of crisis are characterized by uncertainty and are often susceptible to policy reconsideration) (Verger 2014). This work adds complexity to the discussion of policy adoption and attempts to enhance our ability to explain why policies are, or are not, borrowed in a given context.

Finally, it should be noted that some scholarship within the political perspective overlaps with research from the approach of international political economy. This makes sense, since scholars are often interested in issues of power dynamics, particularly between international organizations and national governments, but without attending to larger geopolitical structures or to theories of global capitalism and the crisis of legitimation that states face as a result of the latter (Dale 1989; Tarlau forthcoming). Here, scholars have focused on processes of policymaking and policy diffusion and the national-level politics that accompany them (Edwards 2017; Edwards et al. forthcoming-a) as well as the economics of policy borrowing (Steiner-Khamsi 2006). While processes of policymaking in the context of global governance are important to unpack because doing so shows the mundane ways that power dynamics manifest, and thus makes us aware of the seemingly innocuous actions through which the preferences of international actors are advanced, a focus on the economics of policy borrowing is likewise an important aspect to incorporate into analyses, since low-income countries in need of financing frequently pursue reforms suggested and funded by international organizations such as the World Bank or other aid agencies. However, it is also important to extend the analysis beyond the moment of initial policy adoption. In so doing, research has shown that development organizations are not always able to achieve meaningful policy reforms in the face of reluctance or intentional foot dragging by borrowing governments (Steiner-Khamsi and Stolpe 2006). Notably, rather than focusing only on the nexus between international and governmental actors, some research has taken the additional

step of incorporating nongovernmental actors into the equation of policy reform, including by examining how international civil society and transnational social movements connect with and support the capacity and the political engagement of local-level NGOs in policymaking and policy implementation processes (Edwards and Brehm 2015; Mundy and Murphy 2001; Rambla et al. 2017; Steiner-Khamsi and Silova 2008; Sutton and Arnove 2004; Verger and Novelli 2012).

Anthropological Approaches

What research from the political perspective tends to overlook is taken as the central focus by scholars who work with anthropological approaches. Stambach (2016) characterizes the distinction well: "Whereas scholars who focus on policy directly might talk about norms as not made but set—as in, set goals and set agendas within policy organizations—anthropologists stay focused on the concept of making in order to stress the ongoing project of social activity" (p. 498). In other words, researchers working from anthropological approaches "examine disjunct-yet-linked social spaces simultaneously" (Stambach 2016, p. 499), and in so doing are attentive to sociocultural aspects of policy, that is, the meaning that policy has in practice (Sutton and Levinson 2001). As opposed to focusing on how policy is adopted, anthropologists focus on policy appropriation by studying the "frameworks of cultural meaning people use to interpret their experience" (Sutton and Levinson 2001, pp. 2–3). These approaches thus highlight the ways that global education policies are variously portrayed, interpreted, experienced, and enacted across different spaces. For example, research has examined what globally circulated models look like and how they are lived at the community level (Anderson-Levitt 2003) as well as at the "in-between worlds" of national policy actors (Gardinier 2015) and even the ways that policy borrowing plays out in specific institutional settings, such as universities (Rappleye et al. 2011).

Since at least the early 2000s, scholars have worked to adapt anthropological methods to the challenges presented by globalization and the circulation of global education policies (Vavrus 2005; Vavrus and Bartlett 2009). To that end, Frances Vavrus and Lesley Bartlett suggest the use of ethnographic strategies to account for the vertical, horizontal, and transversal dimensions of the policy experience. The first of these (i.e., the vertical) pertains to the practice of policy across micro-, meso-, and macro-levels (or scales); the second of these (i.e., the horizontal) corresponds

with how policies unfold in distinct locations; and the last of these (i.e., the transversal) directs attention to the "creative appropriation of educational policies across time" (Bartlett and Vavrus 2014, p. 131). Although less common, there are scholars who not only bring a multidimensional anthropological lens to their work but who do so while being an insider, that is, while being an actor in the process of enacting policy. One example is the case of Rappleye and Leang (forthcoming) who, through auto-ethnographic methods, report on their own experiences as actors in the process of implementation of World Bank policy in Cambodia. They show in detail the frustrating ways that the World Bank's assessment of local context is bereft of meaningful knowledge of that context, the ways that World Bank policies repeatedly clash with Cambodian institutional culture and constraints, and the extent to which the World Bank is willfully unresponsive to the challenges that arise.

The Future of Global Education Policy Research

Without a doubt, research will continue to be produced that aligns with the approaches delineated above. This is not surprising, as the strands discussed are part of larger intellectual projects that will sustain themselves without needing to look outside their disciplinary or epistemic boundaries. That said, there are other ways forward that can push the limits of current scholarship on global education policies, a few of which will be mentioned here.

Work by Stephen Carney (2016) has drawn on the postmodern tradition to trouble the notion of subjectivity and the centrality of the state in research on global education policy. The goal here is to problematize the assumptions that permeate global education policy research when it comes to the rational and holistic (as opposed to fragmented and becoming) nature of individuals as well as the notion that the state is at the center of social life. This line of investigation clearly threatens the foundations of global education policy research, though it also holds the promise of new insights that current approaches are limited from producing.

There are other scholars who are similarly investigating and questioning the roots of comparative and international education more generally. These scholars are doing so by bringing into relief the colonial foundations of the field of comparative and international education (Rappleye forthcoming; Takayama et al. 2017) as well as by disturbing such central, Western concepts as chronological time (Rappleye and Komatsu 2016).