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Educational Reform in Latin America

By Allison L. C. de Cerreno and Cassandra A. Pyle

Executive Summary

The Latin America Program Study Group, "Reforming Education in Latin America," examined the problems and potential solutions for reform of the public educational systems in Latin America, widely recognized as vital to the further economic, social and political progress of the region. This report and the study group were made possible by the generous support of the Tinker Foundation, Inc.

Among the key conclusions:

- There is no single model that can be used successfully in all cases of public educational reform in Latin America. Each country must develop its own model, based on its unique historical, cultural, and social context.
- Already, there are examples of positive change in various countries. Some, like the "Escuelas Nuevas" project in Colombia, have met with great success, while other experimental projects in El Salvador and Brazil show promise.
- One point that many of the successful innovations have in common, and which may prove to be a key to all models of educational reform, is the fostering of community involvement as an important element in any change.
- Accountability for educational quality is critical at all levels, from the parents and students to the teachers and administrators, and from the local level community governments to the federal governments.

Preface

On June 26, 1995, the Latin America Program of the Council on Foreign Relations, in conjunction with Foreign Affairs magazine, held an unprecedented two-day conference, "Latin America: The Next Generation." Participants included young leaders from almost every country in the region, and from all walks of life: business men and women; environmentalists; educators at both the secondary and university levels; journalists; and government officials, to name a few.

The key finding of the conference, and one which has great importance for Latin America's leaders, was that "...Latin America's poorly educated labor force may be the single greatest factor retarding economic growth."¹ With this in mind, the Latin America

program convened a study group in 1996 to study more closely the issue of public education and educational reform of the public school systems in the region.

The report that follows is the outcome of this study group. Providing insight into some of the problems facing Latin America's public educational systems, the report offers some possibilities for improvement. Clearly, there is no one best way for improving public education, particularly when dealing with a region as diverse and complex as Latin America. Thus, the members of the study group felt very strongly that each country must find its own path, based on its unique indigenous and cultural framework.

Not meant to be a definitive statement on how educational reform should proceed in any country in Latin America, this report is intended to invite dialogue on the issue--a crucial first step in any reform process. Moreover, such discussion need not provide lessons only for the countries of Latin America; it can serve to highlight and provide insight into the difficulties and dilemmas facing the U.S. educational system as well.

The Context

During the past five years, most of the countries of Latin America have begun to walk down the path of economic and political reform. A new generation of leaders has implemented tariff reductions, trade agreements, and privatization plans to increase trade and ultimately, economic growth. In many cases, political reforms have accompanied these economic changes, as the countries of the region move away from the authoritarian regimes characteristic of the 1960s and 1970s toward more open democratic governments. Yet, in the face of rapid and exponential urbanization, most countries must now begin to focus on a variety of social issues. For example, while national economies are indeed growing, there are still great disparities in in-come and wealth; and though few countries can now be considered authoritarian, many still have not implemented all the changes at all levels of society which are necessary to become truly democratic.

Educational reform, the politicians and economists agree, is essential to sustaining the economic and political reforms already made, and to broadening these reforms so that the vast majority of the people are included. Though changes in public educational systems are occurring in some countries such as Brazil, Chile, and El Salvador, it is important to stress the need for further and broader reform, for education is inextricably linked to continued economic and political reform. Today's students must be taught the technical skills that are needed to compete effectively in today's global economy, and they must be taught the problem solving, cooperation, and flexible thinking skills that are needed for democracies to thrive.

In February 1996, the Latin America Program of the Council on Foreign Relations organized a four-session study group, "Reforming Education in Latin America," to examine the problems of public educational systems in the region today, and to offer possible suggestions for change. Among the findings were the following:

- Inadequate educational models are common in the public system.

- Inequality along the lines of class, gender, and ethnicity exists in many education systems.
- Responsibility is currently so diffuse that no group is held accountable for poor standards or failed systems; and no group is empowered to develop and implement new models.
- Partnerships must be forged among parents, teachers, union leaders, political leaders, and employers.
- National Concepts of the role of education in democratic society are needed; a "culture of education" needs to be created.
- Local Groups are crucial for implementing educational reforms and must be given the power and tools needed to do so.
- Private sector members can and should play an important role in educational reform; it is the private sector which stands to gain the most from an educated populace and lose the most when its workers cannot compete effectively.
- Centralization can be detrimental to the creation of diverse educational models, local support, and participation.
- Funders such as multinational organizations, U.S. government aid, NGOs, and the private sector need to work together more closely to create complementary policies; mechanisms for sharing successful strategies and models should be developed.
- Positive change and improvements are difficult but possible, and have already occurred in some countries.

Early in the discussions, members of the group realized that the subject was much more complex than is often thought. Economists and politicians often point to education as crucial for long-term economic and political success, but they fail to address the questions of how to improve educational standards and accountability.² Moreover, while there are trends that link countries throughout the region, different countries have had very different experiences with their education systems. Literacy rates and grade repetition rates vary greatly from country to country, as do the figures for women's access to education. Finally, the causal links between specific improvements and overall improvement of the education system are not always readily apparent, making it very difficult to determine where resources are best invested. Yet one fact remains the same for all countries: education and educational reform must be a real priority for decisionmakers if change is to occur.

Similarities Linking the Countries of Latin America

Each country's educational past and current experiences are different, but several important similarities exist. These similarities provide a starting point for comparisons from country to country, and for a better understanding of some of the problems which must be solved if the educational systems are to be improved.

Inadequate Models

Most of the region's countries are advancing economically and politically, but their educational systems are based on models which are inadequate for today's realities. In many countries, academic curricula have not been modernized to provide students with the tools necessary for competing in an increasingly technologically-driven world. Critical and innovative thinking is rarely stressed, and dogmatic teaching persists.

Related, is a second trend found across the region--the emphasis on quantity of education instead of quality of education. Decades ago, the countries of the region began expanding their educational systems to include the majority of their citizens. Most countries proved very successful in these initiatives, but in today's world it is obvious that numbers alone do not make for a good educational system. In most Latin American countries the vast majority of primary school students have access, but in most cases increased access has done little to improve quality.

Several important statistical indicators provide some insight into the depth of the problem in Latin America. First, grade repetition rates in Latin America are high. In Brazil, for example, only one percent of its youngsters in 1989 graduated from the sixth grade without at least one repetition.³ Though these rates have improved somewhat over the past few years, they are still relatively high when compared to other regions and, in fact, are more akin to rates for the countries of Africa than they are to some of the more industrialized regions [see table 1].

Table 1:
1992 Primary School Grade Repetition Rates for Selected Countries by Region

Africa country %	Latin America country %	Europe and Asia country %
Algeria 9	Brazil 17	Bulgaria 5
Botswana 3	Colombia 12	Germany 2
Burundi 24	Costa Rica 10	Ireland 2
Egypt 7	Mexico 9	Spain (1989) 4
Gambia 14	Nicaragua 17	
Morocco 12	Uruguay 10	China 5
Zaire 9	Venezuela 11	India (1987) 4

UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1995 (NY: UNESCO and Bernan Press, 1995), table 3.6, pp. 3-139 to 3-154

High rates of repetition generally stem from lack of attendance and the tradition of holding a youngster back a full grade even if only one class was failed. More worrisome and more detrimental to an educational system as a whole are bureaucratic incentives for having children repeat grades--some budgets are determined by enrollment numbers so schools try to keep children as long as possible. This practice contributes to enormous waste, both in terms of human and financial capital. While grade repetition rates are high, primary school completion rates are low [see table 2]. In fact, as an aggregate, Latin America has the lowest completion rate in the world, with only four countries maintaining a primary school completion rate of higher than seventy-five percent.⁴ In

Mexico, almost half the youngsters who enter primary school are unable to complete the cycle and move to the secondary level.⁵

Table 2:

% of 1991 Students Completing their Primary Cycle Through Grade 5

Africa country %	Latin America country %	Europe and Asia country %
Algeria 93	Bolivia 60	Denmark 100
Angola 34	Brazil 72	Germany 99
Botswana 84	Chile 95	Ireland 100
Burundi 74	Costa Rica 86	Poland 98
Nigeria 87	Colombia 59	Spain 96
Rwanda 59	Nicaragua 55	
Senegal 88	Paraguay 74	Malaysia 98
Zimbabwe 76	Venezuela 78	South Korea 100

UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1995 (NY: UNESCO and Bernan Press, 1995), table 1.1, pp. 1-3 to 1-7.

The result is that illiteracy rates are still very high in countries such as Guatemala (44.4%), Nicaragua (34.3%), and El Salvador (28.5%), and are still relatively high in countries such as Brazil (16.7%), Peru (11.3%), and Mexico (10.4%).⁶ The combination of high rates of grade repetition and low rates of completion are leading to populations which lack the basic reading, writing, and math skills necessary to compete effectively in today's societies, and which are ill-equipped for sustaining democratic societies. Thus, educational reform becomes essential for economic development and social well-being.

Inequalities Based on Class, Gender, and Ethnicity

Inequity abounds in the educational systems of Latin America. In some countries the greatest inequities are based on class, but in others these inequities are divided along either ethnic, racial, or gender lines. Thus, while it is crucial to acknowledge and resolve inequities in education, each country must define its own particular educational system's shortcomings in this respect and find its own solutions.

Class Divisions

There are great disparities between public and private education throughout Latin America, both with respect to quality of education and to funding. Public primary and secondary education is utilized almost entirely by the poor, while middle and upper class parents send their children to private schools. A 1992 study of mathematics and science achievement of thirteen-year-old students in various types of schools in Latin America clearly demonstrated the inequalities of education in the region. The average mathematics score for students in elite private schools in Argentina was 50, while the figure in rural public schools was only 29. Similarly, in the Dominican Republic, the average score for

students in elite private schools was 60 while their poorer rural counterparts only averaged 31.⁷

Illiteracy rates are also often tied to class. In many countries rural populations have markedly higher illiteracy rates than urban populations [see table 3].

Table 3:
Urban and Rural Illiteracy Rates for Selected Countries in Latin America

Country (year)	Rural Illiteracy Rate	Urban Illiteracy Rate	Total Illiteracy Rate
Argentina (1980)	14.6%	4.1%	6.1%
Bolivia (1992)	36.1%	8.9%	19.9%
Chile (1982)	21.9%	6.2%	8.9%
El Salvador (1980)	42.2%	15.5%	30.2%
Panama (1980)	26.0%	4.5%	14.4%
Venezuela (1990)	26.7%	7.1%	10.0%

UNESCO Statistical Yearbook 1995 (NY: UNESCO and Bernan Press, 1995), table 1.2, pp. 1-10 to 1-11

Contributing to such inequality is the means by which education expenditures are disbursed. The divisions between public and private education are not always clear. Often, public education means that public monies pay for salaries and building maintenance while the parents must pay for the books and supplies. Conversely, many private schools receive public funds even though the parents of the children in these schools are the more affluent members of society. More problematic is the level at which public monies are directed. The greatest number of students are to be found at the primary school level, but the greatest funding per student is often directed toward the university level.

Thus, though this need not be the rule, education expenditures of-ten favor higher education to the detriment of lower levels of education. With high levels of education expenditures directed at state universities, they generally remain free throughout the region, yet very few poor students ever reach the university level due to poor preparation at the primary and secondary levels. Thus, the only students to benefit from expenditures on higher education are those who were able to afford private education at the lower levels, resulting in a system in which there is little connection between the various levels of education or between private and public education.

Gender and Ethnic Divisions

In addition to the inequalities between rich and poor, there are also inequalities based on gender to be found. Though gross enrollment rates in primary and secondary school for girls and boys are almost equal in most Latin American countries, illiteracy rates vary by gender. In Bolivia, for example, only 9.5% of men are illiterate compared to 24.0% of

women. Similarly, the percentage of illiterate men in Peru is 5.5% compared to 17.0% for women.⁸

Gender divisions are often closely linked with the class and ethnic divisions as well. For example, in a 1990 census in Brazil, the illiteracy rate of black girls in the economically depressed Northeast region was 65% while the illiteracy rate of white boys in the most industrial areas of the south was only 19%.⁹ Similar disparities are found among the indigenous and white or mestizo populations of the Andean region and of Guatemala and Mexico.

The inequalities between men and women are found in Latin America in many spheres of life: women in all sectors tend to earn less than their male counterparts; women tend to be respected more as mothers and sisters than as workers; and women have very little political representation. While education alone cannot remedy these inequalities, it is clear that the current educational systems are helping to maintain them. In many countries, the textbooks used in classrooms are full of sexual stereotypes in which women are depicted as subordinate, passive, caretakers. In classrooms around the region, boys are allowed to be more boisterous and assertive while girls are reprimanded for the same types of behavior. And, women are more likely to study conventional fields when they continue into secondary and university level education, often avoiding or being guided away from areas such as mathematics, science, and technology.

The Need for Professionalism in Teaching and the Status of the Profession

When examining education and educational reform, one of the most important aspects is the role of teachers. In every country in Latin America, teacher unions are the largest service sector unions, yet teachers are paid some of the lowest salaries of any profession. Changes made in education policy throughout the region rarely address the issues of teacher salaries, training, and evaluation standards.

The vast majority of teachers at the primary and secondary levels are women, who are often viewed as friends of the students more than instructors. This attitude toward teachers, coupled with the broader societal perceptions of women, make it difficult to professionalize in this area. Thus, unlike the historical patterns in Europe and the United States where men dominated the field for many years, the teaching profession is not viewed as a means for increasing social mobility. In fact, compared to their counterparts in other ministries, education ministers are the least likely to rise to higher levels within the Latin American bureaucracies, leading to a low degree of change within the ranks and a lack of professionalism even at the highest levels.

Politics as an Obstacle to Improvement

Few would disagree that a well-educated citizenry is essential for building and sustaining democratic governments, yet in discussions on public education and educational reform throughout Latin America, there is a tendency to describe the problems in terms of economic and technological deficiencies. Upon closer examination, it is clear that the

more difficult obstacles to overcome are often political in nature. These political obstacles can take many forms. In some cases, centralized ministries, local politicians, university students, teacher unions, and others, have vested interests in maintaining the traditional educational systems, making it very difficult to reform.

In other cases, politicians are willing to contribute funds to certain projects, but unwilling to put their political careers in jeopardy by enacting more far-reaching changes aimed specifically at improving education. Moreover, when changes are made, they are often treated as lesser components of a broader economic or political agenda, rather than focused exclusively on educational reform. For example, it is not uncommon to see political leaders providing funds for new school buildings, particularly in rural areas where they are often needed. However, the more difficult, and politically risky, reforms aimed at changing teacher training, dealing with the disparities between private and public education, and changing outdated curricula are rarely part of such plans.

Related to this is the tendency for leaders to see spending on education as running counter to their interest in economic growth and development. While most leaders are quick to agree that good education is necessary for continued economic growth, when inflation is high and governments must decrease expenditures, education is often one of the first areas cut. When education funds are decreased, it often takes time before the damage is seen and felt, making such cuts less politically risky.

Also of importance is the fact that in most countries of Latin America, the consumers of public education--students and their parents, as well as the business community--have not played a role traditionally. With only a few minor exceptions, the business community, which draws upon the educated population for its workers, has been all but silent in matters of educational reform. Upper class parents send their children to private schools and, thus have little interest in changing the public school systems. In fact, it is from this sector that demands for higher education monies are made to the detriment of lower level public education. Poorer parents, who send their children to public schools, often lack the resources and means for exerting influence, or do not know what demands should be made, so public education does not improve.

It is significant that across the region the people of Latin America view education as important, so the difficulties associated with creating an atmosphere in which people understand the importance of education have already been overcome. What is needed now is an understanding of how to use funds most effectively.

The Issues, and Suggestions for Action

Since each country's experiences, culture, and history are different, each country of Latin America will have to devise its own plan for educational reform. No one plan is likely to work everywhere. For example, what may prove successful in a country like Chile may not work in a much larger and more heterogeneous country like Brazil, or a smaller and poorer country like Guatemala. Nevertheless, there are some issues which all countries must deal with to a greater or lesser degree at one point or another, and these are the

issues and suggestions which will prove a helpful starting point for all those seeking educational reform.

Centralization versus Decentralization

Most countries of Latin America still subscribe to highly centralized educational systems in every regard. Chile began experimenting with a more decentralized system during the 1970s. Along with increases in the level of expenditures to education, the creation of standardized national exams, and a special targeting program to identify the schools most seriously in need, Chile's decentralization scheme has proven to be successful. More importantly, it has been maintained through successive transfers of governmental authority.¹⁰ Recently, Argentina, Mexico, and Peru have begun their own processes of decentralizing their educational systems, but more remains to be done before a fair evaluation can be made.

Decentralizing educational structures, funding, and authority has its benefits: schools are more likely to be responsive to the communities in which they exist; and, parents and students are more likely to involve themselves in the school system if they can have a greater impact. However, decentralization is not always an easy political choice, since certain groups would be required to give up power in this process. With this in mind, some countries might find it easier to decentralize particular components of the educational system, instead of moving ahead on all components simultaneously.

Decentralization must be carefully monitored if it is to be effective. The process should be carried out gradually, allowing for more experimentation to find the best system for each particular case. Local officials must be well-trained to manage the systems. Community organizations like Parent Teacher Organizations and Educational Boards, which until now have been non-existent in public school systems, must be created and must be accorded real power to influence changes in the schools. If they have no power over decision-making and budgeting, the organizations become fixtures only. Funds must be divided and distributed more effectively, more equally, and more openly or the current inequalities between public and private schools may be replicated among the public schools.

One important caution deserves mentioning. If decentralization is implemented too quickly or without proper monitoring, the systems of Latin America might just decentralize the same inefficiencies which are already present. As a result, they could encounter similar problems to those which plague the New York City school system today--lower standards, decreased accountability, increased corruption, etc.

Where Should Funds Be Invested?

Since it is often difficult to establish definite causal links in education, determining where money should be invested to be most effective is not an easy task. There does not appear to be one right answer to the question of where funds would be most effective, and each

country will have to make its own decisions, but it is a question which must be addressed if educational reforms are to be successful.

Among the questions which must be addressed are:

- How should funds be dispersed among primary, secondary, and university level education to be most effective?
- Are funds best invested in teacher salaries, teacher training, teacher recruitment, books and other teaching tools, computers, smaller classes, or some combination of these?
- Are funds best directed toward local, regional, or governmental levels?

How to best disperse available funds among the three levels of education is a critical decision. Important research and development occurs at the university level and many Latin Americans find that university education does impact on their social mobility, so higher education is important. Yet, at the same time, the returns reaped by funding primary and secondary schools are usually greater and would at least help to guarantee that more of the poorer children gain the basic knowledge they need for both being constructive members of society and for gaining entry to college should they so desire. To prevent the choice becoming either university or primary/secondary schools, it is very important to engage the universities in the lower level education systems, instead of treating them as separate entities. Experiments of this nature in the United States have shown that university/school partnerships can be very beneficial to both partners.

Determining whether to direct more monies toward local, regional, or governmental levels will very much depend on whether or not a reform plan includes decentralization. Obviously, those which desire decentralization of the education system must begin to invest more of their funds in the regional and local levels of government. In addition, they might think of ways in which to invest money in community organizations and in improving communications between parents and teachers and administrators.

Even more difficult to determine is where money is best spent at the public primary and secondary school levels. Teacher salaries are among the lowest of any profession throughout Latin America, but will increasing salaries alone make better teachers? Probably not, though increasing salaries is important if teachers are to become more highly regarded and if the profession is to attract the best people. Teacher training is critical for better education and there are ways to invest small amounts of money and improve training greatly. For example, mini-courses which teachers can attend at their schools in the mornings or afternoons, or teacher conference days during which teachers can attend seminars and deal with issues facing the school and their profession.

The Role of the Private Sector

The private sector is one of the largest consumers of education, yet it has remained far too silent with respect to educational reform in Latin America, especially when good education is so closely linked to economic growth. It is often argued that involving the

private sector will be very difficult for two reasons: first, changes in education are likely to lead to higher taxes; second, corporations often prefer uneducated workers at the lower levels since less educated people are unlikely to make many demands. Nevertheless, in a world in which higher levels of education and skills are increasingly needed for effective competition, the private sector is finding that it needs better educated workers. And, more importantly, there are many ways in which the private sector can help improve education- not all of which require monetary contributions.

There are three principal means by which the private sector can be encouraged to play a larger role in education:

- Direct investment
- Philanthropic investment
- Political leadership

Direct investment refers to direct provision of funds to a specific school or schools in order to help improve standards. For example, in Venezuela, the widow of a wealthy industrialist financially supported a school adjacent to the factory which she owned in order to improve the education of her workers' children. Philanthropic investment is characterized by a corporation which provides grants to universities or schools, either donated to the school broadly or targeted toward improvements in a particular area, like technology. Finally, the private sector can provide political leadership at the local, state, and federal levels in order to influence educational policies. This was successfully done in the Dominican Republic by a network of business leaders who worked together to establish the National Education Reform Law in order to improve their educational system.

It would seem that with the current growth and economic development occurring in many Latin American countries, the private sector would prove an important ally for educational reformers. However, before determining what kind of role the private sector should play and where to invest, careful thought must be given to where funds should be directed as to assure success. In addition, it may prove helpful in the beginning stages to target particular groups in the corporate sector, for example, technological companies which may have more of an interest in improving education. If not, political and economic capital may be spent with few noticeable benefits which could prove disastrous for further private support.

The Importance of Responsibility, Goals, and Means for Measuring Success

In the current systems of Latin America, if children are not being well educated, there is no one group which can be held responsible for the problems. As any plans are developed for reforming a country's educational system, one of the most important points to address will be the chain of responsibility. Parents and students must be shown that not all education is good, and must be empowered to demand better education for their children. Through parent-teacher organizations, for example, or by creating parent-teacher boards

which can effect changes in curricula, procedures, or hiring, parents can be given more influence in their local school districts.

Teachers are an important component in any educational system, and they must be willing to take responsibility for their students. It is not easy to teach without books and supplies, but teaching can still occur. In fact, in these cases, the need for creative and energetic teachers is particularly important. It is difficult for teachers who earn low salaries, but low salaries do not pardon poor teaching. And, teachers must themselves demand better training and stricter hiring requirements if the field is to be more highly regarded. These individuals, however, need support for professional in-service training, recognition, and reward. Administrators must also take responsibility and be more responsive to demands made by teachers, as well as by parents and students when those demands will better the educational system. Mechanisms should be instituted to allow for these exchanges. Finally, political leaders need to be more responsible with respect to where they invest public funds as well as political capital.

In addition to determining who should be held responsible for educational reforms and standards, specific goals must be designed as well as means for measuring success. Specific case studies could prove helpful if they are evaluated to find out what works, and equally important, what does not, so that each country can tailor its own reform plan. Again, it is important to reiterate that each country is faced with a different social, economic, political, and historical framework, so while examining different case studies is helpful for planning a strategy, just trying to replicate a particular model from another country may not prove successful.

Hope for the Future

Despite the problems discussed in the previous pages of this report, there is hope for the future of educational reform in Latin America; though difficult, the problems are not insurmountable. Already, several countries have begun to implement various reforms to improve their educational systems. Members of the study group agreed that there is limited knowledge of successful reforms, but they do exist, and greater effort should be made to disseminate information about these models. Several models are included here. They are not meant to be exclusive, but rather suggestive of the innovation and change which is possible and is happening in the region. Perhaps the best documented model at this point is the "Escuelas Nuevas" project in Colombia which has been very successful in enhancing the quality of education in rural areas. Those schools involved in the project offer a complete five year cycle of education and stress the use of innovative techniques and materials which allow the individual student to work at his/her own pace. Classrooms combine students from different levels of education and promotion rules are flexible. Rather than a central library somewhere, each school has its own small library incorporated into it. Finally, the schools actively involve the communities in which they are located. Studies comparing traditional schools and "Escuelas Nuevas" in Colombia show that students learning in the latter score higher in cognitive exams (Spanish and math) and have higher completion rates. Community participation is much higher and yet, the unit costs are similar in both kinds of schools. Other public education reforms

throughout the region are more recent and there is less quantitative information available. Nevertheless, a few of these innovations show a great deal of promise and warrant mention here. In rural areas of El Salvador and in the state of Minas Gerais, Brazil, schools are actively fostering community participation. In both cases, increased participation has led to improved infrastructure, greater support for the schools' initiatives, and more focused educational missions. One point that may prove significant for other innovations is that all three of these cases involve increased community involvement.

Endnotes

1. Marc Levinson, "Latin America: The Next Generation," Conference Report (New York: Council on Foreign Relations, 1995), p. 14.
2. This is not a problem which only affects the countries of Latin America. This same problem plagues the educational system in the United States as well.
3. Jeffrey M. Puryear, "Education in Latin America: Problems and Challenges," paper presented at the Council on Foreign Relations, Study Group on Reforming Education in Latin America, 27 February 1996, table 4a.
4. Nelly P. Stromquist, "Gender and Democracy in Education in Latin America," paper presented at the Council on Foreign Relations, Study Group on Reforming Education in Latin America, 24 April 1996, p. 3.
5. Puryear, "Education in Latin America," p. 4.
6. Stromquist, "Gender and Democracy in Education in Latin America," table 1. Illiteracy refers to the inability to write and understand a simple sentence in one's own language. The figures here are based on populations of fifteen years of age and over.
7. Puryear, "Education in Latin America," table 5.
8. Stromquist, "Gender and Democracy in Education in Latin America," table 1.
9. Ibid, p. 4.
10. It is important to point out here that the educational reforms necessary for this to take place were carried out under General Augusto Pinochet's regime, and may be more difficult to replicate under the governments of today.