

Chilean Education Paradigms: The Rise and Fall of Neoliberal Education Reforms and their
Impacts on Mapuche Education Systems

Marya Katherynn DeVault

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Karin Kitchens
Binio Binev
Desirée Poets

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ABSTRACT

This thesis will address the impacts of Chilean neoliberal education reforms on students access to primary and secondary education. Across three body chapters, I will conduct a historical, policy, and comparative analysis, as well as case study on the Mapuche population within Chile, to exemplify neoliberal reforms' impact on students across differing socioeconomic statuses. Ranging from the 18th century to 2017, this thesis will provide a comprehensive image of how Chile's national education system has transformed from Catholic, missionary schools with majority state influence during heightened colonial practices to increasingly decentralized and marketized institutions during the 1980s. Through a series of analyses, I hypothesize neoliberal education reform has negatively impacted vulnerable students' access to education through exacerbating discriminatory, financial elements at the hands of the rise of privatized education. To support this, I will initially analyze neoliberal dictator Augusto Pinochet's education policies and reforms starting in 1980. To fully understand these lingering impacts, I also analyze 2005 socialist president Michelle Bachelet's education reforms as a method to further understand which 1980 neoliberal education policies were preserved during the restoration of democracy in Chile during the 1990s and early 2000s. The thesis closes with a final case study of the Mapuche population, the largest indigenous population in Chile. With the use of the methodological frameworks deployed in chapter two and chapter three, I attempt to expose the disproportionate impacts of neoliberal education policies on the Mapuche even as modern education and government administrations attempt to transform the education system away from oppressive and discriminatory policies implemented during the 1980s. Riddled throughout the entire thesis are discussions of social movements advocating for greater education equity, amplifying the call for increased attention on justice for students, teachers, and families.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

This thesis will address the impacts of Chilean neoliberal education reforms on students' access to primary and secondary education. Chile is widely known as the "neoliberal experiment" state, making it a prime region to study how neoliberal reforms have impacted the development of the country. I will argue the creation and maintenance of neoliberal education policies have negatively impacted students' access to education, especially focusing on disproportion impacts on students of differing socioeconomic statuses and demographics. The thesis is split into three main chapters, which cover from the 18th century to around 2017. Across these chapters, I will analyze the beginnings of the education system in Chile, studying the main factors that ultimately shaped it into its current system. The second chapter will take on a narrower focus and will examine the main similarities and differences between Augusto Pinochet's 1980s neoliberal dictatorship and early 2000s socialist president Michelle Bachelet's education policies and restructurings. To demonstrate how impactful neoliberal education reforms, the thesis will close with a case study of the Mapuche in Chile. The Mapuche are the largest indigenous population in Chile, and the case study of them aims to show the uneven effects of neoliberal policy creation and preservation within Mapuche education structures. Overall, I work to shed light on the negative elements in education and academic environments, which are drawn out or amplified through neoliberal restructurings.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Asociación Nacional Indígena de Chile (ANI)

National Survey of Socioeconomic Characterization (CASEN)

Christian Democratic Party (CDP)

National Corporation of Indigenous Development (CONADI)

Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE)

Constitutional Organic Law on Education (LOCE)

Program de Mejoramiento de la Calidad y Equidad de la Educación (MECE)

Bilingual Intercultural Education Program (PEIB)

Preferential School Subsidy Act (SEP)

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Chapter 1: Introduction

Education is often placed at the forefront of a variety of issues with persistent encouragement for students to make high academic achievements and to pursue their passion through differing forms and levels of education. However, the idea of grand academic achievements and success is not the reality for some students. The growing marketization of primary, secondary, and tertiary schools has made it increasingly more difficult for a number of students to maintain consistent access to education as well as succeed according to overarching standards within these academic institutions. Chile has emerged as a prime example of the rise and fall of these increasingly neoliberal education reforms within all three levels of education (primary, secondary, and tertiary) undergoing the acts of privatization under Augusto Pinochet's reign in the 1980s and the further preservation of neoliberal education structures after he was removed from office 10 years later.

This thesis will explore this marketization of education systems under a neoliberal framework and will aim to address two main questions of: How have the mid to late-20th century neoliberal education reforms impacted students' access to primary and secondary education institutions, and how have these same neoliberal education reforms disproportionately impacted vulnerable communities that have also experienced colonial interventions and pressures throughout Chile's development? Through the analysis of the Chilean education structures from the 18th century through modern day and with a final case study of the Mapuche population, this thesis aims to address the overall problematic tendencies which arise through the promotion and continuation of neoliberal education reforms. It also aims to address the lingering and lasting impacts of 18th century colonial efforts onto modern day education structures and treatment of vulnerable students within modern neoliberal education frameworks. Presented across three main

body chapters, I hypothesize neoliberal education reform in Chile starting with Pinochet's 1981 Constitution has negatively impacted access to education for students from the Pinochet era into modern day Chile through increasing public schools' closures, raising national education standards despite many students not obtaining sufficient academic resources, and through the promotion of private education in which many public-school students cannot afford to attend. I will also argue modern Chilean national education structures have seemingly preserved neoliberal education restructurings which ultimately continue national efforts to marketize and privatize all levels of education, creating future obstacles when attempting to address student achievement gaps.

The thesis will be split into three main body chapters, each aiming to build historical context, answer the overarching research question, and provide specific insight into neoliberal policy workings in Chile. Chapter two "The Emergence of an Early Chilean Education System" will provide an extensive historical analysis and context surrounding Chile's education system from the 18th century and will lead up to the Pinochet era in the 1970s. Chapter three will provide a comparative analysis between the emerging neoliberal education reforms under Pinochet's administration and socialist education reforms starting with Michelle Bachelet's presidential terms from 2006-2010 and 2014-2015. The final content chapter will be a case study of the Mapuche population in Chile to understand the disproportionate effects of neoliberal education reforms on indigenous education and public education structures within Mapuche territories. Due to the differing structure of each chapter, each one deploys a different research methodology to properly address the content being addressed.

This thesis also utilizes a variety of terms and definitions to strengthen understandings the historical image, the current education system in Chile, and the overall argument being

interwoven into all the chapters. Each of these terms and their definitions can be seen to be interconnected with one another while also being separate. However, for the context of this thesis, many of these words will be seen to affect one another on both the broader and individual scales. The key terms being addressed stem from neoliberalism, varying forms and qualities of education, access to education, student achievement, vulnerable groups, social advocacy, and education programs.

Chapter two relies largely on historical analysis to create a clear picture of how the Chilean education system has transformed from its earliest formal stages. The chapter reads similar to a literature review as it uses mainly previous research papers and scholarly sources from a variety of academic journals and scholarly publications that analyze the emergence of Chile's private and public education structures. Through the overarching framework of the historical analysis methodology, this chapter will examine the overall education system in Chile as the main dependent variable. The dependent variable will be examined through the application of different political, social, and economic conditions across four main eras in Chile: the 18th century, the War of Independence/19th century, the early 20th century, and the late 20th century/1970s. Many scholars have touched on the evolution of Chile's education system from earlier times of colonization to modern-day structures. The use of a broad historical analysis works ultimately as a springboard into the larger discussion of Pinochet's versus Bachelet's education policy reforms in the next chapter.

Chapter three's research methods are similar to those in chapter two. However, they differ in that chapter three focuses more on a comparative analysis approach. Split into two major sections, the chapter will examine the expansion and eliminations of neoliberal reforms between the Augusto Pinochet administration from 1973-1990 and Michelle Bachelet's administration

from 2006-2010 and 2014-2018. The dependent variable of analysis remains the same within this chapter, using the education system and the varying forms of schools which emerge out of it as a method of understanding the increasing and decreasing levels of access to education and the general access to quality primary and secondary education. This chapter will also utilize instruments of historical analysis to build the context of the different leaderships being discussed, however the chapter deviates from the general frameworks of historical analysis to deploy a small level of policy analysis to create a clear distinction between the Pinochet's and Bachelet's reforms. The discussion relies heavily on prior academic discussions and arguments but will also reference many legal documents and government resources, especially referring to national data and policy documents provided by the Chilean Ministry of Education to create an understanding of the government rhetoric and state responsibility during these different eras.

Within the first two body chapters, one of the most crucial terms to define is neoliberalism, specifically in terms of neoliberal policies and education reform. As defined later in the thesis, neoliberalism is seen as the decentralization of overall state powers, creating a market-centric, privatized environment. This especially targets publicly, state funded sectors such as healthcare and education. Neoliberal policies can be seen as legal and state efforts to promote and mobilize privatization efforts across public sectors. Neoliberal education reforms can be defined as the specific steps taken through neoliberal policies to expand privatized education and the transformation of the education system into a market-based system. Through this it is also important to define what education system means in terms of this thesis. Education systems can be defined as the overall education institution in the country, focusing largely on the creation of private and public schools among all levels of education.

It will be crucial to identify the main education institutions within these systems as well. This thesis will discuss and analyze primary and secondary students and the schools they attend. Primary schools hold students from grades one through eight, teaching primarily basic elementary education. Secondary schools are the next level of education above primary, hosting students between ninth and twelfth grade. Secondary education focuses on expanding upon primary education lessons, but also may serve as resources for preparing students for tertiary education. However, this thesis will not specifically focus on neoliberal education reforms on tertiary/higher education institutions.

Within these differing levels of education lies the main distinction between private and public education. Private schools will be seen as educational institutions which require tuition payments or mainly operate outside of national/state requirements and assistance. There are some exceptions to this as some private schools are subsidized and receive funding through forms of voucher programs, government funding given to students and families allowing for greater school choice (ex. to make payments towards private school tuition as opposed to keeping their student enrolled in public schools). Private schools are also still widely required to meet certain national education requirements. However, when examining public schools, these educational institutions will be defined as schools which are solely funded through state/national assistance. There are also exceptions to this, such as when municipalities were placed in charge of educational matters under Pinochet's neoliberal restructuring efforts.

Within the context of education systems, structures, and institutions, I will address access to education, the quality of the education received, and students' overall academic achievement. Access to education will be discussed both positively and negatively, specifically examining how neoliberal reforms have controlled whether students within certain demographics, socioeconomic

statuses, and geographical locations have been stripped of access to schools and other educational resources. Access to schools, through the analysis in this research, is defined as student's ability to attend primary and secondary school based off the characteristics mentioned above. I will aim to examine the relationship between the closing and defunding of public schools during heightened colonial eras and the neoliberal revolution, as well as the consequences these eras pose on students that relied on public schools. Through the thesis, it will be found that neoliberal education reforms took resources away from public schools and led to their ultimate demise, putting students who relied on these public institutions at risk due to their limited access to school.

This also ties in students' access to quality education, which can be defined as education structures that are equipped with academic resources which ensures students have the opportunity to pursue a structured and fair form of primary and secondary education. Quality education in public schools is just as crucial as general access to education because without proper resources to fuel students' education and knowledge, students will not excel or develop academically, even with greater access to education. In terms of this thesis and research, quality education is examined through and determined by student achievement scores on national standardized assessments. Higher assessment scores are often tied to the number of educational resources students have access to within the classroom, therefore indicating the overall quality of education being provided by the school. Both concepts of access to education and quality education open the discussion to student success and achievement. In the context of this thesis, student success and achievement will be based off Chile's national assessment scores provided for primary and secondary students. These scores will represent the overall academic knowledge

and growth for students and will demonstrate the different levels of learning that are presented merely between public and private schools.

The final chapter is an observational case study of the Mapuche population in Chile and will deploy all the listed terms and research methods as one to present a comprehensive image of Mapuche education. The Mapuche population was chosen as the case study as they have been a crucial component of the development of the public education system in Chile from early colonial periods to modern education structures. This chapter attempts to capture their levels of influence and advocacy for inclusive national education practices through a series of historical analyses and dissection of current scholarly literature on the Mapuche in Chile. This chapter is split into similar areas of analysis as the other two chapters, examining the Mapuche from their early origins to colonial periods in the 18th century, to modern-day education practices and advocacy. The evolution of Mapuche education systems and Mapuches' relationship with the emerging Chilean state will attempt to present the impact of changing social, economic, and political variables on Mapuche student's access to quality education. To fully represent the evolution of Mapuche education systems under colonial and neoliberal rule, the case study relies heavily on the expansion of preexisting scholarly literature and the use of government documents/reports to provide concrete, foundational information on the size and influence of the Mapuche in relation to other indigenous and non-indigenous populations.

Overall, this research aims to answer the general question of how neoliberal education reforms have impacted primary and secondary education, specifically through affecting student's access to education and what resources are available to students. Through differing forms of analysis, the research will demonstrate how neoliberalism has impacted Chile's education structures, as demonstrated through the national migration from public to private primary and

secondary schools, the decrease in funding and closure of many public schools, rising social movements advocating for justice for students and teachers, and for misleading national reports of student success for public school students. All these components will be seen during the case study of Mapuche education structures and the injustices these communities have faced at the hands of neoliberal education reforms.

Chapter 2: The Emergence of an Early Chilean Education System

Introduction

The education system in Chile has undergone a multitude of changes from the mid 18th century to modern day, with changes resulting in a variety of societal and government pushback across the state. From the rise of the church in public education to the development of education vouchers under a neoliberal framework, the Chilean education system has become an increasingly important structure to study in terms of education policy and how it has been affected under large economic restructuring. To fully understand the process and development of Chile's education system, it will be necessary to first examine its early stages to formulate a clearer image of how these changes were implemented, reacted to by society and authorities, and how it further transformed into the education system that is now functioning within Chile today.

This chapter will be focus on four main eras: the mid-18th century during heightened Spanish colonial presence in Chile, the impacts of the War of Independence in the 19th century, the creation of foundational educational policies and frameworks in the 20th century, and the beginning of the neoliberal revolution during Pinochet's dictatorship in the early 1970s. Each section will discuss the environment of the Chilean state during that specific time frame and how the education system formally emerged and was modeled up until the height of Pinochet's neoliberal dictatorship. This will attempt to create a clearer image representing the foundational systems and regulatory frameworks which formed the early education system in Chile. This chapter will also serve as a steady starting point into the further discussion of the development of Pinochet's neoliberal education reform and how it is has been transformed, manipulated, preserved under the presidential administrations that followed.

Early Chilean Education System: Mid-18th Century

In early colonial times during the mid-18th century, when Chile was heavily ruled by Spanish authorities, the church held the highest level of authority in the education system, specifically under the expectations and rulings of the Roman Catholic Church. Under these rulings, the Chilean people had little authority or autonomy over their own population through practices in the government, societal operations as well as in the education system. Although the education system was under strict Spanish and religious control, it suffered greatly from a lack of educational experience from the colonizers themselves.¹ The priorities of the Spanish colonizers in Chile did not lie in building a strong, equipped educational system for the indigenous communities in Chile, rather it reflected the desires of resource extraction and the growth of wealth for Spain. With these external motives in mind, Chilean educational institutions and a multitude of other Latin American education and societal structures under colonial rule developed at a much slower rate as compared to Catholic Europe.²

However, despite this slowed educational growth in Chile, the colonial period still served as a crucial foundational element to the modern education system. A prime example of this being the creation of the three-tiered educational system that still corresponds to the educational structure that exists in Chile and in other countries today.³ These three tiers of education were split into *Escuelas de Primeras Letras*, *Escuelas de Gramática o Latinidad*, and *Estudios Superiores*.⁴ *Escuelas de Primeras Letras* were primary and secondary schools that taught

¹ Carmen Gloria Zúñiga, T. A. (Tom A.) O'Donoghue 1953-, and Simon (Simon R. P.) Clarke, *A Study of the Secondary School History Curriculum in Chile from Colonial Times to the Present*, 1 online resource (170 pages) : illustrations vols. (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2014), <https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=943476>.

² Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke.

³ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke.

⁴ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 67.

subjects such as literacy, numeracy, and Catholicism. Within secondary education, the *Escuelas de Gramática o Latinidad* were taught in Latin and focused primarily on teaching grammar, theology, sacred history, and philosophy.⁵ Lastly, the *Estudios Superiores* were forms of undergraduate schools that were taught completely in Latin and only offered courses under the broad subjects of liberal arts, logics, philosophy, and metaphysics.⁶

Although these education tiers range in vastly different levels of instruction, as well as subjects, one common school subject that was excluded from all education was curriculum surrounding the subject ‘history.’ Since schools were solely controlled by the Church, historical education was replaced with lessons and curriculum pertaining to religion and “good manners.”⁷ The decision to exclude history as a subject was in an effort by the church to maintain both political and religious order within Chile. However, this effort backfired in 1767 with the expulsion of the Jesuits from Chile alongside the push towards the removal of religious forces from government and education systems.⁸ The expulsion of the Jesuits was one of the first major steps in Chile to begin the process of cutting religious ties from public areas such as the education system and the government as well.

This shift towards removing religious authorities from major government and administrative roles as well as roles within educational institutions ultimately led to the creation and growth of the University of San Felipe. While the church still held absolute power within Chile, the university was constructed in 1758 and began functioning with only ten university professors. However, after the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1767, the university opened a school of

⁵ Zúñiga, O’Donoghue, and Clarke. 67.

⁶ Zúñiga, O’Donoghue, and Clarke. 67.

⁷ Zúñiga, O’Donoghue, and Clarke. 67.

⁸ Margaret V. Campbell, “Education in Chile, 1810-1842,” *Journal of Inter-American Studies* 1, no. 3 (1959): 353–75, <https://doi.org/10.2307/164901>.

medicine two years later and gave students the first ever opportunity to attend school to obtain a professional degree outside of becoming a churchman.⁹ The growth of this opportunity became a driving force in moving the church out of educational matters, as it allowed for the opening of new societal, government, and educational developments within Chile outside of religious narratives.

The development of the University of San Felipe also influenced the growth of the elementary school system. University graduates from San Felipe often advocated for policy and structural reform in Chile's elementary education, especially regarding creating accessible education for children who could not attend schools that required tuition payments to the head priests.¹⁰ This is one of the first moments that education reform becomes part of the narrative in Chilean education transformations. Advocacy for equal education within Chile's public and private educational structures and policies can be seen to carry through to modern day advocacy for equal educational opportunities and will be discussed further in the upcoming chapters.

Another component of colonial education that reflects the similar continuation of advocacy and call for education reforms by students into modern day social practices is the requirement to pay tuition to priests in primary schools. The division between public and private schools is a subject which is still being evaluated and changed in modern educational practices and still takes on a major precedence in the modern Chilean education system. One aspect of this public versus private school dynamic that has persisted from the mid 18th century to modern times is the large presence of the socioeconomic divide through access to education and how this has driven the socioeconomic gap deeper overtime. Though education was mainly seen as a

⁹ Campbell. 353.

¹⁰ Campbell. 354.

privilege for the higher socioeconomic classes in Chile's colonial times, there was a push to educate indigenous populations, not in an effort to grant them equal education access, but rather in a manner to force indigenous populations to be "evangelized and integrated" into what the colonizers considered a "'civilized' Spanish way of living."¹¹ The impacts of education reform on indigenous groups throughout Chile's development are immense and will be further discussed and evaluated in the final case study on the Mapuche in Chile.

Educational Shifts in the 19th Century- The War of Independence

At the start of the War of Independence in 1810, the education system experienced many shifts that significantly impacted the way that education and the institutions within it operate today. Chilean patriots viewed the expansion of educational opportunities as a catalyst for achieving their collective goal of liberating Chile from Spanish control and independently developing Chile's economy, government, and society. In 1813, the *Instituto Nacional* was created and offered a vast range of areas of study, including "international law and political economy, experimental physics, chemistry, geography and military science, pure mathematics, drawing, logic, and metaphysics and philosophy."¹² This marks one of the first major institutions, outside of the University of San Felipe, to offer educational opportunities that stray from ecclesiastical training, as well as the first institution to hire professors that were not clergymen.

The *Instituto Nacional* has since served as the main framework for secondary education within Chile. Through its framework and development, it became the first institution in Chile to

¹¹ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke, *A Study of the Secondary School History Curriculum in Chile from Colonial Times to the Present*. 67.

¹² Campbell, "Education in Chile, 1810-1842." 354.

significantly emphasize and draw a separation between secondary and tertiary education. Its creation also led to the further development of a centralized educational system, and ultimately to the creation of the *Universidad de Chile* which later transformed into and took on the functions of Chile's Ministry of Education. Not only did this transformation emerge as a new method for controlling the education system, but it served as a method to develop and grow a sense of nationality around institutions and Chilean education.¹³ This method of utilizing education to grow national identity then became an element that is carried forward in the growth of Chile's national education system.

Through the emergence of a strong, centralized system of education, in-class subjects began to shift due to the introduction of newer subjects that moved away from original ecclesiastically driven instruction. Around 1843, history as a school subject became a point of contention in educational institutions due to the lack of historical education in earlier forms of the education system. State authorities often saw history as a method to instill a sense of nationality in students at an early age, aiding in the process of growing support for the central state and its ambitions. As seen previously in the educational shifts during the War of Independence, education became a tool by the state to increase collective support among students and younger generations, working to increase popularity among state agendas and goals.

Although history began to take on a new level of importance in the school systems, there was still an immense amount of pushback from families, politicians, and educators on whether history should be a foundational subject in earlier stages of education. Though the overarching state government felt it was important to teach history to formulate a sense of national identity,

¹³ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke, *A Study of the Secondary School History Curriculum in Chile from Colonial Times to the Present*. 68.

opposers often felt that history could be utilized as a method of indoctrination of young students, which would essentially damage the collective state instead of aiding its development.¹⁴

Education was recognized as one of the most crucial elements to the development of younger generations, driving many groups to want education to remain empirically based and to eliminate space for wide interpretation of societal events. This led not only to debates among smaller communities, but also among major politicians who believed that curriculum surrounding history was being utilized to formulate new political and radical ideologies, sparking continuous partisan debates.¹⁵ However, one of the most major significant impacts of these debates around history in schools, was the creation of a national, core curriculum and syllabus, initially known as *curriculum concéntrico*.

In the 1880s, the Chilean government introduced an effort towards investing more funds towards education and building up both schools and the programs within them. Heavy international presence and influence shaped how these new policies and funds were implemented and distributed, specifically during the introduction of *curriculum concéntrico* in 1889. Inspired by the German education system, *curriculum concéntrico* focused largely on secondary education, implementing a core curriculum across schools in all regions, also establishing six total years of instruction in secondary education.¹⁶ Within these six years of secondary schooling, students would receive an education across a variety of subjects, with history still being limited to only three hours of lesson time per week, and with each new school year, students would move up in curriculum intensity, depth, and complexity.¹⁷ The curriculum also established a

¹⁴ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 69.

¹⁵ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 69.

¹⁶ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 69.

¹⁷ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 69.

stronger divide between the three levels of education (primary, secondary, and tertiary education), emphasizing how teachers should begin the first stages of instruction with basic, core concepts and gradually increase to more abstract, advanced lessons for higher level students.

It is crucial to identify the interworking of European influence into emerging Latin American systems as it demonstrates the highly influential western development tactics utilized to entangle European states into Latin American states. Later in the thesis, German education becomes a focal point for understanding the emergence of the desire for modernized, western concepts of education to take over indigenous education practices. This is merely one example of how western ideology consumed the development of Chile, especially concerning the transformation of the national education system and its initiatives.

Curriculum Development and State Influence through the 20th Century

Entering the 20th century, the state and the education system gradually became deeply intertwined. This entanglement is seen prominently in the official establishment of the *Ministerio de Educación* in 1927. However, despite this newly developed connection and increased rhetorical promotion of state centric education systems, the state became less of a guiding, constructive role in education involvement, but ultimately served as a role of absolute power and influence.¹⁸ The state expressed a great level of support for educational development and funding, however this was often in an effort to lift the state's position of authority through the education system.¹⁹ The state held a sense of hope that emerging educational opportunities and

¹⁸ Oscar German Espinoza, "The Global and National Rhetoric of Educational Reform and the Practice of (in)Equity in the Chilean Higher Education System (1981–1998)," *ProQuest Dissertations and Theses* (Ed.D., United States -- Pennsylvania, University of Pittsburgh, 2002), ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global (305523565), <http://login.ezproxy.lib.vt.edu/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/global-national-rhetoric-educational-reform/docview/305523565/se-2?accountid=14826>.

¹⁹ Espinoza. 37.

outcomes will help to maintain a positive connotation surrounding the state's agendas and beliefs.

In 1889, as the state took on a greater role in expanding educational opportunities, the common curriculum within schools shifted beyond *curriculum concéntrico* to reach new areas of instruction and educational content. The Chilean curriculum received heavy criticism, especially those who criticized the educational system for channeling strong German influence as opposed to reflecting the needs of Chilean citizens.²⁰ It was often argued that instruction under this framework did not support the growth of the industrial and economic state of Chile and was hindering Chile's progression towards state development and independence.²¹ This common argument also centered itself around the reignited argument surrounding the full introduction of historical education in primary and secondary schools, expressing that historical education could potentially serve more harm than good to the Chilean state. In comparison to prior arguments around historical education, many educators and students began to push against this belief, advocating for history to be taught in the classrooms across all levels. However, politicians and opposers held a strong stance against the incorporation of history as a subject into schools.²²

In line with the altering perspectives of educators and students on history and as curriculum developed from the early 1900s, perspectives and arguments surrounding history as a subject began to shift and was seen as more of an educational practice that could boost Chilean society despite the amount of pushback that it received over the past decade. The Council of Public Instruction became ambitious and optimistic in that students would use their historical

²⁰ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke, *A Study of the Secondary School History Curriculum in Chile from Colonial Times to the Present*. 70.

²¹ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 70.

²² Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 70.

knowledge and education to learn more about Chilean history and context.²³ With this goal in mind, the Council of Public Instruction created guidelines and expectations for history education in 1915, publishing a nationwide syllabus for history in all secondary schools.²⁴ The framework outlined in the syllabi for history lectures and instruction can still be seen as a crucial component to the subject instruction in modern secondary schools.

Through the growth of the common core instruction-based education system, differing economic classes began to take stances on what the intention of education should be for students. Chile's desire for industrial growth and for the strengthening of economic classes transformed the responsibility of the educational system to the continuous development of students' "mental, physical and moral features."²⁵ Common core instruction became a method in which these responsibilities could be met, ensuring that students are meeting standard national requirements, as well as learning subjects that met and exceeded national guidelines and education standards. This further led to the creation of the Ministry of Public Education and the General Ministry of Secondary Schools in 1927, which strengthened the government's presence in public and secondary school curriculum.²⁶

The creation of the Ministry of Public Education and the General Ministry of Secondary Schools promoted the idea of *Estado Docente* dating back to 1860.²⁷ The *Estado Docente* (teaching state) established the state as the center and main supporter of the education system. This framework took on wide popularity across Chile from its creation in 1860 to the mid-

²³ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 72.

²⁴ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 74.

²⁵ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 74.

²⁶ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke. 74.

²⁷ Zúñiga, O'Donoghue, and Clarke.

twentieth century, incorporating itself into current educational and administrative thought.²⁸ The document also formally established and outlined the content that teachers should be instructing in their classrooms, creating a formal, solidified national common curriculum. In 1920, the Compulsory Primary Education program was put into effect, establishing that the state would now also provide and ensure all children access to primary education with proper instructional environments, the construction of new schools, and extensive teacher training.²⁹ However, despite state academic requirements and guidelines, it fell upon the teachers to determine how and when the content should be taught.³⁰

Throughout the creation and establishment of the *Estado Docente*, there were not only shifts in the curriculum being taught, but also surrounding economic class dynamics within the state. From the 1860s to the 1950s, many educational reforms and efforts were utilized to contain the rise of the middle class on large political and governmental stages.³¹ During the early 1900s, the middle class began to push towards greater political participation and involvement, and through this the middle class strived to possess higher levels influence and control within the educational system.³² This movement created tension between the government and the middle class, leading to increased amounts of pushback and criticism from educational officials inside the government, thus leading to a stronger reliance on the *Estado Docente* and the presence of the state through policy reforms. These pushbacks can be exemplified through the number of

²⁸ Museo de la Educación Gabriela Mistral, “Construcción Del Estado Docente En Chile (1860-1920),” n.d., <https://www.museodelaeducacion.gob.cl/coleccion/construccion-del-estado-docente-en-chile-1860-1920>.

²⁹ Museo de la Educación Gabriela Mistral.

³⁰ Zúñiga, O’Donoghue, and Clarke, *A Study of the Secondary School History Curriculum in Chile from Colonial Times to the Present*. 76.

³¹ Zúñiga, O’Donoghue, and Clarke. 76.

³² Zúñiga, O’Donoghue, and Clarke. 74.

social movements that took place during the peak times of *Estado Docente*, especially regarding indigenous mobilizations throughout the entirety of Chile's nation building efforts.

Looking ahead to 1970, the education system began to experience a wide range of reforms under democratically elected President Salvador Allende. Through Allende's Popular Unity government, he worked to spread democracy throughout Chile, targeting changes in the health care, agriculture and education systems.³³ In regards to education reforms, Allende sought out changes through all three levels of education (primary, secondary and tertiary).³⁴ He promoted equal access to quality education and offered free tuition in higher education institutions, which is still a contested subject in current education discussions on the international stage.³⁵ Many researchers, politicians, and policymakers still debate these topics and reforms that occurred under Allende's administration as they are often seen as movements towards socialist or radical, leftist agendas. However, these policies are seen to drastically shift in 1973 after Allende was overthrown in a coup d'état conducted by Allende's Commander-in-Chief Augusto Pinochet.

The Neoliberal Revolution

After Allende was overthrown by Pinochet, the education system began to form an even deeper entanglement with economic structures through Pinochet's neoliberal agendas. Education and economic developments often go together as discussed in the previous section, however this intertwined relationship becomes increasingly evident through the emergence and spreading of neoliberal ideology in Chile and globally. Education structures become a major focal point in

³³ Office of the Historian, "The Allende Years and the Pinochet Coup, 1969–1973," United States Department of State, 2017, <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/allende>.

³⁴ Vannia J. Zelaya, "Chile's Educational Reform: The Struggle Between Nationalization and Privatization," Pepperdine Policy Review (Pepperdine University, June 4, 2015), <https://digitalcommons.pepperdine.edu/ppr/vol8/iss1/7.2>.

³⁵ Zelaya. 2.

neoliberal agendas, as it provides direct access to building both influential, ideological efforts and building credibility and merit through academic settings. The next section will break down the overall conceptual aspects of neoliberal ideology, while exposing its ability to infiltrate education structures to strengthen its social and economic capabilities.

Neoliberalism, beginning around the 1930s and 1940s, promotes a laissez-faire, free market agenda, as well as the increased privatization of public sectors.³⁶ In a neoliberal state, the central state no longer holds a significant role in conducting general state regulations and state relations, as its role is essentially diminished to preserving the integrity of the self-correcting market and evolving neoliberal framework. Neoliberal theory believes that the welfare state, weak policy planning, and government mismanagement all lead to the demise and downfall of local, small-scale power.³⁷ A weak state can then only be aided by strong privatized market actors that support market, economic, and social functions.³⁸ The state then retains solely the responsibility to create private markets in sectors that are largely controlled and operated under governmental structures, such as land, water, education, health care, social security, and environmental protections.³⁹ This free market driven ideology gained a wide amount of popularity in the developed world, especially in the United States, creating a growing discussion around the implementation and spread of neoliberalism globally.

Two neoliberal thinkers that contributed to this rapid spread of neoliberal ideology were philosopher-economist Friedrich von Hayek and economist Milton Friedman at the University of

³⁶ David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Business Book Summary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). 2.

³⁷ Sunni Ali, "A Second-Class Workforce: How Neoliberal Policies and Reforms Undermined the Educational Profession," *Journal of Curriculum and Teaching* 8, no. 3 (August 21, 2019): 102, <https://doi.org/10.5430/jct.v8n3p102>. 104.

³⁸ Ali. 104.

³⁹ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. 2.

Chicago. Once Hayek moved to the US and began working alongside Milton Friedman at the University of Chicago, neoliberalism began to gain scholarly merit through his teachings and collaborations with other scholars. This not only created an ideal environment for spreading neoliberal ideologies among younger generations of scholars and students, but it also gave neoliberalism an upper hand in swaying the thoughts and agendas of politicians, journalists, and intellectuals.⁴⁰ Neoliberalism became less of a theory-based ideology and more of an example framework for free-market systems.⁴¹

Looking at influenced countries outside of the United States and United Kingdom, on August 11, 1973, Augusto Pinochet forcefully took power in Chile, overthrowing and killing former democratically elected President Salvador Allende. Once assuming the position of the reigning dictator in the country, Pinochet implemented mass amounts of policy changes, erasures, and additions, changing Chile's framework drastically. In 1980, Pinochet enacted a new constitution without popular input from the country, directing Chile's economy and government towards a free-market, individualistic, neoliberal-based framework.⁴² Many of the neoliberal features, changes, and focal points included in Pinochet's new constitution were influenced by the "Chicago Boys;" a group of Chilean students from the University of Chicago, inspired by Milton Friedman, who later rejoined other students and scholars at the Catholic University of Chile.⁴³ Pinochet utilized the "Chicago Boys" neoliberal model as an inspiration for the

⁴⁰ Daniel Stedman Jones, *Masters of the Universe*, REV-Revised (Princeton University Press, 2012), <http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1d2dmhg>. 5.

⁴¹ Felipe Aravena Castillo, "Neoliberalism and Education on an International Perspective: Chile as Perfect Scenario," . . . *Bulgarian Journal of Science & Education Policy* 10 (February 17, 2016): 1–21. 70.

⁴² Jennifer M. Piscopo and Peter M. Siavelis, "Chile's Constitutional Moment," *Current History* 120, no. 823 (February 1, 2021): 43–49, <https://doi.org/10.1525/curh.2021.120.823.43>. 43.

⁴³ Piscopo and Siavelis.

framework and building of the 1980 constitution, which is reflected through the drastic shifts towards privatization of sectors that were previously public.⁴⁴

Neoliberal Education Reforms at Large

As mentioned previously, neoliberalism pushes for the privatization of a multitude of different sectors, working towards the diminishing power of state presence in a market-based structure. One sector that neoliberalism has been found to drastically effect, not only in Chile's case but in many countries that adopt neoliberal practices, is the privatization of the education system. Through neoliberal policies and agendas, the education system has seen an increasing presence of and the encouragement for the construction of private schools. Private schools operate mainly outside of state control, only adhering to some state guidelines and regulations. When examining the shifts towards privatized education in Chile under Pinochet, one year after the education voucher system was introduced in Pinochet's 1980 constitution, 73.8% of students attended municipal public schools and 26.2% attended private schools.⁴⁵ Just over 10 years later in 1994, only 57% of students were enrolled in public schools and over 43% of students were enrolled in private schools.⁴⁶ In 2007, less than 50% of Chilean students were enrolled in public schools.⁴⁷

Neoliberal education reforms, of course, reflected directly on students in many aspects, ranging from the curriculum they are taught to what type of access to education they have. Due to the rising construction and spread of private schools, many students shifted from public to

⁴⁴ Piscopo and Siavelis.

⁴⁵ Martin Carnoy, "National Voucher Plans in Chile and Sweden: Did Privatization Reforms Make for Better Education?," *Comparative Education Review* 42, no. 3 (1998): 309–37. 318.

⁴⁶ Carnoy. 318.

⁴⁷ Carnoy; JOHANNA BANDLER, "Be Careful What You Vouch For," September 20, 2019, <https://brownpoliticalreview.org/2019/09/be-careful-what-you-vouch-for/>.

private schools. Private schools often offered access to greater and higher quality resources, providing a stronger education to students. However, private schools are also often very selective in student enrollment, charge exorbitant tuition and fees to students and their families, and are mainly located in highly populated, urban areas.⁴⁸ These factors leave out a large population of students from several backgrounds and characteristics, for example students of lower socioeconomic status or students that reside in rural areas.

Without access to quality education, neoliberal education reforms can be seen as contributing to the widening gap between socioeconomic classes by limiting access to education and professional opportunities for certain students with limited access to opportunistic resources and institutions. Students within lower socioeconomic statuses are often presented limited opportunities as they face barriers such as tuition and fees, costs for books and materials, discrimination in the educational setting, transportation factors, as well as barriers related to obtaining responsibilities to provide income for their families.⁴⁹ Limited access to educational resources in early education can also lead to limited opportunities for future success in higher education and later professional careers. Students in private schools with greater funding, resources, and materials are more likely to use their advantage to propel their education and career, ultimately deepening the divide between upper and lower economic students.

A method in which the widening socioeconomic gap and educational opportunities were addressed early on was through the creation of neoliberal backed educational support programs and systems, such as educational voucher programs. These programs were introduced through

⁴⁸ Alfonso Echazarra and Thomas Radinger, "LEARNING IN RURAL SCHOOLS: INSIGHTS FROM PISA, TALIS AND THE LITERATURE," OECD Education Working Paper (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, March 8, 2019). 7.

⁴⁹ Echazarra and Radinger. 13.

Augusto Pinochet's 1980 constitution and were heavily inspired by Milton Friedman's perspective on education through a neoliberal lens. Friedman became a large advocate of school choice and many modern school choice movements have been influenced by his notions of the freedom of educational choice through neoliberal policy.⁵⁰ Under neoliberalism, the education system is seen essentially as a market-based system, where students and their families can pick and choose schooling opportunities that best suit their educational and economic interests and statuses. Early voucher systems worked to expand economic and financial opportunities for students seeking differing educational opportunities.

Not only did the privatization of public schools' impact public school enrollment rates and educational opportunities, but it also impacted teachers within schools and the curriculum they were required to teach. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, a common curriculum was implemented across Chilean schools in hopes of spreading state approved curriculum and lessons. Under Pinochet's implementation of neoliberal policy, this common curriculum remained in place, but teachers were evaluated on a much harsher scale. Strict national evaluations on educators and students led to increased school closures, leaving teachers without jobs and students without access to education. This became a common theme over the time of Pinochet's reign, leading to an even larger inequality gap both in terms of education and wages.

Societal Backlash on Neoliberal Education

Many teachers and students were faintly considered when Pinochet constructed the 1980 constitution, leaving them unheard and misrepresented.⁵¹ Consequently, this led to the emergence

⁵⁰ Colleen Hroncich, "Milton Friedman, School Choice Pioneer," *CATO Institute* (blog), January 24, 2023, <https://www.cato.org/blog/milton-friedman-school-choice-pioneer>.

⁵¹ Carla Tapia et al., "Teacher Activism: Struggles over Public Education in Chile," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 44, no. 6 (August 18, 2023): 963–77, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2023.2219404>. 965.

and spread of student and teacher riots and protests across the country. These social demonstrations can be seen to stem from elementary education reforms in the 18th century and have further transformed into modern day student movements ranging from protesting college admissions to subway fare costs. Continuous student and teacher protests in Chile demonstrate how active and vocal individuals within the education system remain despite changes in educational reforms from both sides of the political spectrum. However, many of these protests and riots began to expand and grow in strength during Pinochet's dictatorship and have marked significant impacts on neoliberal education policy.

For example, many teenage activists began protesting alongside students, advocating for changes in the education reforms Pinochet brought on in the 1980s. Many of these protests revolved around the municipalization of schools, as Pinochet's neoliberal agenda pushed for the decentralization of education under the state system and for municipalities to take on control of the education system on a more localized level.⁵² The municipalization of state schools began to diminish the quality of public education and increased the role of the private sector.⁵³ However, a majority of protests that occurred during Pinochet's dictatorship revolved around higher education policy changes, with mainly university students taking a stand against increasingly neoliberal policy changes.

Despite many riots and protests breaking out quickly after Pinochet's policy changes, students have begun to take on leadership and become the center of many riots following Pinochet's exit from the Chilean government. One riot that took on great significance and

⁵² Richard Smith, "From Pinochet to Piñera, Chile's Secondary School Students Have Long Been a Potent Political Force," The London School of Economics and Political Science, November 8, 2019, <https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/latamcaribbean/2019/11/08/from-pinochet-to-pinera-chiles-secondary-school-students-have-long-been-a-potent-political-force/>.

⁵³ Smith.

demonstrated the vocal strength of primary and secondary students following the Pinochet era is the 2006 *revolución pingüina* (penguin movement). High school students marched alongside college students protesting the increasing privatization of education across Chile.⁵⁴ Students protested intense, discriminatory education policies that were being implemented through Chile's neoliberal framework, demonstrating the continuation of neoliberal policies through education and consistent pushback from the Chilean population. What started as a small, controlled movement expanded rapidly to involve over 80% of Chile's high school student population, various teachers', and labor unions, as well as advocates and activists from Chile's general population.⁵⁵

The *revolución pingüina* in 2006 is merely one example of many student movements across Chile, however it represents the consistent pushback against neoliberal policy in education. The effects and negative sentiments from Pinochet's education policy have persisted from these early protests to current student movements in Chile. Of course, some of the movements have changed in motive, such as the 2019 student protests increasing subway fares, but the underlying motive and narrative still stems from advocacy against Pinochet's lingering policies.⁵⁶

With Pinochet's policies persisting and powering through modern day Chile, there have been major calls for the redrafting and replacement of Pinochet's 1980 constitution which is still being utilized through the current government. Mass protests against the constitution from the dictatorship-era have been on the rise since October 2019, almost 40 years after it was

⁵⁴ Tapia et al., "Teacher Activism." 965.

⁵⁵ Tapia et al. 965.

⁵⁶ Sandra Cuffe, "Chile Protests: The Students 'Woke Us up': Secondary Students Kicked off Chile's Movement for Systemic Change Now in Its Sixth Week.," *Aljazeera*, November 29, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2019/11/29/chile-protests-the-students-woke-us-up>.

implemented, with referendums being called to replace the constitution. However, Chileans have been facing little to no results or changes. Just a year after an uptick in protests, in 2020, 78% of Chileans voted to replace the constitution in a referendum, however the 1980 constitution still remains after the new draft was voted down in 2022.⁵⁷ Now, one year later in November 2023, the current government under President Gabriel Boric has called for a second plebiscite on a new draft of the constitution in hopes of gaining traction towards a new constitution although the country remains divided on the issue.⁵⁸

Conclusion

Chile has undergone a vast transformation in terms of country development as well as through their education system. The Chilean education system has been shown to influence many sectors across the country, emphasizing its importance and significance when it comes to both economic and political changes. While some of the earlier frameworks from Chile's colonial period shine through in modern education structures, Chile's neoliberal period has still come to affect the way the education system functions today. Students, teachers, union members, and the public have taken a stance on the continuation and preservation of neoliberal policy into modern day practices and reforms. Riots and protests have increased, now calling for the rewriting of Chile's constitution, which could pose major shifts to the Chilean government and society.

Across each time frame examined (the colonial period during the 18th century, the 19th and 20th centuries, and the rise of Augusto Pinochet in the late 20th century) it becomes evident

⁵⁷ Pascale Bonnefoy, "'An End to the Chapter of Dictatorship': Chileans Vote to Draft a New Constitution," *The New York Times*, October 25, 2020, <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/25/world/americas/chile-constitution-plebiscite.html>.

⁵⁸ Natalia Ramos and Alexander Villegas, "Chile's Boric Calls for Referendum on Second New Constitution Proposal," *Reuters*, November 7, 2023, [https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/chiles-boric-calls-referendum-second-new-constitution-proposal-2023-11-07/#:~:text=SANTIAGO%2C%20Nov%20%20\(Reuters\),dominated%20by%20right%20wing%20forces.](https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/chiles-boric-calls-referendum-second-new-constitution-proposal-2023-11-07/#:~:text=SANTIAGO%2C%20Nov%20%20(Reuters),dominated%20by%20right%20wing%20forces.)

how intertwined each period is with the next. Despite all the time periods introducing new elements and developmental points, each work together to formulate the education system in Chile today. Not to mention it also shows growing similarities to international education systems, especially through foreign influences, such as German elements. The education system of the 18th century provided insight into the foundational educational frameworks which can still be examined in modern day education structures, such as the introduction of different tiers of education as well as social movements. The 19th century demonstrates the importance of increasing state intervention in education systems through the creation of national curriculums and through the growing involvement of politicians and legal actors in primary and secondary education requirements. These elements are seen to carry through into the 20th century, however it is examined interestingly through the differing relations of the government with education.

Looking further into the research, Chile's education system will be examined and analyzed under a deeper lens to understand how reforms in these programs have affected students and their achievement. The current chapter provides a historical lens to highlight the foundational and continual elements from Chile's initial education systems to the policies and characteristics outlined in the next chapter. There will be various areas in the next chapter which prove historical continuity, such as the continuation of national requirements for syllabi, the preservation of three-tiered education system, and the influence of state powers in education systems. However, it will also exemplify points of departure from historical patterns, especially regarding new neoliberal policies which marketize primary and secondary education. From 1981 to 2008, Pinochet's universal education voucher system remained active in Chile until former president Michelle Bachelet introduced the "Preferential School Subsidy Act" (SEP). Pinochet's education voucher system was driven by a neoliberal framework, representing, and pushing for a

market-based education system. The next chapter will look deeper into how Pinochet's education system impacted student's access to quality education in comparison to Michelle Bachelet's socialist reforms, examining how varying policies from the two administrations were enacted and how they impacted students.

Chapter 3: Education Reforms and their Transformations from Pinochet to Bachelet

Introduction

The Chilean education system began to take on major shifts in the 1970s following extreme changes to the government through forceful forms of authority. From the fall of Salvador Allende's administration following Augusto Pinochet's military coup to Michelle Bachelet's education socialist-driven reforms and challenges, this chapter will study the progression, commonalities, differences, and complexities between increasingly neoliberal education reforms and their elimination and preservation over a 30-year period. It is crucial to build an understanding of these elements as it will provide a larger image of how the modern education system functions and the struggles new administrations face as they attempt to depart from prior education policies implemented. It will also demonstrate the social environment and reactions to these new and old policy implementations, showing the amount of social pressure being placed on the government in terms of education reforms. Through this comparative analysis of two larger forms of historical and policy analysis, I will argue access to primary and secondary education for students, especially of lower socioeconomic classes and rural locations, declined with the beginning of Pinochet's 1980 constitution which contained majority neoliberal education policies, and has ultimately prevented newer government administrations from fully implementing education policies that promote fair and equal access to education for all students.

First, I will analyze the rise of Pinochet and his neoliberal education policies, expanding further from the previous chapter introducing the overarching changes, injustices and atrocities in the education realm that followed his rise in power. I will first start through the brief analysis of Pinochet's neoliberal dictatorship, then into a historical and policy analysis of the educational

programs and policies Pinochet pushed through his 1980 constitution. These analyses will largely utilize preexisting forms of analysis, as well as government policy documents to formulate a clear image and demonstration of how these policies were implemented, reacted to on social and political scales, and how they directly impacted students and teachers alike.

This section will also draw attention to public schools and their transformation into an object of necessity and commonly becoming a final or only option for students who cannot access private schools. Under neoliberal policies, private schools are placed on a higher “platform” or at a higher status than public schools. This creates negative sentiments towards public, state schools, which not only decreases student enrollment rates, but also decrease fundings and resources toward public schools. With declining student enrollment, low teacher employment, and low resources, families are no longer incentivized to send their students to public schools, which fuels the cyclical nature of low enrollment, low funding, declining quality to the eventual closure of public schools in areas and for students who rely on them.

The second half of the chapter will deploy similar methods of analysis; however, it will examine former president Michelle Bachelet’s socialist administration and how she introduced, preserved, and eliminated education policies during her presidency while still under the 1980 constitution. This chapter will focus largely on Michelle Bachelet’s administration from 2006 to 2010 and 2014 to 2018, examining how her policies made major shifts from the educational frameworks preserved in Pinochet’s 1980 constitution. It will be crucial to maintain similar forms of analysis to the first section studying Pinochet’s education reform as it will ensure uniform points of analysis and the ability to directly see how maintain and changed policies have had direct impacts on schools, students, and teachers. This section will also rely heavily on

preexisting studies and scholarly research, as well as national and government data to show continuities and transformations across Chile.

The final portion of the chapter will briefly address the current state of the education system and the looming neoliberal education policies in Chile through similar forms of analysis from the prior sections. I will focus largely on new government reports and forms of literature to demonstrate the growing discussion of emerging education reforms, as well through the critiquing of preserved neoliberal and outdated education practices. These analyzes will attempt to identify and expose shifting relationship between the government and private entities and the education system, focusing on how this has impacted students of varying demographics and their access to quality education.

The Fall of Allende and Rise of Pinochet

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Augusto Pinochet forcefully took power from democratically elected Salvador Allende on August 11, 1973. It will be crucial to address the rise and fall of Salvador Allende and the lead up to the coup conducted by Augusto Pinochet. Beginning roughly around 1960, the fear and anxiety of the nationalization of Chilean companies, including copper mining companies, sparked foreign intervention in Chile.⁵⁹ Under the former US president John F. Kennedy's 1961 Alliance for Progress act, the US felt an obligation to intervene in Chilean political relations, aiming to stop socialism from spreading within the country.⁶⁰ The US government utilized covert tactics in Chile during the 1970 presidential elections and worked hand-in-hand with the Chilean government as they also did not

⁵⁹ Office of the Historian, "The Allende Years and the Pinochet Coup, 1969–1973."

⁶⁰ Office of the Historian.

want Allende to be elected into office for a second term due to fears of the nationalization of the copper industry and spreading of leftist ideology in the country

From 1971 to 1973, Allende advocated for several socialist, left-leaning policies including increasing the government's hand and influence in health care, agriculture and education policy.⁶¹ This triggered widespread riots and demonstrations against Allende's administration and ultimately to the attempted coup by Lieutenant Colonel Roberto Souper on June 29, 1973.⁶² The failed coup led to increased sentiments of discontent among military leaders in the government, including General Carlos Prats who was later replaced by Augusto Pinochet on August 24, 1973.⁶³ The increased sentiment for change and the ousting of Allende from office became strong in Chile among moderate and right-wing individuals, as well as on the international stage.

On September 11, 1973, Augusto Pinochet conducted a military coup, removing Salvador Allende from the presidential palace as he refused to surrender, which ultimately led to his death.⁶⁴ Pinochet had successfully performed a military coup against Allende's government and was later declared President on September 13, 1973.⁶⁵ Chile had now entered a new period socially, politically and economically that would not seek an end until 1990 when Pinochet left office following the 1988 plebiscite calling for a democratic election. As previously mentioned in the prior chapter, Pinochet's reign yielded times plagued with human rights violations and the amplification of injustices across Chile. However, despite Pinochet leaving office in 1988, he remained the Commander-in-Chief until 1998.

⁶¹ Office of the Historian.

⁶² Office of the Historian.

⁶³ Office of the Historian.

⁶⁴ Office of the Historian.

⁶⁵ Office of the Historian.

During Pinochet's government readjustment period in the late 1970s, he implemented a variety of neoliberal policies which have carried a multitude of impacts on various populations and sectors throughout Chile. Neoliberalism began to take effect in the early 1930s with Friedrich Von Hayek and his Mont Pelerin society, and it progressively spread globally from Switzerland to the United States. As the economic, political, and social thought spread, the US slowly integrated many of the characteristics through various layers of academia and government. These US influences, ranging from the Chicago Boys to the Reagan Administration, took great roots in developing Latin American states in the 1970s through 1980s, especially regarding Pinochet's growing influence.

Despite Pinochet assuming he yielded a great amount of power in leading neoliberal thought in Chile, the state ultimately developed the name of the neoliberal experiment state and has even been referred to as the laboratory for neoliberal development. Chile became a case study, with scholars, politicians and economists around the world closely examining Chile as Pinochet slowly built-up neoliberal agendas. In terms of education, Chile also serves as a variable to study how neoliberal policy has impacted the development of education policy and its direct impact on students.

Chile's Neoliberal Education System under Pinochet

Augusto Pinochet's drive to transform Chile into the neoliberal state shown through in many aspects, however education became a centralized focus of state interest during these transformations. In the perspective of the education system, Pinochet's neoliberal agenda followed two major neoliberal themes of municipalization and privatization, which aimed to decentralize the education system while simultaneously transferring it towards a private

market.⁶⁶ One of Pinochet's initial education reforms was censoring any subjects, knowledge or information in classrooms that his administration deemed as inappropriate for students.⁶⁷ This action came generally as an effort to eradicate the education system from any potential socialist narratives remaining from Salvador Allende's administration and other potential education efforts that could work to counter his administrative efforts. Through these efforts, many school-teachers were fired and removed from their jobs and the national teachers union was disassembled.⁶⁸ In comparison to the teachers rights under Allende's administration, teachers had grown to work under education system under a centralized government with national influence, however Pinochet's transformations eliminated these previous centralized rules and structures, seeing them as against Chilean national economic and ideological interests .⁶⁹ This initial restructuring of the national education structure and removal of teachers opened up the spiraling issues of consistent quality education and reliable access to education that students began to increasingly face starting in the 1970s.

On the last day of Pinochet's reign, on March 10, 1990, a major piece of legislation was enacted through Pinochet's neoliberal agenda of the decentralization and privatization of the education system, the Constitutional Organic Law on Education (LOCE). He outlined the basic rights and objectives of Chile's public education system. In chapter III, article 19, section 10, it states that all citizens are entitled of the right to education. The LOCE education guidelines state:

10. The right to education.

⁶⁶ Taryn Rounds Parry, "Decentralization and Privatization: Education Policy in Chile," *Journal of Public Policy* 17, no. 1 (1997): 107–33, <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0143814X00003457>. 109.

⁶⁷ Parry. 108.

⁶⁸ Parry. 108.

⁶⁹ Parry. 108.

The objective of education is the complete development of the individual in the various stages of his life.

Parents have the preferential right and duty to educate their children. The State shall provide special protection for the exercise of this right.

It is mandatory for the State to promote preschool education, for which it will finance a free system starting from the middle-lower education level, intended to ensure the access to it and to its higher levels. The second level of transition is mandatory, being a requirement for admission to primary education.

Primary and secondary educations are mandatory. For this purpose, the State must finance a free system, aimed at ensuring access to it to all the population. In the case of secondary education, this system, in accordance with the law, will be extended until the age of 21.

It will also correspond to the State to encourage the development of education at all levels, encourage scientific and technological research, artistic creation and the protection and enhancement of the cultural heritage of the Nation.

It is the duty of the community to contribute to the development and improvement of education;⁷⁰

A crucial component of this constitutional right to education is that although it ensures access to education for students, it does not ensure quality of education provided. Public schools become a figure of necessity, becoming an option for students who likely do not have other options available to them for a multitude of reasons including geographical location, family obligations, and socioeconomic status. Multiple researchers and scholars have addressed the issue between access to education and access to quality education. Access to education is often understood as the expansion and creation of schools in areas which suffered from low numbers of education institutions.⁷¹ However, as seen in Daniel Sifuna's study of education in Kenya and Tanzania,

⁷⁰ Augusto Pinochet and Chilean 1980 Military Junta, "Chile's Constitution of 1980 with Amendments through 2021," trans. Rodrigo Delaveau Swett and Deputy Justice of the Constitutional Court of Chile, rev. 2021 1980, https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Chile_2021. 12.

⁷¹ Daniel N. Sifuna, "The Challenge of Increasing Access and Improving Quality: An Analysis of Universal Primary Education Interventions in Kenya and Tanzania since the 1970s," *International Review of Education* 53, no. 5 (November 1, 2007): 687–99, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11159-007-9062-z>.

school participation can be referred to as a supply and demand process, which should categorize access to education as an opportunity cost of students and families.⁷² The conceptual portion of schools' "supply" directly correlates to the quality of resources and education being provided, which directly influences the demand impacting student enrollment and parental decisions within individual schools.⁷³

This becomes an emerging complication that is stretched through social demands and advocacy surrounding education in both urban and rural settings as students find themselves subject to deteriorating public education structures under neoliberal policy implementations. In the case of Chile, it can be widely attributed to Pinochet's advocacy for private education over public, causing mass movements and incentives of students and parents to choose private education. As shown in scholarly research alongside government reported data, the movement to deregulate and decentralize the education system resulted in the decrease of total government spending towards education, however spending towards municipal and private education increased dramatically.⁷⁴ In 1982, 73.8% of students attended municipal public schools and 26.2% attended private schools.⁷⁵ By 1994, only 57% of students were enrolled in public schools and over 43% of students were enrolled in private schools, and less than 50% of students were enrolled in public schools by 2007.⁷⁶ The shift from students enrolled in public to private schools continued to increase, exposing the presence of a strong narrative pushing for students to enroll in private schools over public schools.

⁷² Sifuna.689.

⁷³ Sifuna. 689.

⁷⁴ Carnoy, "National Voucher Plans in Chile and Sweden: Did Privatization Reforms Make for Better Education?" 381.

⁷⁵ Carnoy. 318.

⁷⁶ Carnoy. 318.; BANDLER, "Be Careful What You Vouch For."

It is important to identify one of the main contributors to this shift and what drove many of the decisions to turn from public schools to private schools. Pinochet harped on the crucial emphasis on the right of the parent's ability choose the overall path of their child's education and the idea of choice that was interwoven into the idea of education. Augusto Pinochet's implemented education voucher distributions across the state to emphasize this concept of educational choice. In 1981, he implemented a universal school voucher system, highly influenced by Milton Friedman's idea of school choice.⁷⁷ The voucher system's main elements included:

1. The distinction between three types of schools (public schools by vouchers, private voucher schools, and private schools with separate tuition paid by parents),
2. Family income was not a factor in voucher distribution, private voucher schools were not required to adhere to admissions requirements,
3. Public schools were obligated to admit all students, public and private schools could hire teachers on different criteria and implement different pay,
4. And all schools must participate in the national system of standardized assessments.⁷⁸

These central elements promoted the idea of school choice and decentralized forms of governance within the education system; however, the state still held a central form of power through methods of financing, such as through voucher distribution.

Despite public schools bearing the brunt of many of these neoliberal policy reforms, the neoliberal push for privatization, many students, teachers, and schools were incentivized to move towards privatization for financial purposes. Through the voucher system, Pinochet's regime introduced per-student subsidies for private educational institutions that met specific standards set by the government.⁷⁹ Privatization was a method in which schools could still maintain

⁷⁷ Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. 8.

⁷⁸ María Soledad Bos and Emiliana Vegas, "The Consequences of Educational Voucher Reform in Chile," IDB WORKING PAPER SERIES N° 833 (Inter-American Development Bank, August 2017). 3.

⁷⁹ Parry, "Decentralization and Privatization: Education Policy in Chile." 109.

government financial support, however it came a cost of readjusting curriculum and the adherence to strict student quotas and regulations. Voucher systems and other private school funding also contributed to the increasing competition and marketization of public and private schools, often leading to a deeper demise of public schools as they cannot sustainably function with lower numbers of students, funding, and general support. Not only did students and their families find themselves readjusting to new education policies and demands under privatization efforts, but the structures of the schools themselves were incentivized to move towards privatized models.

Under the Chilean model of neoliberalism, the education system was highly decentralized, moving a majority of all decision making for educational institutions in an area into the hands of the individual municipalities, with the exception of the national requirements under the national standardized assessments.⁸⁰ Within this newly decentralized education system, it opens the opportunity for deregulation among both public and private schools in the same municipalities causing a major increase in competition between schools for students.⁸¹ However this push for deregulation among public schools yielded vast downfalls as the regime often intervened when educators and students did not meet requirements set, leading to a cyclical tendency to remove teachers from public schools which led the further demise of the schools.

The Michelle Bachelet Administration and Transformed Education Reform

Now serving as the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet was elected President of Chile from 2006 to 2010 and from 2014 to 2018. She served as

⁸⁰ Carnoy, “National Voucher Plans in Chile and Sweden: Did Privatization Reforms Make for Better Education?”

⁸¹ BANDLER, “Be Careful What You Vouch For”; Carnoy, “National Voucher Plans in Chile and Sweden: Did Privatization Reforms Make for Better Education?”

the first female president of Chile, as well as Chile's Health Minister from 2000 to 2002 and as the first female Defense Minister for Chile, and all Latin America, from 2002 to 2004. In 2005 she was selected as the candidate for the Christian Democratic Party.⁸² She ran her campaign largely targeting the lower socioeconomic classes in Chile, focusing on promoting women and indigenous rights, as well as advocating for the reforms of social economic programs, such as the pensions system.⁸³ Despite her efforts to appeal to the larger, underrepresented groups in Chile, she still faced immense levels of social backlash and criticism.

At the start of her presidency, Michelle Bachelet inherited education policies formed and preserved under the previous government administrations led by center/center-left coalition of parties. Formed in 1988, the political coalition *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia* began to take an influential political stance through its four main parties, the Socialist Party, the Christian Democratic Party, the Party for Democracy, and the Radical Social Democratic Party.⁸⁴ The *Concertación* aimed to reshape the government and social market Pinochet had built during his dictatorship. They relied heavily on concepts such as civil society, citizen participation, and social capital to mobilize their political thought and ideologies focusing on the construction of new institutions and social behaviors that still supported the idea of open markets.⁸⁵ For the fifteen years following the end of Pinochet's dictatorship starting in 1990, the *Concertación* ruled for three consecutive government terms, starting with Christian Democrat candidate Patricio

⁸² Britannica, "Michelle Bachelet," March 9, 2024, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Michelle-Bachelet>.

⁸³ Britannica.

⁸⁴ Democracy in Latin America : Thirty Years after Chile's 9/11 (Conference) (2003 : University of Albany), Silvia 1953- Nagy-Zekmi, and Fernando Ignacio. Leiva, *Democracy in Chile : The Legacy of September 11, 1973* (Brighton ; Sussex Academic Press, 2005), <http://catdir.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0512/2005013609.html>. 86.

⁸⁵ Democracy in Latin America : Thirty Years after Chile's 9/11 (Conference) (2003 : University of Albany), Nagy-Zekmi, and Leiva. 73.

Aylwin, who worked to preserve the same neoliberal framework Pinochet introduced while in office.⁸⁶

Of all the policies created and preserved by the *Concertación*, one of the final, lingering policies that Michele Bachelet faced when she came into office in 2006 was the Constitutional Organic Law on Education (LOCE) that was enacted under Pinochet's regime. However, the *Concertación* governments from the late 1990s to early 2000s began to take on LOCE educational restructuring efforts, but not in a manner that would eliminate the neoliberal injustices bred out of Pinochet's original enactment. This inability to eliminate neoliberal policies stemmed from the strict and permanent characteristics of the LOCE and the 1980 constitution. *Concertación* administrations were forced to work around these concrete policies implemented during Pinochet's dictatorship. However, even as some of the following governments attempted to change the inherently unchangeable policies, some governments remained in favor of neoliberal practices and proceeded to maintain them. Societal, public reactions to these small acts of framework preservation were often negative and inevitably, led to larger protests and forceful action, such as the 2006 *revolución pingüina*.

As previously mentioned, the *revolución pingüina*, secondary school students across Chile demanded changes in the education system. This protest eventually led to one of their ultimate goals of the removal of the LOCE, which was removed by Bachelet's administration in 2009.⁸⁷ She then replaced the LOCE with the General Education Law (LGE) which normalizes the education structures outlined by Law 20.370. This education law outlines the basic principles

⁸⁶ Democracy in Latin America : Thirty Years after Chile's 9/11 (Conference) (2003 : University of Albany), Nagy-Zekmi, and Leiva. 73.

⁸⁷ Francisca De La Maza and Carlos Bolomey, "Mapuche Political, Educational and Linguistic Demands and Public Policy in Chile," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 40, no. 4 (May 19, 2019): 458–74, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2019.1572493>. 459.

of the education system, the role of community members in primary and secondary education and emphasizes the minimum requirements for making academic progress within varying educational structures.⁸⁸

The 2008 Preferential School Subsidy Law (SEP)

Interestingly, despite Bachelet running on an evidently socialist platform her administration still upheld neoliberal education frameworks, which can be seen through the neoliberal preservation done by the *Concertación de Partidos por la Democracia*. In 2008, the universal education voucher system experienced a major shift under President Michelle Bachelet's newly proposed Preferential School Subsidy Law (SEP). Under the SEP, the voucher system began to open up consideration towards deeper financial struggles that low-income students may tend to experience when meeting education tuition and costs.⁸⁹ Students were now eligible to receive "priority students" status if their families were in the bottom 40% of income distribution in Chile, allowing them to receive a higher-valued vouchers and concentration bonuses, which alternatively contributed to the growth of schools.⁹⁰ Essentially, vouchers provided to students who were in the bottom 40% of the national income distribution were worth around 50% more than vouchers distributed to students in the other upper 60% of income distribution in the country.⁹¹ This served as an incentive for schools to take in "priority students" as well as enroll in the SEP program in order to receive increased federal funding.

⁸⁸ Ema Lagos, "Chile: The Challenge of Providing Relevant Information from ILSA Studies for the Improvement of Educational Quality," in *Improving a Country's Education*, ed. Nuno Crato (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2021), 49–82, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-59031-4_3; Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, "Historia de La Ley N° 20.370. Establece La Ley General de Educación" (Biblioteca del Congreso Nacional de Chile, 2016), <https://www.bcn.cl/obtienearchivo?id=recursolegales/10221.3/3824/7/HL20370.pdf>.

⁸⁹ Bos and Vegas, "The Consequences of Educational Voucher Reform in Chile." 4.

⁹⁰ Bos and Vegas. 4.

⁹¹ Richard Murnane and Emiliana Vegas, "What Chile Teaches Us About School Vouchers," January 19, 2018, <https://www.future-ed.org/what-chile-teaches-us-about-school-vouchers/>.

Through the enrollment of schools into the SEP voucher system, schools were faced with a wider array of requirements and frameworks that had to meet to continue receiving government assistance through the program. The SEP increased school's accountability requirements, resulting in a three-tiered classification system labeling schools as "autonomous, emerging, or recovering," based on their national assessment results.⁹² In 2008, the voucher program only covered national assessment results from preschool through 4th grade, adding one new grade level each year until all grades were covered in the assessment.⁹³ These assessment results and tier-ranking system held schools accountable by gauging how much assistance they should receive from the Ministry of Education in areas such as teaching plans, tracking academic growth, and technical assistance.⁹⁴

However, even though these education voucher reforms demonstrate stark differences from Pinochet's 1981 universal voucher system, the act of preserving and maintain the voucher system itself is an act of neoliberal education reform. It still harps on the idea of prioritizing choice surrounding a student's education and allows for parents to maintain the choice of which education structure fights their child's needs. Private and for-profit schools were still able to thrive under the SEP framework, although most of the schools accepting education vouchers were public primary schools. This essentially defeats the purpose of including a new voucher system as it does not directly target the social, economic, and educational divide presented through public versus private primary and secondary schools.

⁹² Bos and Vegas, "The Consequences of Educational Voucher Reform in Chile." 5.

⁹³ Bos and Vegas. 5.

⁹⁴ Bos and Vegas. 5.

In a 2017 study, researchers broke down the actual impact of the SEP voucher reform on fourth grade students, examining both a socioeconomic and geographical divide.⁹⁵ They sought out to examine the national assessment scores to determine whether the SEP voucher system had genuine effects on student improvement and their educational achievement. One of the first major findings within in the study was the divide between public and private schools in a rural versus urban settings. In 2005, there were 2,444 public schools in rural Chile while only 1,867 in urban areas despite there being five times as many fourth graders in urban areas, at 98,424 urban students compared to 19,953 rural students. However, what drives this disproportionate public school to student ratio is the factor that 82% of rural students attended public schools in 2005, as opposed to only 50% of urban students doing the same.⁹⁶ To examine even further into this divide, when examining student distribution across varying private-school structures, merely 2% of rural students attended fee-charging private schools while 38% of urban fourth grade students did.⁹⁷

This unequal distribution is closely related to the ties between rural students and the lower economic status that many rural families are in. Bos and Vegas recognized in 2005 rural students often did worse on national assessments, with an average national mathematics score of 228 in comparison to fourth grade urban students scoring 247.⁹⁸ Examining the impact of the SEP system on student test scores based on where students and their families existed in the national income distribution, Bos and Vegas' study shows dramatic average mathematic test score increases for both rural and urban students in 2012, after the SEP had been in effect for

⁹⁵ Bos and Vegas.

⁹⁶ Bos and Vegas. 10.

⁹⁷ Bos and Vegas. 10.

⁹⁸ Bos and Vegas. 11.

four years.⁹⁹ Average mathematics achievements also showed large increases from 2005 to 2012 through rural and urban divide.¹⁰⁰ However, despite pre and post SEP data showing academic improvement among students in all socioeconomic classes as well as in rural versus urban settings, the SEP does not show any progress on solving the achievement gap between students in opposite social demographics.

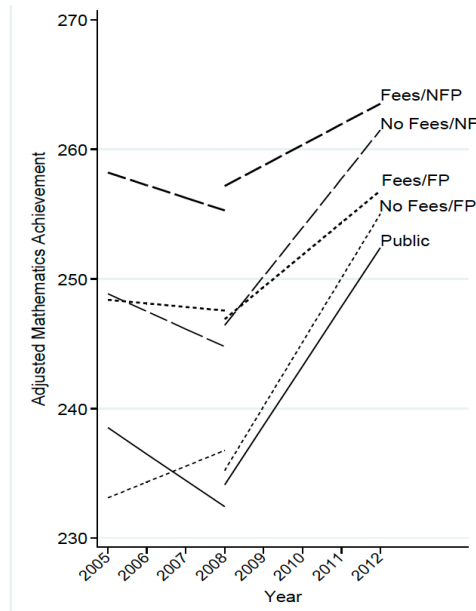


Figure 1: Figure from Bos and Vegas; Students’ mathematic achievement scores, “The Consequences of Educational Voucher Reform in Chile.”¹⁰¹

As shown above in the graph constructed by Bos and Vegas in their 2017 study, it is evident there is an overall upward trend from 2004 to 2012 on average mathematic scores between five different schooling structures: fee-paying/not-for-profit, non-fee paying/not-for-profit, fee-paying/for-profit, non-fee paying/for-profit, and public schools.¹⁰² Each education

⁹⁹ Bos and Vegas. 19.
¹⁰⁰ Bos and Vegas. 21.
¹⁰¹ Bos and Vegas. 23.
¹⁰² Bos and Vegas. 23.

structure shows and upward trend in student achievement for the variable being studied (fourth grade students on mathematic national assessments), however it shows the persistent, maintained achievement gap between students in-between the listed types of schools. The problem at play remains; students in public schools are not experiencing the same academic advantages as students attending private schools. Looking specifically at public schools at the 2012-mark, test scores between public and fee-paying, not-for-profit schools maintained a difference of around 10 points.¹⁰³ This is even considering that fee-paying private schools were extremely less likely to participate in the SEP program, demonstrating that even without the SEP aid and reforms, private schools still accelerated upwards and in a parallel trend with schools that were more likely to take part in the SEP programs. It is important to note that 100% of Chilean public schools were participating in SEP programs while around 50% of fee-charging, for-profit schools chose to participate in the program in 2012.¹⁰⁴

It is also important to note and refer to the previous statistics of rural and urban student distributions in public schools as opposed to private schools. As students within all educational structures benefit from the SEP reforms of 2008, rural students who rely on public schools will still find themselves falling short of students in urban settings with the opportunity of having access to private education. These parallel improvements between public and private schools will continue to drive the gap of student achievement and future education and career goals deeper. Although the SEP grants students of lower socioeconomic status access to educational opportunities they had lacked before and is allowing for the improvement of public education

¹⁰³ Bos and Vegas. 23.

¹⁰⁴ Bos and Vegas. 25.

achievements, they are still only reaching the preliminary achievement standards that private education structures have now excelled beyond.

As explained above, one of the SEP's goals was to eliminate income-based gaps in student achievement as it attempted to give lower-income students/families the opportunity to attend private schools. Bos and Vegas' study examined the effect of the SEP framework on school segregation between fourth graders from low-income backgrounds and fourth graders from high-income families.¹⁰⁵ Their study found the introduction of SEP did not necessarily decrease or increase any income-based segregation in schools as compared to pre-SEP school environments.¹⁰⁶ Interestingly, their study found school segregation began to stem from increasing amounts of residential segregation in 2012 as compared to 2007 and earlier.¹⁰⁷ However, under SEP regulations, more private schools were incentivized to bring in student of lower socioeconomic status due to government benefits SEP participating schools could receive, causing for higher levels of integration among schools. As Bos and Vegas exposed, it was not just the movement of lower socioeconomic students into private schools, but also of higher socioeconomic students moving out of public schools and into private schools from the benefits of SEP voucher system and participating school regulations. Higher income fourth graders enrolled in public schools declined from 29% to 24%.¹⁰⁸

During the SEP education reform, it is crucial to acknowledge the shift in student enrollment between public schools and private schools. As shown in Bos and Vegas' research, from 2005 to 2015, the number of fourth graders enrolled in public schools that participated in

¹⁰⁵ Bos and Vegas. 31.

¹⁰⁶ Bos and Vegas. 31.

¹⁰⁷ Bos and Vegas. 31.

¹⁰⁸ Bos and Vegas. 31.

the voucher program decreased by 40,000 or 5%.¹⁰⁹ This is likely due to parents' growing attention towards Chile's school ranking system, which ranks schools based solely on average test scores. Bos and Vegas identified that since most public schools in urban areas tend to serve students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, the rankings of these schools remained relatively low as compared to private schools simply due to economic disadvantage.¹¹⁰ Students and their parents utilizing the SEP voucher are less incentivized to attend public schools because of their low rankings, causing public schools to become less of a focal point for education reform, further amplifying the cycle of public schools becoming less funded and considered as a last resort for parent and student choice.

During Michelle Bachelet's second term from 2014 to 2018, she began to focus greater attention towards proposing and implementing education reforms outside of the SEP framework. Her education agenda took on an overarching goal to shift what Pinochet had previously done, moving the management of state schools out of the control of the municipalities and to put an end to state-funded private schools.¹¹¹ State-funded private schools were required to become either an entirely non-fee-paying, public school or a full fee-paying private school.¹¹² This shift in primary and secondary education within fully public and fully private schools became increasingly important because it began to accentuate and dramatically change the relationship between the government and schools. In 2014, 56% of students were enrolled in private-voucher schools, 37% in municipal schools, and 8% in private-tuition schools.¹¹³ Shortly before this in

¹⁰⁹ Bos and Vegas. 27.

¹¹⁰ Bos and Vegas. 27.

¹¹¹ De La Maza and Bolomey, "Mapuche Political, Educational and Linguistic Demands and Public Policy in Chile." 459.

¹¹² De La Maza and Bolomey. 459.

¹¹³ Peter M. M. Cummings, Alejandra Mizala, and Ben Ross Schneider, "Chile's Inclusion Law: The Arduous Drive to Regulate an Unequal Education System, 2006–19," *Educational Review*, n.d., 1–26, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2023.2234661>. 5.

2006, around 40% of all students in municipal, public schools were considered vulnerable students, as compared to 37% in private-voucher schools without copay and merely 14% in private-voucher schools with copays.¹¹⁴

However, in 2015 there was a major shift in Bachelet's approach to the Chilean education system and the inequalities that were interwoven into its framework. This shift likely occurred due to the societal and public backlash she faced during her first time in office from 2006-2010, incentivizing her to make greater adjustments to her education policy to gain public support over her second presidential term. During Bachelet's second term, the Pupil Inclusion Law came into effect in 2015.¹¹⁵ The ultimate goal of this inclusion law was to strengthen regulatory frameworks on private education by working to cut profits in government-subsidized schools and to eliminate market-based incentives restricting educational opportunities for students through strict student selection processes and tuition fees in schools.¹¹⁶ The law also prohibited for-profit schools, which made up over two thirds of private-voucher schools in Chile and made a total profit of over \$400 million.¹¹⁷ This individual law came in a package of three education reforms, which placed larger amounts of attention and aid towards students of lower socioeconomic classes.¹¹⁸ The Pupil Inclusion Law was one of the first legislative acts which worked to increase government regulation in the Chilean education system since the restoring of democracy following Pinochet's dictatorship.

¹¹⁴ Cummings, Mizala, and Schneider. 6.

¹¹⁵ De La Maza and Bolomey, "Mapuche Political, Educational and Linguistic Demands and Public Policy in Chile." 459.

¹¹⁶ Cummings, Mizala, and Schneider, "Chile's Inclusion Law: The Arduous Drive to Regulate an Unequal Education System, 2006–19." 2.

¹¹⁷ Cummings, Mizala, and Schneider. 2.

¹¹⁸ Cummings, Mizala, and Schneider. 2.

The shift towards increasing government regulation in Chilean education structures under the Pupil Inclusion Law began to recognize the unequal distribution of education opportunities among students of varying socioeconomic classes. However, as previously examined, Bachelet, still adhered to certain neoliberal frameworks set in place under the Pinochet regime. Without the dissolving or drastic reforming of these structures, it would be nearly impossible to achieve the goal set by Bachelet's administration of closing income-based inequality gaps and fighting forms of segregation in the classroom. Under Bachelet's reforms, when public school students improved academically, so did the private school students. While this is a positive outcome for the overall national achievement levels for the state as it improves achievement for all students, it does not address the achievement gaps that still exist between public and private school students. Parallel improvements will of course improve the overall national image and standards of education; however, it does not work to solve the overarching issues of income-based inequality and discrimination impacting vulnerable students. Working to close this gap will require increased attention on the specific needs and vulnerabilities of public-school students in comparison to private school students.

Conclusion

The transformation of education reform and overall restructuring efforts has exemplified the efforts to preserve, eliminate, and change how education is understood and utilized in Chile. It also creates an understanding of how access to education for students across differing geographical and socioeconomic characteristics are both prioritized and limited. Colonial education structures exuded inclusive efforts, however under the intention to create a unified nation-state. However, the shift to exclusionary educational practices carried through into modern education structures, especially regarding neoliberal policies made under Pinochet's

regime. The following governments worked to transition away from exclusionary practices but restrictive and lasting education policies, such as the LOCE which was made as essentially a permanent policy structure in the 1980 constitution, ultimately limiting their power to create progressive, new education reforms. The next chapter will attempt to understand the primary and secondary education transformations and their impacts through the lens of the Mapuche. The chapter works to identify disproportionate impacts of neoliberal education restructuring efforts on vulnerable and underrepresented communities, and how new reforms have both negatively and positively impacted indigenous primary and secondary students.

Chapter 4: Impacts of Neoliberal Education Reforms on the Mapuche in Chile

Introduction

This chapter will explore the disproportionate impacts of neoliberal education policies on indigenous communities in Chile, specifically the Mapuche. As the current chapter will discuss, the Mapuche are the largest indigenous group in Chile, with ancestral lands spanning from Chile's west coast into Argentina. Over the course of Chile's development and establishment as a formal state, the Mapuche have drastically felt the impacts of overarching, oppressive government, legal, and corporate powers. Many members of the Mapuche community have taken forceful stances against the exploitation of their land and people, through methods of social protests, extremist groups, and through the creation of legal groups to pushback against oppressive powers. However, it can also be examined that the Mapuche have faced disproportionate impacts from government restructuring efforts, and this case study aims to demonstrate specifically how neoliberal education reforms have disproportionately affected the Mapuche population. This case study will also exemplify how vulnerable groups have been impacted, or even targeted, during varying government administrations, especially during the neoliberal revolution of the 1980s.

First, it will be crucial to discuss the history of the Mapuche community, starting with the impacts of colonialism stemming from the 19th century, as this marks the one of the first official state and military interventions on Mapuche ancestral lands. This contextual analysis will begin to identify the foundational relationship between overarching state powers and the Mapuche, exemplifying how the two entities have conflicted and interacted with one another. The second portion of the chapter will move into analyzing the Mapuche population under Pinochet's neoliberal education reform and how this has impacted Mapuche students' access to quality

education as compared to prior, present, and future education reforms and regulations. The final sections of the chapter will heavily analyze former president Michelle Bachelet's education reforms and the modern education system the Mapuche community is grappling with today. Through this case study, I will continue my prior arguments emphasizing how neoliberal education reforms have yielded negative impacts on students' access to education. However, I will expand this further, arguing neoliberal education reforms has posed disproportionate levels of negative impacts to indigenous students, specifically the Mapuche.

The Chilean Indigenous Population Under Neoliberalism

One group that has felt the magnitude of neoliberal impacts is the indigenous population in Chile. Through Pinochet's mass mobilization of neoliberal thought and agendas, he worked to cut social programs and funding towards public goods such as education, healthcare and housing.¹¹⁹ Alongside these formal state restructuring efforts, Pinochet's neoliberal reforms followed with immense human rights violations, including the killing and kidnapping of more than 3,000 people in Chile while over tens of thousands of people were arrested, exiled, and tortured.¹²⁰ Examining the formal framework of Pinochet's regime, neoliberal thought in Chile has harped on the need for large-scale agricultural operations, especially targeting the southern regions of Chile where the Mapuche indigenous population resides and who also make up a major portion of Chile's indigenous population.¹²¹ Neoliberal agendas under Pinochet were

¹¹⁹ Jeffrey A. Gardner and Patricia Richards, "Indigenous Rights and Neoliberalism in Latin America," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Ethnicity*, ed. Steven Ratuva (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2019), 849–65, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-13-2898-5_70. 852.

¹²⁰ Gardner and Richards. 852.

¹²¹ Gardner and Richards. 852.

mobilized to destroy the indigenous population, through methods of cultural, political, economic and environmental destruction brought on by the overarching neoliberal state.¹²²

In mass efforts to counter these atrocities, Indigenous groups, not strictly within Chile, have led resistance efforts through transnational and international forms of activism, calling for the recognition of their sovereign rights.¹²³ Indigenous activism came through many forms including formal congressional hearings, the formation of unions such as the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Affairs, and through forms of protest pushing directly against neoliberal states.¹²⁴ Indigenous mobilization has proven to be powerful not only from the early protests of land seizing efforts but also into modern anti-neoliberal movements stretching into 2019.

Also, through neoliberalism, the process of urbanization and the migration from rural to urban settings were emphasized. Dating back to colonial periods, indigeneity through the eyes of the colonizer is seen as a rural, traditional subject that must undergo processes of modernization, progression, and whiteness at the hands of the colonizers and overarching state.¹²⁵ The emphasis of urbanization and modernization under neoliberal agendas has posed an intense pressure on indigenous populations, not only in Chile but globally. This has not only created an environment for segregation and conflict between indigenous groups and non-indigenous groups in urban settings, but also in relations between individuals within the same indigenous community. This is a point of analysis which will be expanded upon further in the chapter.

¹²² Gardner and Richards. 852.

¹²³ Gardner and Richards. 852.

¹²⁴ Gardner and Richards. 852.

¹²⁵ Dana Brablec, "The Neoliberal Multicultural State and the Urban Indigenous Associative Model in Santiago de Chile," *The British Journal of Sociology* 74, no. 5 (December 2023): 957–70, <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.13055>. 958.

History of the Mapuche in Chile – Prior to and during the 19th Century

When studying indigenous populations in Chile, the Mapuche stand as a very prominent community within both Chile and Argentina. Thus, before discussing the educational impacts on the Mapuche in Chile, it will be crucial to understand the historical developments of the Mapuche over a broad length of time. Researchers have theorized the Mapuche are direct descendants of ancient pre-Hispanic cultures of Pitrén and El Vergel which lived between the Bío Bío River and Reloncaví Sound, where a majority of Mapuche ancestral lands exist today.¹²⁶ Archaeological research has suggested the Mapuche existed starting around 500 BC in these central regions of Chile.¹²⁷ The region where the Mapuche inhabit is formally known as the Araucanian territory and was split in the early 16th century into three main geographical zones: the Picunche, Mapuche, and Huilliche.¹²⁸ The Inca began to invade the Araucanian territory, dominating the Picunche community, however they were stopped at the Río Maule by the Mapuche and Huilliche.¹²⁹ By the mid-sixteenth century, Spanish colonizers arrived in Latin America, but the Mapuche were able to maintain their independence from the Spanish through the last 1800s through guerilla warfare tactics.¹³⁰ The Mapuche led two successful rebellions against the formal Chilean state, but were defeated on their third rebellion from 1880 to 1882.¹³¹

Throughout Chile's colonial period, the Mapuche remained relatively independent of the legal state until 1880s when the Chilean army invaded and began forcefully occupying Mapuche

¹²⁶ Museo Chileno de Arte Precolombino, "Native Peoples: Mapuche," 2012, <http://chileprecolombino.cl/en/pueblos-origenarios/mapuche/historia/>.

¹²⁷ Lydia Nakashima Degarrod, "Culture Summary: Mapuche" (New Haven, Conn.: Human Relations Area Files, 2009), <https://ehrafworldcultures.yale.edu/document?id=sg04-000>.

¹²⁸ Nakashima Degarrod.

¹²⁹ Nakashima Degarrod.

¹³⁰ Nakashima Degarrod.

¹³¹ Nakashima Degarrod.

land.¹³² However, the story of legal intervention spans much earlier than the 1880s, beginning shortly after the War of Independence in 1810 when settled colonizers began to mobilize efforts to homogenize the indigenous populations under a nationalist goal of an imagined unified state across Chile.¹³³ However, narratives of inclusion from times during the independence shifted to an exclusive narrative, spreading the ideology that the Mapuche culture and language existed outside of the “civilized,” Chilean goal. Looking back to 1819, the first Chilean president Bernardo O’Higgins enacted a law which gave the Mapuche citizen status.¹³⁴ However, the law was never thoroughly implemented due to the Chilean governing body’s idea that the Mapuche were considered “backwards and ignorant bad workers who wasted their resources.”¹³⁵

In 1845, the Mapuche began to experience major efforts from the legal Chilean state as the state forcefully advocated for state control and expansion into the southern region of Chile. In 1845, Polish geologist and mineralogist Ignacio Domeyko proclaimed the sovereign nation in which he resided in (Chile) was split in half; a group of barbaric individuals (the indigenous Mapuche) and the rest of Chile.¹³⁶ It was this territory between Concepción and Valdivia that the majority of Mapuche resided and that the emerging Chilean state wanted to occupy.¹³⁷ The region held an abundant amount of resources, including timber, which the government sought after especially in initial state development efforts and towards international competition and growth.

¹³² Minority Rights Group, “Mapuche in Chile” (Minority Rights Group, 2023).

¹³³ Patricio R. Ortiz, *Indigenous Knowledge and Language: Decolonizing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in a Mapuche Intercultural Bilingual Education Program in Chile*, 2009. 33.

¹³⁴ Ortiz. 34.

¹³⁵ Ortiz. 34.

¹³⁶ Ignacio Domeyko, *Araucanía y Sus Habitantes: Recuerdos de Un Viaje Hecho En Las Provincias Meridionales de Chile En Los Meses Enero i Febrero de 1845* (Santiago: Imprenta Chilena, 1845), <https://www.bibliotecanacionaldigital.gob.cl/coleccion/BND/00/SM/SM0000578.pdf>.

¹³⁷ Joanna Crow, *The Mapuche in Modern Chile : A Cultural History*, 1 online resource vols. (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10641613>. 19.

Shortly after, in 1852, the Chilean state created the Province of Arauco, later to be called Araucanía, which essentially stripped the rights of the Mapuche from their land and placed it into the hands of government control.¹³⁸ What was once in total control of the Mapuche, was now a portion of control of the Chilean state which was to remain in their endeavors to gain control in the southern part of the continent. The heartland of the Mapuche was now authorized for both purchasing and selling by the state, although the Mapuche community still occupied their own lands.¹³⁹ The Chilean state was determined to seize the fertile lands that the Mapuche rightfully held because this would give Chile an economic edge by means of exponential agricultural export growth.¹⁴⁰

This drive to take over the Mapuche's agricultural, fertile land and to "unite" the Chilean state had grown to an incredibly powerful and oppressive level, with Chilean citizens calling for the use of military intervention on the Mapuche lands.¹⁴¹ The Chilean state, with it now being more centralized, began occupying Angol in 1862 and proceeded to expand military occupations in January 1883 after taking over Villarrica.¹⁴² It was then from this moment on that the Chilean state began pushing Mapuche communities out from the southern region, stripping them of their territorial and cultural rights as the Chilean military campaigns and operations removed a majority of Mapuches from their ancestral heartlands.¹⁴³ In addition to this, these occupational activities created the still existing border between Chile and Argentina, splitting the Mapuche territorial nation in half.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁸ Crow. 19.

¹³⁹ Crow. 19.

¹⁴⁰ Crow. 22.

¹⁴¹ Crow. 22.

¹⁴² Crow. 22.

¹⁴³ Minority Rights Group, "Mapuche in Chile."

¹⁴⁴ Minority Rights Group.

Mapuche in the Modern Chilean State - 20th and 21st Century

The Mapuche represent the largest indigenous group in Chile, making up around 80% of the country's indigenous population and account for almost 10% of the total Chilean population, with a population of over 1.7 million.¹⁴⁵ The Mapuche also make up a majority of the rural population in Araucanía at 71%, occupying most of the rural regions of the eight and district regions of Chile.¹⁴⁶ However, of the Mapuche population, a majority live in cities and urban areas including Santiago, Temuco, and Concepción.¹⁴⁷ Around 44% of the population live in Santiago, the nation's capital, while only 15% are living in the ninth district, the traditional lands of the Mapuche.¹⁴⁸ Within these geographical separations, today, only 20% of Mapuche are fluent in their native language, Mapudungun.¹⁴⁹ The following table breaks down the indigenous population numbers in Chile as recorded in the 2017 census, demonstrating the large Mapuche population, as well as general education levels and age groups among Mapuche populations.¹⁵⁰

Ethnic Group	2017 National Population #	2017 National Population %	% of group with 0 years of education	% of group under 5 years old
Indigenous	2,185,792	12.44%	11.85%	6.95%
Mapuche	1,745,147	9.93%	11.75%	6.85%
Total	17,574,003	100%	10.71%	7.99%

Table 1: Distribution of Chile's indigenous population from Chile's 2017 census data.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵ Moisés H. Sandoval, Marcela E. Alvear Portaccio, and Cecilia Albala, "Life Expectancy by Ethnic Origin in Chile," *Frontiers in Public Health* 11 (June 15, 2023): 1147542, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1147542>.

¹⁴⁶ Minority Rights Group, "Mapuche in Chile"; Sandra Becerra, María Eugenia Merino, and David Mellor, "Ethnic Discrimination against Mapuche Students in Urban High Schools in the Araucanía Region, Chile," *International Education Studies* 8, no. 10 (September 28, 2015): p96, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v8n10p96>. 96.

¹⁴⁷ Minority Rights Group, "Mapuche in Chile."

¹⁴⁸ Leslie 1958- Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs., *Language of the Land : The Mapuche in Argentina and Chile*, Document, 0105-4503 ; No. 119 (Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2007). 21.

¹⁴⁹ Minority Rights Group, "Mapuche in Chile."

¹⁵⁰ Instituto Nacional De Estadísticas, "Population and Housing Census," 2017, <https://www.ine.gob.cl/estadisticas/sociales/censos-de-poblacion-y-vivienda/censo-de-poblacion-y-vivienda>.

¹⁵¹ Instituto Nacional De Estadísticas.

These movements, divisions and shifts from rural to urban areas have created exacerbated divides among the Mapuche, with those expressing discontent with members of the community who have moved outside of traditional, cultural life and towards a modernized, urban one. The rural-urban divide has become prominent, with rural Mapuches viewing the urban lifestyle as corrupting for their community and cultural, despite many urban Mapuches move away from traditional native lands and cultural behaviors.¹⁵² Rural Mapuches often view the urban lifestyle as linked to impurities and ultimately hold the rural landscape and community as the final place that most accurately embraces traditional elements of the Mapuche.¹⁵³ However, many Mapuches who have migrated into urban areas have identified their movements as methods to utilize the Chilean state to bring pacification to their society.¹⁵⁴

These urban motivations begin to then make sense of the emergence of Mapuche scholars and organizations that originated in the 20th century. In 1910, the urban Mapuche movement took a foundational step with the creation of the first non-traditional group Sociedad Caupolicán Defensora de la Araucanía, which also occurred around the time when workers began to unite to advocate for their rights.¹⁵⁵ The Mapuche advocacy groups held a prominent stance in Chilean society as they grew and expanded into varying groups including the Federación Araucana, the Sociedad Mapuche de Protección, and the Unión Araucana.¹⁵⁶ These groups marked the official beginning of Mapuche pushing back to modern, central state powers and to the continually growing injustices that they began to face as the Chilean state expand their legal framework

¹⁵² Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs., *Language of the Land : The Mapuche in Argentina and Chile*. 22.

¹⁵³ Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. 22.

¹⁵⁴ Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. 102.

¹⁵⁵ Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. 103.

¹⁵⁶ Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. 103.; Minority Rights Group, “Mapuche in Chile.”

through indigenous lands. Despite advocating for varying overarching goals, the groups shared a common thread of discussing Mapuche communal lands and of these lands' legal protection and division.¹⁵⁷ Another common theme that the Mapuche social groups shared was the advocacy for increased access to education, which is something that will be discussed further in the chapter.¹⁵⁸

It was not until the 1950s when the Mapuche gained small amounts of traction in the Chilean government, creating louder voices for the community. In 1953 the Asociación Nacional Indígena de Chile (ANI) was created and took place in the left-wing political spectrum in Chile.¹⁵⁹ Later in 1962, the Law of Agrarian Reform was passed which allowed for any land usurped from the Mapuche before 1946 to be administered for public use, still working around giving the Mapuche the rights back to their own lands.¹⁶⁰ However, it was not until 1970 when former president Salvador Allende arrived in office that the Mapuche began to see government action favoring the rights of Mapuche ancestral lands. During his short time in office, Allende passed Law 17.729 in 1972 which began the official, state recognition of the culture and history of the Mapuche within Chile.¹⁶¹ Within one year following the passing of this law, over 70,000 hectares of land were given back to Mapuche communities, representing a stark difference from the legislative practices placed by preceding president Eduardo Frei Montalva, who required unanimous decisions by the entire Mapuche population to keep ancestral lands as theirs.¹⁶²

However, the over 40 Mapuche organizations and communities represented under Allende's presidential period in 1970-1973 began to face an extreme harsh political and social

¹⁵⁷ Minority Rights Group, "Mapuche in Chile."

¹⁵⁸ Minority Rights Group.

¹⁵⁹ Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs., *Language of the Land : The Mapuche in Argentina and Chile*. 104.

¹⁶⁰ Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs. 104.

¹⁶¹ Minority Rights Group, "Mapuche in Chile."

¹⁶² Ray and International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs., *Language of the Land : The Mapuche in Argentina and Chile*.

sphere following Augusto Pinochet's coup on September 11, 1973. Mapuche political leaders, government office holders, and community members were murdered and kidnapped under the Pinochet dictatorship, setting the tone for unspeakable levels of injustice and violence against the Mapuche and indigenous groups in Chile during his regime. Journalists and scholars across the globe discussed Pinochet's behaviors and actions towards the Mapuche as genocide and ethnocide, ultimately ruling Pinochet's actions as an attempt to eradicate Mapuche presence in Chile.¹⁶³ It will be important to note Pinochet likely conducted targeted political, legal, and social attacks against the Mapuche and other indigenous groups due to personal prejudice and authoritative, oppressive political motivations. However, Pinochet's neoliberal policies opened the opportunity for oppressive frameworks to be placed upon indigenous groups, especially through the targeting stemming from neoliberal financial and economic reforms which worked actively against them (i.e. the privatization and extraction of resources on Mapuche ancestral lands).

In 1989, at the end of Pinochet's reign, elected *La Concertación* and Christian Democratic Party (CDP) president, Patricio Aylwin signed the agreement "*Nueva Imperial*" with Mapuche leadership, signifying the president's support and advocacy to meet the Mapuche demands during his attempted restoration of democracy in a post-Pinochet era.¹⁶⁴ The "*Nueva Imperial*" opened the stage for new demands that extended from the usual community-driven demands. These demands included legal recognition of indigenous rights, land, and water protection, territorial autonomy, the redistribution of ancestral lands, as well as state support for

¹⁶³ Crow, *The Mapuche in Modern Chile : A Cultural History*. 152.

¹⁶⁴ Ortiz, *Indigenous Knowledge and Language: Decolonizing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in a Mapuche Intercultural Bilingual Education Program in Chile*. 42.

cultural and linguistic rights, especially regarding public school programs such as Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE).¹⁶⁵

In 1991 Patricio Aylwin sent forward two bills for congressional approval for the demands brought forth by the Mapuche: the signature of Covenant 169 (the United Nation's International Labor Organization) and for the *Ley Indígena 19.253*.¹⁶⁶ The second law would have established the *Corporación Nacional de Desarrollo Indígena* which would work to protect Mapuche territory and prohibit the sale of Mapuche land to non-Mapuche buyers, as well as implement Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) programs in schools.¹⁶⁷ However, despite promising narratives and notions from the *Concertación* alongside major international organizations such as the United Nations, the constitutional reforms and its respective bills were never passed at the demands of the Mapuche.¹⁶⁸ The bills were passed to up to Congress, who maintained preexisting tensions with the Mapuche population from prior endeavors to extract resources from their ancestral lands. Of course, as the bills were sent to Congressional groups which held extremely critical views of the Mapuche, all the proposed bills were intensely modified to preserve large-scale state presence in the region and to maintain agricultural and resource extraction efforts, essentially stripping the bills of their original intent to grant the Mapuche legal status to their land, cultural, and language.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Ortiz. 42.

¹⁶⁶ Ortiz. 43.

¹⁶⁷ Ortiz. 43.

¹⁶⁸ Ortiz. 42.

¹⁶⁹ Ortiz. 42.

The Development of the Mapuche Education System through European Influence

During the era of heightened state intervention in Mapuche lands and culture in the late 17th century and early 19th century, the education system served as a transformative institution which was driven to amplify national unity and assimilate Mapuche children into the goals set by the Chilean State.¹⁷⁰ The Mapuche lands were home to valuable resources that were a central focus to the Chilean economic state, requiring a mass effort to assimilate and take command over the Mapuche ancestral lands. In 1883 after the conclusion of the War of the Pacific, Chilean elites began concentrating more attention into nation-building and sought out these efforts through education reforms based off German education structures.¹⁷¹ Through this academic connection, the Chilean Agency of Colonization in Europe began to bring foreign *colonos* into Chile, primarily settling Austro-Swiss, Germans and rural Europeans into La Araucanía.¹⁷²

German immigrants elected to positions of high government power in the region determined the Mapuche territory needed state transformations to aid national industrial developments.¹⁷³ The shift towards German state influence was reflected in the Mapuche education system, especially shown through methods of modernization in state education.¹⁷⁴ Modernization was a useful tool to the state as it aimed to transform not only education, but it worked to assimilate Mapuche into what was considered modern Chilean culture. This attempt to create essentially a homogenized culture would create an easier environment for state control to take root in Mapuche lands, gaining the economic advantage the Chilean elites strived for.

¹⁷⁰ Romina Akemi Green Rioja, “To Govern Is to Educate: Race, Education, and Colonization in La Araucanía, Chile (1883-1920)” (University of California, Irvine, 2018), <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0gj0t3mj#main>. 3.

¹⁷¹ Romina Akemi Green Rioja. 4.

¹⁷² Romina Akemi Green Rioja. 4.

¹⁷³ Romina Akemi Green Rioja. 5.

¹⁷⁴ Romina Akemi Green Rioja. 5.

Following the capturing of Mapuche ancestral lands in the late nineteenth century, the government began enacting various legislative powers on their land. Through newly proposed *titulus de merced* (title grants) administered by the state, the Mapuche only maintained control over a small portion of their land on “indigenous reductions” and lost any legal right and voice they formerly had over the use and distribution of the land.¹⁷⁵ A majority of schools built on the indigenous reductions were now under the control of the state or the Catholic Church, and required Mapuche students to learn Spanish as opposed to their native language Mapudungun.¹⁷⁶ On top of state and Catholic education phasing out Mapudungun, Mapuche students were also required to learn both religious and national values, which some scholars have viewed as colonization with the goal of “Chileanisation” in mind.¹⁷⁷

Chilean education reformers during the 1880s understood the power of education structures and their influence over individuals. As noted by Chilean scholar, Amanda Labarca, Chilean, national education reformers during this era were the main driving force in education transformation in Mapuche territories (as well as other indigenous lands) and often worked to deconstruct sacred practices, replacing them with Northern European driven, modern nation practices.¹⁷⁸ Especially focusing on German education frameworks, elite education reformers understood education to both strengthen military efforts and successes, as well as lead in scientific innovation.¹⁷⁹ Ultimately, the Prussian state served as the exemplary subject for the emerging Chilean state, driving the Chilean desire to modernize and industrialize the land they

¹⁷⁵ De La Maza and Bolomey, “Mapuche Political, Educational and Linguistic Demands and Public Policy in Chile.” 461.

¹⁷⁶ De La Maza and Bolomey. 461.

¹⁷⁷ De La Maza and Bolomey. 461.

¹⁷⁸ Romina Akemi Green Rioja, “To Govern Is to Educate: Race, Education, and Colonization in La Araucanía, Chile (1883-1920).” 24.

¹⁷⁹ Romina Akemi Green Rioja. 24.

were in control of. However, the Mapuche population in Araucanía stood in the way of these strict modernization and industrialization efforts, criticizing Chilean national intervention. As previously mentioned, the Chilean state and President Manuel Bulnes sought to tackle this by sending European settlers into the southern region.¹⁸⁰ The act of moving majority German colonizers into the land also introduced a growing number of missionaries in the region, increasing efforts to convert the Mapuche to Catholicism.¹⁸¹

In 1896, the first group of Bavarian Capuchin missionaries arrived at the Valdivia mission.¹⁸² As their presence grew in the region, friars began to negotiate with Mapuche community members in Panguipulli and Coñaripe, attempting to gain the trust of the Mapuche during the expansion of their missionary efforts. In exchange for trusting the missionary leadership and presence, the Bavarian Capuchin missionaries promised to teach Mapuche children Spanish per the demands of Mapuche families.¹⁸³ This led to the opening of a multitude of missionary boarding schools, satellite day schools, and vocational workshops for Mapuche children.¹⁸⁴ From the early 1880s until 1910, there was a 49% increase in schools constructed, going from 159 to schools in 1880 to 289 schools in 1910 in the Mapuche region between the Bío Bío River to the Chiloé Island (it is crucial to note this also includes the construction of national, public schools in the region as well).¹⁸⁵ However, in the midst this rapid education

¹⁸⁰ Romina Akemi Green Rioja. 25.

¹⁸¹ Romina Akemi Green Rioja. 26.

¹⁸² Romina Green, “‘Useful Citizens for the Working Nation:’ Mapuche Children, Catholic Mission Schools, and Methods of Assimilation in Rural Araucanía, Chile (1896-1915),” *Historia Agraria de América Latina* 1, no. 01 (April 22, 2020): 114–36, <https://doi.org/10.53077/haal.v1i01.18>. 120.

¹⁸³ Green. 120.

¹⁸⁴ Green. 120.

¹⁸⁵ Andrew Webb, *Indigenous Identity Formation in Chilean Education : New Racism and Schooling Experiences of Mapuche Youth*, 1 online resource : illustrations. vols., Routledge Research in Decolonizing Education (New York, NY: Routledge, 2022), <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9781003090700>. 57.

expansion, the missionaries initially taught Mapuche children in their native language Mapudungun as opposed to Spanish, violating their deal with Mapuche families.¹⁸⁶

Mapuche parents and families reacted poorly to this violation of their agreement and the lack of Spanish teachings within schools. They threatened to pull all their children from the missionary schools, which would ultimately work to diminish the legitimacy of the missions in the region.¹⁸⁷ It is interesting to note the sense of autonomy and authority the Mapuche were given during these massive missionary efforts in Chile, regarding the Panguipulli and Coñaripe mission sites. As seen through other scholarly works, it seems as though this Mapuche autonomy and legitimacy were quickly stripped away as the overarching state moved towards larger efforts to unify the entirety of the Chilean nation under one narrative and image.

The Capuchin missionary schools in rural Araucanía were also one of the first instances in which there was a major push for a national curriculum in the southern region, in line with the 1860 *Ley Orgánica de Enseñaza Primera y Normal* which created the first national curriculum. The missionary schools prioritized the teaching of a unified curriculum, like the efforts of a national curriculum, however it differed mainly based on the strong catholic tones interwoven into the missionary schools' subjects. The 1889 Pedagogical Congress determined the positions of Capuchin missionary schools, however many southern representatives expressed opinions against developing a national rural education initiative claiming its rural education should remain at the hands of the landowners.¹⁸⁸ The early frameworks of the Chilean Ministry of Education pushed back on this encouragement of the denationalization of the education system, an

¹⁸⁶ Green, “Useful Citizens for the Working Nation.” 120.

¹⁸⁷ Green. 120.

¹⁸⁸ Green. 121.

insightful reaction as it demonstrates the push and pull on the decentralization and role of education from structures such as Chile's Ministry of Education.

However, at the missionary schools' core, its education practices served as a method of assimilating the Mapuche into the overarching Chilean narrative being shaped through European influences. Many of the schools emphasized educating women and young girls, however it was to drive Mapuche women away from polyamorous, cultural traditions, as these traditions hindered the reception of Christian ideals through family making.¹⁸⁹ Vocational schools were also products of furthering the growth of the missions since self-sustaining missions could not survive without the labor of Mapuche vocational students. This also ties in the push for teaching Spanish language in missionary schools in rural Araucanía as it worked to unify a national language, which can be seen to reemerge as a contested issue in modern day Mapuche education due to the dying out of their native language Mapudungun.

With Prussian structures of power in mind, the education system took on a pedagogical model called "concentric learning," which expected children to retain information from one subject and utilize those same learning points in connection to a different subject.¹⁹⁰ Concentric education not only encouraged knowledge-association, but it also emphasized education's abilities to influence children's thought processes.¹⁹¹ In the case of the Mapuche, this pedagogical learning model would be used as a national tool to conform public education, strengthening assimilation efforts and the elimination of Mapuche culture from the nation. These efforts can be examined through the elimination of Mapuche culture and other indigenous

¹⁸⁹ Green.123.

¹⁹⁰ Romina Akemi Green Rioja, "To Govern Is to Educate: Race, Education, and Colonization in La Araucanía, Chile (1883-1920)." 39.

¹⁹¹ Romina Akemi Green Rioja. 40.

learning subjects in public schools, especially through the elimination of native language learning, which is a common thread that is seen throughout the suppression of Mapuche culture through national education structures.

In response to heightened government and religious intervention, many members of the Mapuche community began to form organizations and begin demonstrations in protest of the growing state intervention in schools. Mapuche groups such as Sociedad Caupolicán began advocating and demanding government grants for increased access to both primary and higher education.¹⁹² These movements also included advocacy and demands for the construction of more day and boarding schools, as well as was backed by the demands of educators within the schools.¹⁹³ For example, in 1939, the Unión de Profesores called on the government to make bilingual language learning mandatory for Mapuche children in primary schools, requiring students to learn both Spanish and Mapudungun.¹⁹⁴ Other advocacy organizations also called on the government during the 1930s and 40s, demanding Mapuche teachers receive higher quality training and that schools include perspectives on rural regions and technical farming information.¹⁹⁵

Social movements as such served to be crucial to the evolving nature of primary and secondary education, as it shed light on the demands of the indigenous communities regarding social welfare concerns. It also demonstrated the collective strength of Mapuche voices and advocacy towards education. These themes of strong advocacy for education continue throughout history, linking both to previous social battles for land rights to social movements

¹⁹² De La Maza and Bolomey, “Mapuche Political, Educational and Linguistic Demands and Public Policy in Chile.” 461.

¹⁹³ De La Maza and Bolomey. 461.

¹⁹⁴ De La Maza and Bolomey. 461.

¹⁹⁵ De La Maza and Bolomey. 461.

against Pinochet's acts of humanitarian violence to modern day movements towards social justice and equality for the Mapuche in Chile and Argentina. The Mapuches continuous participation in social advocacy for their community and other indigenous communities alike, represents the strong motivation and criticism against evolving governmental and societal structures which worked to suppress their culture and identity.

One of the most crucial laws passed during this time frame was the 1920 Compulsory Primary Education Law and the lingering effects it had on the Mapuche community. Under this law, state-governed structures were prohibited to use Mapuche native language Mapudungun and persons who used Mapudungun were punished.¹⁹⁶ The effect of eliminating Mapudungun is an issue that is persisting in the modern education systems and has been a contested issue through varying government administrations. Although this law prohibited the use of Mapudungun, it did not eliminate all Mapuche cultural components and still worked to incorporate indigenous language into music, art, mathematics, physical education, and the humanities.¹⁹⁷ However, state-governed education structures were careful to ensure the incorporated indigenous knowledge was still cohesive with what the state ruled as Chilean national identity.

Mapuche Education during Pinochet's Neoliberal Chile

During the Pinochet dictatorship, many indigenous voices were silenced due to Pinochet's efforts to dissolve all previously established indigenous organizations and political groups. The regime focused very little amounts of attention towards indigenous needs and calls

¹⁹⁶ Webb, *Indigenous Identity Formation in Chilean Education : New Racism and Schooling Experiences of Mapuche Youth*. 57.

¹⁹⁷ Webb. 58.

for action and only allowed some indigenous social and cultural groups, such as Indigenous Cultural Centers, to function under the control of Catholic and Evangelical churches.¹⁹⁸ Despite this, there were some educational advancements for indigenous groups during the dictatorship era. For example, the work done by the *Asociacion Nacional Mapuche Nehuen Mapu* to advocate for diversified, indigenous education and to implement safeguards that fought assimilatory education designs.¹⁹⁹

However, shortly after Pinochet forcefully took power in 1973, Mapuche students found themselves to be targeted by his new exclusionary and genocidal agendas. Over 90% of Mapuche students were forcibly expelled from the Universidad Técnica de Estado in Temuco and from universities in Santiago.²⁰⁰ This became a widespread effort by Pinochet, targeting Mapuche, as well as other indigenous groups, students, and teachers within primary, secondary, and tertiary schools. Pinochet sought out power through the manipulation and transformation of education structures to adhere to and facilitate his ideological agendas. The elimination of certain social and ideological groups in the education system were some of the primary methods in which Pinochet could directly target ideology building and development. He understood the importance and influential power of education structures, and through this next section it will become evident how he used neoliberal frameworks to target Mapuche students, teachers, and families in these reformation efforts.

As mentioned in chapter three, Pinochet pushed for a uniform learning style across Chile, implementing extremely high standards for teachers in public schools. With these high standards, the government was able to justify educational intervention, firing teachers if they did not seem

¹⁹⁸ Webb. 61.

¹⁹⁹ Webb. 62.

²⁰⁰ Crow, *The Mapuche in Modern Chile : A Cultural History*. 152.

to be working towards the national standards set by the dictatorship. On top of this, national teachers' unions were abolished, and teachers' contracts were privatized, falling into Pinochet's use of neoliberalism to facilitate his national goals.²⁰¹ This made it extremely difficult for Mapuche teachers to implement indigenous cultural and language learning efforts, as they could risk losing their jobs, which ultimately deteriorated the status of the public schools even further as more and more teachers were fired from their positions.

However, in the perspective of public primary and secondary education, neoliberal policies produced an evolving dynamic between the state and Mapuche education demands for students. The emergence of a privatized education system forced Mapuche students to face educational struggles and future professional complications. Of the Mapuche population most students attended public schools as opposed to private schools. The neoliberal push for privatized education and the marketization of the education system presented an educational disadvantage to Mapuche students. The quality of public schools began to deteriorate due to the lack of state attention and assistance, setting public school students behind and further driving the achievement gap between students in public versus private schools.

As mentioned in the third chapter, Pinochet's reorganization of the education system in 1981, through efforts such as education vouchers, put large amounts of strain on public-state schools and the teachers and students that relied on these schools. In context to the Mapuche populations, Pinochet's administration began to construct state-subsidized private schools in remote, rural areas, specifically targeting Mapuche territories.²⁰² These schools were ultimately

²⁰¹ Andrew Webb and Sarah Radcliffe, "Mapuche Demands during Educational Reform, the Penguin Revolution and the Chilean Winter of Discontent," *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 13, no. 3 (December 2013): 319–41, <https://doi.org/10.1111/sena.12046>.

²⁰² Webb, *Indigenous Identity Formation in Chilean Education : New Racism and Schooling Experiences of Mapuche Youth*. 62.

deregulated which had negative consequences on student performance as there were no regulatory components upholding student standards or achievement. The founders of these schools profited purely off student enrollment, as the state-subsidized schools were enrolled in the 1981 universal voucher system. Not only did it impact student performance, but it impacted many teaching professions and upheaved contracts and unions teachers previously had under state schools.

Under the imposition of Decree Law 2.568 in 1978, the state divided most of the Mapuche community's lands in a clear and strong effort to disconnect the Mapuche's cultural connection and to push "Chileanisation" even further.²⁰³ The intense measures taken to split the Mapuche resulted in the formulating of Mapuche Cultural Centers (CCM) which aimed to contest and limit the government's capabilities in the region.²⁰⁴ Alongside other previously mentioned Mapuche organizations, members advocated for increased access to education and transformations in school subjects to include information that includes cultural components for Mapuche students. Under Pinochet's neoliberal education model, demands for increased access to education were met, however the new concern of quality of education became a major point of contention between Mapuches and the state.²⁰⁵

Pinochet's intense resurgence of Chileanisation called on the prior colonial and early state developmental efforts to modernize and unify the entirety of the Chilean state. Pinochet's neoliberal Chileanisation frameworks placed more pressure back onto the Mapuche population as it took prior methods of unification and amplified them under the use of even harsher, violent

²⁰³ De La Maza and Bolomey, "Mapuche Political, Educational and Linguistic Demands and Public Policy in Chile." 462.

²⁰⁴ De La Maza and Bolomey. 462.

²⁰⁵ De La Maza and Bolomey. 462.

tactics than experienced before. Pinochet's administration strived for the control of the fertile Mapuche lands to further economic growth and performing all means necessary to obtain these lands, causing education to be one of the ideological pinpoints which Pinochet knew could work to infiltrate the Mapuche population. Pinochet's efforts instilled fear and anxiety into Mapuche students, leaders, families, workers, etc., however this fear also fueled social demands and protests against Pinochet's oppressive regime in terms for education and other social justices alike.

On Pinochet's last day in office, March 10, 1990, he enacted the *Ley Orgánica Constitucional de Enseñaza* (LOCE). Outlined in chapter three, the LOCE called for quality control on education, while also establishing universal rights to education and constitutional forms of teaching. However, the LOCE also prevented the next democratically elected government, Patricio Aylwin, from changing or altering the neoliberal reforms put in place.²⁰⁶ Neoliberal education policies were essentially made concrete in the Chilean government, resulting in what appears to be the preservation of neoliberal policies made during the regime throughout the governments that came after. However, despite this serving as an anti-democratic form of governance, it opened the door for programs that supported indigenous groups, such as the Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) system.

The Mapuche Education System in a Post-Pinochet Era

In the government administrations following Pinochet's dictatorship, the LOCE placed restrictions on how much these governments could transform the education system. However, incoming governments were able to find solutions to work around these concrete LOCE policies.

²⁰⁶ Webb, *Indigenous Identity Formation in Chilean Education : New Racism and Schooling Experiences of Mapuche Youth*. 63.

For example, Patricio Aylwin's government introduced remedial programs for rural and urban students who were set back during the dictatorship, such as the P-900 program.²⁰⁷ Many schools in the P-900 program were rural schools in Araucanía and had large numbers of Mapuche student enrollment. This program was the foundational points for many remedial efforts for the declining access to quality education for Mapuche students and opened the opportunity for other programs such as the *Program de Mejoramiento de la Calidad y Equidad de la Educación* (MECE) and *ENLACES*.²⁰⁸

However, one of the most impactful and influential acts passed by the Aylwin government was the introduction of the Indigenous Law, 19.253, in 1993. This law replaced Allende's previous and only partially implemented law 17.729, which officially recognized the Mapuche cultural traditions. Law 19.253 called for the formation of the National Corporation of Indigenous Development (CONADI) and would allow for increased collaboration between indigenous peoples and non-indigenous peoples in the government to guide in the creation of inclusive and just policymaking of legislation surrounding indigenous culture and development. CONADI was responsible for creating and implementing the IBE program and were also responsible for ensuring the protection of indigenous culture and native language learning initiatives in primary, secondary, tertiary schools.²⁰⁹

To support the growth of IBE programs and the CONADI's educational expansion efforts, several universities across each region in Chile piloted education programs in primary schools. Specifically in the Araucanía region, Temuco's Catholic University was responsible for piloting three different programs in three different primary schools. All surrounding

²⁰⁷ Webb. 63.

²⁰⁸ Webb. 63.

²⁰⁹ Webb. 65.

Mapudungun language learning, the first was to promote Mapudungun language learning as a first language, the second program focused on teaching Mapudungun as a second language, and the third as an initiative to promote interculturality in primary schools.²¹⁰ In addition to this, the CONADI supported eight other primary schools with experience-based learning and curriculum grounded in bilingual and intercultural learning.²¹¹ CONADI also began trial Mapudungun literacy programs in rural schools with high numbers of Mapuche students enrolled within them.²¹²

Despite these emerging efforts to support indigenous populations and students, in 2000, the United Nations' Program for Development reported the Mapuche of Araucanía had the lowest rates of education, health, and income in Chile.²¹³ The situation remained the same in 2003 when the United Nations Children's Fund and the Chilean Ministry of Planning and Cooperation also announced Araucanía as the region in the Chile with the lowest education, health and income rates, with around 48.9% of children in the region living below the poverty line.²¹⁴ Despite Araucanía holding the lowest rates of adequate social and economic structures, varying scholars have noted these low rates of education, health, income span to both rural and urban Mapuche, contesting arguments surrounding rural and urban divides serving as the main contributing factor to these disparities.²¹⁵

However, now that a majority of Mapuches live in urban areas, especially within and surrounding Santiago and Temuco, many urban Mapuches have experienced disproportionate

²¹⁰ Webb. 65.

²¹¹ Webb. 65.

²¹² Webb. 65.

²¹³ Ortiz, *Indigenous Knowledge and Language: Decolonizing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in a Mapuche Intercultural Bilingual Education Program in Chile*. 56.

²¹⁴ Ortiz. 56.

²¹⁵ Ortiz. 57.

experiences regarding social and professional discrimination.²¹⁶ Recent studies surveying urban secondary schools in the Araucanía Region, representing around 50% of the Mapuche population, have displayed increasing levels of verbal, behavioral, attitudinal and institutional discrimination against Mapuche students from other students and teachers.²¹⁷ High levels of these discriminatory categories demonstrated direct and negative effects on individuals self-esteem, security, academic self-recognition, social visibility, and future projections.²¹⁸ All of the these categories and conditions of discrimination placed on Mapuche students and teachers have demonstrated severe implications on future developments and professional, personal progressions.

The Bachelet Administration's Hand in Mapuche Education

The shift of Mapuche populations from rural areas to urban locations can be seen to also contribute to the previous evidence and argument of how Bachelet's SEP program has opened the door to the shift of income-based segregation to residential segregation.²¹⁹ As noted by Bos and Vegas, the SEP program did not necessarily eliminate overall levels of segregation in primary schools due to its introduction and amplification of residential segregation. The movement of Mapuche students into urban primary and secondary schools can provide a definitive example of Bos and Vegas' conclusion, as it shows the widening opportunity for geographical-based discrimination to expand. Not only does this create conditions for segregation and discrimination

²¹⁶ Becerra, Merino, and Mellor, "Ethnic Discrimination against Mapuche Students in Urban High Schools in the Araucanía Region, Chile." 96.

²¹⁷ Becerra, Merino, and Mellor. 98.

²¹⁸ Becerra, Merino, and Mellor. 103.

²¹⁹ Bos and Vegas, "The Consequences of Educational Voucher Reform in Chile." 31.

between students in the same schools, but it also creates acts of segregation and discrimination within the Mapuche community.

Among these forms of residential-based and income-based discrimination, Mapuche students often faced ethnic discrimination in schools. A 2015 study on three urban high schools in Chile identified three main forms of discrimination against Mapuche students including: verbal discrimination, behavioral-attitudinal discrimination, and institutional discrimination.²²⁰ In the study, researchers found not only were Mapuche students experiencing discrimination from non-Mapuche students, but also from non-Mapuche teachers within the urban high schools selected. However, as opposed to the verbal discrimination (i.e. derogatory name calling and teasing) between Mapuche and non-Mapuche students, non-Mapuche teachers deployed acts of interiorizing comments to Mapuche students.²²¹

A 2015 National Survey of Socioeconomic Characterization (CASEN) of indigenous populations in educational settings demonstrated the continuous gap between indigenous and non-indigenous students despite growing education reforms under Bachelet. The CASEN results indicated of the Chilean population of 19 years old and above who reported they did not obtain a high school degree, 46.6% were indigenous despite only making up around 12% of the entire Chilean population.²²² Interestingly, of those who do extend their academic careers into higher education, the 2015 CASEN survey did not show difference levels of educational resource access or academic achievement between indigenous and non-indigenous students in public universities.

²²⁰ Becerra, Merino, and Mellor, “Ethnic Discrimination against Mapuche Students in Urban High Schools in the Araucanía Region, Chile.” 101.

²²¹ Becerra, Merino, and Mellor. 101-102.

²²² Marta Silva et al., “Life Trajectories and Higher Education Access for Chilean Indigenous Students: Mapuche Students in STEM and STEM-Related Fields as Participants in Academic and Indigenous Cultures,” *Journal of Latinos and Education* 22, no. 2 (March 15, 2023): 767–84, <https://doi.org/10.1080/15348431.2020.1819810>; Sandoval, Alvear Portaccio, and Albala, “Life Expectancy by Ethnic Origin in Chile.”

However, a drastic difference was presented between indigenous and non-indigenous student enrollment numbers in private universities.²²³

Now understanding the larger goals of Michelle Bachelet's education reforms and programs, it becomes evident even through socialist-driven education policies, the struggle for equal student access to quality education remains. However, it must be made clear Bachelet's socialist administration was still function under Pinochet's 1980 constitution and LOCE framework, which has been shown to prevent total education reforms under new administrations. Bachelet's programs do help to eliminate income-based segregation and discrimination in schools that were written in foundational education structures during colonial periods and further emphasized in Pinochet's neoliberal regime. Despite this, it also opened the door for varying forms of segregation and discrimination to rise to the surface, such as residential segregation and verbal discrimination onto Mapuche students from educators. Students, especially indigenous students in rural, low-income areas, continually experience disadvantaged access to quality education merely due to the characteristics in which they were likely born into.

Conclusion

Over the course of this case study of the Mapuche population in Chile, it became evident as the independent Chilean state increased expansionist efforts into Mapuche territory in the southern regions of Chile, shaping state interactions with the Mapuche, as well as impacting preexisting structures on the land. In the instance of Mapuche education, as shown in this chapter, the developing state utilized varying forms of reform and power to shape Mapuche education, from implementing missionary schools which reflected German educational

²²³ Silva et al., "Life Trajectories and Higher Education Access for Chilean Indigenous Students." 2.

frameworks to neoliberal marketization efforts which worked to eliminate indigenous, cultural learning from school curriculum and target functioning public schools in the region. The Mapuche population has fought in varying methods, from social advocacy groups to legal groups in the government, to advocate for control over their ancestral lands, including control over their education structures and academic standards.

From these points of evidence and analysis, it becomes clear Chile's education system's foundational elements and reforms, as presented in chapters two and three have impacted the entirety of Chile. However, through this case study it becomes evident how these impacts have disproportionately affected vulnerable groups, such as the Mapuche and other indigenous communities. As shown in the two prior chapters, education was directly impacted through developments towards increasingly capitalistic, marketized efforts, impacting general education standards and structures for all Chilean students. In terms of the Mapuche population, these same developments and reforms impacted indigenous students in ways non-indigenous students did not experience, such as the elimination of cultural learning from schools and the erasure of native languages from school language courses.

Despite many of the inequalities and disparities listed many Mapuche students experience in primary and secondary education, indigenous students have broken barriers in terms of student achievement and enrollment. In terms of post-secondary enrollment numbers, indigenous students have increased their enrollment from 16.6% of indigenous populations completing post-secondary studies in 2006 to 31.3% in 2015.²²⁴ This increase in enrollment and completion of post-secondary studies demonstrates the positive results of student accessibility and achievement

²²⁴ Webb, *Indigenous Identity Formation in Chilean Education : New Racism and Schooling Experiences of Mapuche Youth*.

from the creation of educational programs and initiatives for vulnerable students. However, despite increased achievements and access to education for indigenous students, a gap remains between non-indigenous and indigenous students.

As these complications and injustices against Mapuches in primary and secondary schools have become a larger subject in the academic and social realm, larger international communities have begun to outline frameworks and goals to increase Mapuche and other indigenous representation through public education. Initiatives such as UNESCO's International Decade of Indigenous Languages and their pilot programs in partnership with the Bilingual Intercultural Education Program (PEIB) of the Chilean Ministry of Education demonstrate a larger global focus on intertwining Mapuche and indigenous culture into educational frameworks.²²⁵ The global initiative creates a mandatory subject of "Ancestral Indigenous Peoples' Language and Culture" in all schools where at least 20% of the student population are part of indigenous communities through boarding programs such as "koneltun."²²⁶ However, despite efforts to increase indigenous knowledge and immersion in schools, it does not handle the issue of growing discrimination and harassment against Mapuches and other indigenous students in urban public schools.

²²⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "UNESCO in Chile Implements Pilot Experience of Mapuche Linguistic Immersion," September 14, 2023, <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/unesco-chile-implements-pilot-experience-mapuche-linguistic-immersion>.

²²⁶ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Education remains one of the most crucial components in understanding state development and how these developments have impacted the overall wellbeing of students across the state over a series of time. This thesis has argued neoliberal education reforms, through their creation and preservation over time, have negatively impacted student's access to education. These negative impacts can be examined through increasing variations of discrimination and segregation that is going unaddressed in public, private, and other schools that partake in neoliberal programs, such as voucher systems. This can be also proven through varying instances other scholars have examined, showing although public school students have increased in academic achievement, private school students increase in the same manner which maintains a consistent achievement gap between institutions. Although it is an objectively positive outcome all students are experiencing higher levels of achievement, it is also crucial to address the gap is still existent between public and private schools' students. There must be greater work done to aid in the closure of this gap.

Through newly emerging government reforms, such as more inclusive voucher systems as shown in chapter three through Bachelet's SEP system, lower socioeconomic students have experienced higher levels of academic achievement and success. However, varying private schools' benefit from these programs without actively engaging in them, continuing to drive the gap between public and private school students, as mentioned above. Although it is a positive that student achievement averages are rising among all schools, public and private, the initial problem remains; how to eliminate the achievement gaps between students in different institutions. This is why I argue greater access to education, especially quality education, can help close this gap despite students going to either public or private schools. With this, I conclude the general hypothesis of this thesis is correct; neoliberal education reform has

negatively impacted access to education for students among differing socioeconomic, demographic, and geographical backgrounds.

However, it should also be noted that although neoliberal restructuring efforts themselves may have impacts on education systems, the overarching governments play a deeper role in who these structures will benefit and destroy most. As shown especially in chapter three, Augusto Pinochet's motives benefited from decentralized education structures, targeting specific demographics of students by amplifying certain institutions over others (ex. private primary schools over public primary schools). Especially shown in the case study on the Mapuche, many of Pinochet's efforts specifically targeted indigenous groups, removing them from education institutions and intentionally diminishing opportunities available to them. With this, it is important to consider the atrocities fueled under Pinochet's regime may not be reflected under all neoliberal structures. However, in the terms of this thesis, it can be concluded neoliberal frameworks aided Pinochet's ideological interventions and spreading of violence across Chile.

As Michelle Bachelet came into office under the same 1980 education reforms proposed by Pinochet, she expanded educational opportunities through a similar education voucher system but with certain framework readjustments which aimed to recognize the struggles of vulnerable students. The SEP voucher system did not necessarily eliminate gaps in academic achievement, but it made some progress in closing the gap between public and private school students. However, it is important to not ignore new areas of segregation in schools, declining public school enrollment, and the still existing gap that education voucher systems are not able to fix. This calls for greater efforts, understanding, and advocacy for increasing academic equity and justice for students and teacher who experience hardships within the classroom.

Chapter three also amplifies the dualistic relationship between the role of the state and neoliberal education reforms. According to traditional neoliberal theoretical frameworks, the state/government serves merely to create and maintain ideal economic, social, and political conditions for the market to operate in. However, as noted throughout the entirety of the thesis and especially within chapter three, without the powers of the state and its elevated role within the country, neoliberal agendas and frameworks would not be supported and would ultimately fail. Even after blatant neoliberal supporters are removed from office (ex. Augusto Pinochet), the state will often still work to preserve inherently neoliberal education frameworks, as shown through the *Concertación* administrations and Michelle Bachelet's time in office. This proves that although under neoliberal education reform the illusion that the state is not involved is often promoted, it is untrue due to the fact neoliberal policy frameworks and agendas rely on the state to facilitate and push forward ideas of deregulation, privatization, and marketization of schools.

Across all three body chapters, it became clear how the Chilean education system does not remain separate from economic and political endeavors. Schools, both public and private, are directly impacted and shaped by state initiatives and goals, which often impacts how students receive their education and whether students can continue their academic career or professional careers into the future. Chapter two sets the stage, introducing the foundational elements of the Chilean education system, demonstrating how the government has become entrenched in educational programs for a variety of motives. Chapter three expands upon this but through a very narrowed lens, examining more recent education developments while also emphasizing two of the most impactful and influential time periods in Chile. Chapter four closes with a case study of the Mapuche, which shows the evolution of Mapuche education and student opportunities across the same time frames presented within chapters two and three.

The case study of Mapuche works to encapsulate the disproportionate impacts of neoliberal education reform on vulnerable communities. Through the examination and analysis of Mapuche education structures and varying social advocacy movements throughout history, it becomes clear how crucial education, and its accessibility, are to the Mapuche. However, at the hands of neoliberalism and increasing demand for the resources on Mapuche ancestral lands, their education structures became a largely targeted area. Many Mapuche public schools were targeted during Pinochet's neoliberal restructurings, not only targeting education accessibility, but also targeting the elimination of Mapuche cultural learning structures and curriculum. Through this, the case study chapter becomes a method to better understand the different difficulties and struggles the Mapuche are faced with when pursuing and advocating for education, especially regarding education structures which reflect their cultural history, values, and knowledge. However, it will also be important to note not all Mapuches fought against neoliberal restructuring efforts or education reforms, as many urban Mapuche were disconnected from the narratives and struggles of rural Mapuche.

These tensions between Mapuches who fought state neoliberal reconstructing efforts and Mapuche who remained complicit with neoliberal reforms are crucial to understanding the role of the Mapuche in national indigenous education demands, as well as in the advocacy for access to quality education in largely rural, indigenous lands. Internal tensions within communities can often convolute the social, economic, and political demands of the population. In the case of the Mapuche, it is evident the movement of Mapuches from rural, ancestral lands into urban cities have sparked tensions, demonstrating the role of neoliberal, state reforms on communal foundations and connections. This becomes a new element to consider when examining the study

of social movements stemming from cultural groups, as these demands do not often ring true within the entirety of the population.

However, although this emerging element of internal community tensions is crucial to the examination of modern social movements and Mapuches' relationship with the state, it also resonates directly to colonial education building and colonial interventions on Mapuche ancestral lands. A multitude of Mapuche social movements and social demands emerged during the 18th century colonial period. However, many of these social demands and protests resonate directly with modern social movements, as shown through the analysis of Mapuche education demands following the growing colonial presence in the early 18th century and during the rise of neoliberalism in the 1970s. This explicitly identifies the lingering and lasting characteristics and elements of colonialism within modern education structures, ranging from the continual erasure of Mapuche cultural knowledge, as well as promotion private schools which excluded Mapuche students through the implementation tuition expenses and education fees during both colonial periods and the neoliberal revolution. It becomes vital to understand how colonial ties from past education systems into modern schools have not been severed and continue to thrive under neoliberal initiatives to increase exclusive access to primary and secondary education.

Through the exposure of lasting colonial efforts under new neoliberal structures, this thesis attempts to cover a broad range of history and create a clear, comprehensive image of the education system. However, due to its broad development and analysis of Chile's education system, the research poses some levels of limitations across all the chapters, potentially diminishing the overall, comprehensive image that could be developed if there were more accessible information on specific educational components. One aspect that poses as a limitation is the information available on the IBE programs and their development today. As other scholars

and researchers have noted, IBE programs have provided little information on how these programs have taken effect in modern schools. Many of the programs have provided extensive outlines on their initiatives and use, however there is not a wide range of updated information on whether these programs have supported inclusive, diverse learning in varying communities. This updated information would potentially create a strong idea of how primary and secondary schools have transformed under new policy implementations.

On top of this lack of information available about IBE program, other limitations experienced during the research process were the lack of information on the Bachelet administration, limited census data, and lack of information surrounding COVID-19 recovery efforts in schools. General information surfaced for all these topics, however like the IBE programs, most of the information was not updated. For example, Chile only collected census data until 2017, severely limiting the overall image and understanding of population distributions and annual changes. It would have also been useful to have known COVID-19 data alongside the census data to develop a clear understand of how COVID impacted Chile as a whole, but also how different populations were impacted on a disproportionate level.

COVID-19 recovery efforts and openly available policy information starting in 2020 would have also been beneficial to understanding how education operations and systems have changed due to the pandemic. The education system was impacted globally, especially in-terms of financial impacts as well as changes involving modes of teaching (in-person, online, hybrid). With new economic struggles spreading throughout populations, the research could have shown how these economic struggles had impacted the gaps among access to education on a more economic and financial front. It could have also demonstrated whether students began to switch

to online education and how schools adopted new technologies to accommodate students learning from outside of the school.

Lastly, one of the largest limitations posed was my inability to conduct field work, direct interviews, or access unpublished archives. Due to limited time and funding, I was not able to conduct such extensive research methods during this project. Gratefully, many other scholars and researchers have had the opportunity to conduct research to this extent and I was able to access and analyze these pieces. With other forms of direct research, this thesis could have drawn out a deeper story, uncovered new testimony, and expanded upon archives within the Chilean government. However, this merely sets the thesis up for a larger, future project where I am capable to conduct field work, interviews, and contact government offices over an extended period.

Despite these limitations posing potential research barriers, it opens the opportunity to expand the research into future research projects and studies. This thesis serves as a grounding point for studying not only Chilean education systems, its origins, and its transformations, but for also studying other countries' education systems. A larger comparative study would grant the opportunity to understand the increasingly global influence neoliberalism has implemented and how neoliberal frameworks have prevailed on an international stage. This could provide further insight into how neoliberal education reforms will impact the next generations of the education system and how they will carry into future policy-making processes.

This thesis ultimately aims to draw attention to the disproportionate effects of neoliberal frameworks on education processes and structures on differing classes of students. Further research will help expand upon these effects in Chile and abroad and will also provide a more detailed look into different communities and their experiences under an increasingly neoliberal

education process. I view this thesis as the beginning of a larger conversation, of how all education structures can and must become a place of greater opportunities for students no matter financial needs, geographic location, or other social factors.

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