# (Virtual) P02 / Understanding the role and impact of regulatory environments in educational markets

**Topic :** OTHER SECTORIAL POLICY

**Chair :** Adrian Zancajo (Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona)

**Second Chair :** Clara Fontdevila (Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona)

**Third Chair :** Huriya Jabbar

**Fourth Chair :** Antoni Verger (Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona)

## GENERAL OBJECTIVES, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE

In the last four decades, markets have acquired a central role in the provision of different public services in many countries worldwide. In the case of the education sector, the combination of private provision, choice, and competition has become a characteristic feature of different national educational systems. Policies such as public subsidies for private schools, open enrolment schemes or incentives to promote competition between schools have expanded dramatically over this period.

Markets in education have been promoted based on a variety of justifications, mainly on their capacity to promote a more effective provision of educational service, but also in a more efficient manner. Other arguments that have frequently accompanied the adoption of education markets are the need to diversify the school supply and foster pedagogical innovation. Regarding equity, advocates of education markets have frequently argued that socially disadvantaged students would benefit the most from these positive outcomes, improving, therefore, educational opportunities. However, the available evidence about the impact on these dimensions is mixed and remains inconclusive. While some studies show that these policies have increased the diversity, innovation and effectiveness of education systems, others consider that these effects have been null or even negative, particularly regarding equity (i.e., achievement gap, school segregation, social stratification between schools or exclusion of disadvantaged groups of students).

This diversity of outcomes and impacts has raised interest in the role of regulatory environments in mediating the impact of markets in education. There is indeed growing consensus that, to some extent, rules, norms, and other policy design components can determine the impact of these policies on the effectiveness, efficiency, and equity dimensions. Accordingly, different countries have recently experimented with regulatory reforms oriented at improving the outcomes of education markets - or at least mitigating their more detrimental effects, particularly in terms of equity. However, despite growing policy and academic interest that regulatory changes could play in mediating the impact of markets in education, this has not been the object of a systematic examination from a public policy perspective. Another important knowledge gap in this area refers to the specific regulatory dimensions and instruments that can determine the impact of regulatory environments.

The panel aims to fill these research gaps by bringing together scholars who have conducted research in different contexts on how regulatory environments and education policy options can mediate market impacts, with a particular focus on equity effects. Specifically, the panel pretends to answer three main research questions: 1) What is the role of regulatory environments in determining the impact of markets in education?; 2) What has been the impact of regulatory reform processes in different contexts to tackle the negative impacts of education markets?; 3) How do education actors enact and recontextualize regulatory reforms, and how this mediates reform impact? The scientific relevance of the panel will lie in providing interdisciplinary and comparative analyses that shed light on the role and impact of regulatory environments for educational markets.

Panel modality: On-line

## CALL FOR PAPERS

**This panel only accepts online presentations**.

Most of the empirical literature on the impact of education markets coincides in signaling their negative effects on equity-related dimensions - including the exacerbation of school segregation patterns or the

expansion of educational inequalities and discriminatory dynamics. At the same time, there is growing recognition that the ultimate impact of education markets is crucially shaped by the regulatory environment in which they operate. The so-called ‘rules of the game’ (including national and local norms, laws and regulations) operate as a key mediating variable with the potential to inhibit or exacerbate the inequalities, inefficiencies and other negative effects generated by education markets. Across different national contexts, recent attempts at reforming normative arrangements have rendered clearer the importance of the regulatory context - and have spurred considerable academic interest and policy debate. However, this body of scholarship inspired by these developments remains largely fragmentary and unsystematized. This represents an obstacle to gain an informed understanding of the opportunities, limitations and trade-offs offered by regulatory efforts.

This panel aims to bring together and establish a dialogue between researchers addressing the role of policy design and public regulation in education markets from a public policy perspective. To this end, it invites both conceptual and empirical contributions interrogating how regulatory environments contribute to shaping the impact of education markets on different education dimensions, and engaging with the policy implications of such dynamics. Papers adopting a retrospective approach and focusing on recent reform episodes are equally welcome. The panel looks for contributions addressing such questions from the following angles:

- The configuration and reform of regulatory environments, with particular attention to the processes of agenda-setting and policy instrumentation. The panel invites contributions analyzing under which circumstances existing regulatory arrangements are problematized, enquiring into the process through which certain regulatory alternatives come to be perceived as desirable, and reconstructing the process through which policy instruments are embedded in existing regulatory regimes - and which rationales, discourses and interests are at play in such processes.

- The role of regulatory variables in determining the outcomes of education markets. The panel encourages contributions measuring and evaluating the ultimate impact of specific regulatory features, instrument changes and policy designs on educational systems, and aimed at identifying the differential effects of education markets under different regulatory environments. The panel particularly welcomes papers addressing regulatory effects on equity-related dimensions such as school segregation, the inclusion of minority and special needs students, or differences in academic achievement.

- The enactment and recontextualization of regulatory frameworks and instruments. Of particular interest are contributions critically examining how specific instruments and regulations are interpreted on the part of different education agents (schools, families and students, teachers, education authorities, etc.), which strategies, behaviors and subjectivities these actors develop in response - and how such responses vary according to their social circumstances and social position.

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## Session 1

Wednesday, June 28th 10:20 to 12:20 (VIRTUAL 3)

### (Virtual) The role of Government of Punjab, Pakistan in regulating Public Private Partnerships (PPP) in education

Moaaz Hamid (Indiana University Bloomington)

Tahreem Fatima (Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, USA)

### (Virtual) The crisis and the market: regulation attempts and the impact of the covid-19 pandemic on Perú’s ungoverned private education market

Maria Fernanda Rodriguez (University of Cambridge)

Maria Balarin

### (Virtual) Taming education markets: a mechanisms-based approach to the potential and limits of pro-equity regulatory approaches

Clara Fontdevila (Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona)

Adrian Zancajo (Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona)

Antoni Verger (Universitat Autónoma de Barcelona)

### (Virtual) The right to pay. Ideology and ideological tensions in enacting market regulations. The case of Chile

Mariano Rosenzvaig (University of Cambridge)

### (Virtual) Regulatory Framework for Civil Society Organizations (RFCSO) implementation in the provision of childcare spaces in São Paulo and their impact on the results of the early childhood education`s politics.

Bianca Cesário da Silva (Universidade de São Paulo)