

Public vs. Private Education in Morocco : Navigating the Challenges, Failures, and Growth of the Sectors

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Abstract: *The educational landscape of Morocco is changing significantly, particularly in regards to integrating languages into both public and private schools. This evolution is primarily driven by political scenarios and legislative initiatives that seek to enhance the quality and accessibility of education. This article focuses on these alterations by taking a look at the distinction between the country's public and private educational institutions, which have significant differences. Typically, private schools have a more extensive curriculum and superior resources, which leads to positive academic results for students. On the other hand, public schools are typically overcrowded, lackluster resources, and inconsistent with regards to teacher education. It's crucial to recognize these differences as they have an effect on the educational opportunities of people. The difference in educational quality between public and private schools can have a long-term effect on society. Students who are enrolled in private schools have a greater opportunity to access higher education, this may augment the existing social status. Conversely, students who attend public schools often have to overcome significant barriers that prevent them from achieving their full potential.*

Keywords: *Dichotomy, Disparities, Education, Inequalities, Private schools, Public schools, Social privileges.*

I. INTRODUCTION

It is important to remember that education remains the driving force behind the economic and social progress of a nation. It is the standard by which we judge the greatness of a country, and the reflection of the society of a given era. It promotes democratic values, political awareness, tolerance and respect for humanity. Furthermore, it acts as a springboard that frees individuals from illiteracy, ignorance and poverty, while preventing their proliferation. It also plays a crucial role in guiding new generations in their evolution in a changing world, which demands a considerable level of knowledge. As stated by Ross and Wu (1996), an individual's ability to manage their quality of life for economic and social development is determined by the level of education they have received. There is no doubt that uneducated children will become illiterate in the future. Education increases employment opportunities and contributes to economic affluence. In agreement with this, Idris et al. (2012), argues that education is widely regarded as the cornerstone of society, driving economic prosperity, social well-being, and political stability. An individual's economic and social standing is closely tied to the education they receive, as it plays a key role in enhancing their ability to manage and improve their quality of life. There is no doubt that uneducated children will become illiterate in the future. Education increases employment opportunities and contributes to economic affluence. To achieve these goals, the school, as a public institution that educates citizens, must become an environment of development and awakening, capable of providing quality and targeted education that arouses a passion for learning in young people, and of inspiring young people with a taste and pleasure for learning. This educational space must offer each citizen the opportunity to lead a socially active and favorable life, contributing to the advancement of the nation by preparing future social development initiatives. Indeed, the progress of society is based on the appreciation of

the educational system, considered the main pillar of all progress. It must be recognized that education is a crucial responsibility and a priority for the nation and its various components, which deserve its full attention. In Morocco, the redundant problems of the education system make the quality of education a major concern. This is really surprising for a country that invests so much in the education sector, despite attempts at reforms, gaps persist, characterized by inefficient spending and inadequate planning. Many challenges continue to negatively affect educational standards within the system, including the disparities between private and public education. This contribution explores the complex landscape of education in Moroccan schools, particularly after the implementation of the Strategic Vision 2015-2030 and Framework Law 51-172, by examining both the public and private education sectors while addressing the challenges and opportunities that arise. Recognizing the educational disparities between these education systems is crucial for various reasons. Education is not only a fundamental right, but also a path to personal and societal progression. However, educational models are often marked by profound differences, which can have long-term societal repercussions. Primarily, understanding these disparities is essential to identify the obstacles to achieving an education that meets international standards of excellence. Furthermore, this article highlights significant developments in language teaching. In order to properly discuss this educational framework, we believe it is necessary to first outline the broad outlines of education within Moroccan society.

II. THE ACADEMIC IRREGULARITIES OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The article begins by highlighting the disparities between private and public education systems, noting the irregularities that often plague public institutions while private schools offer more structured environments. The two education systems do not provide the same opportunities to students. Resources and support are unequal, with private schools often being well-equipped with staff and equipment, while state schools lack basic resources. In addition, tuition fees in private institutions represent an insurmountable obstacle for low-income families, increasing existing inequalities. These discrepancies have outsized implications, affecting not only students' academic performance, but also their opportunities for social agility. Furthermore, the representation of private and public education in Morocco tends to maintain these inequities, with private establishments being perceived as an indicator of success and prestige, while public schools are side-lined. In addition, understanding the disparities between the two sectors in education can help to achieve effective interventions. "A quality public school for all." is the objective of the 2022-2026 Roadmap for education reform presented by Minister Benmoussa. According to *Chakib Benmoussa présente la feuille de route de la réforme du système de l'éducation nationale* (2022), the minister states that it depends on adopting a new implementation approach, introducing change in the classroom and the impact on students, strengthening public confidence over time by providing visibility on the long-term program, regularly sharing interim results and bringing together the strengths of all parties to build vitality (author's translation). The ministerial statement specifies that this revision aims to achieve three crucial strategic objectives to improve the quality of education in Morocco and is committed to promising students an excellent level. It also aims to strengthen the quality of learning, promote personal development and civic-mindedness, and make education compulsory by minimizing the school dropout rate.

III. CHALLENGES AND FAILURES OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

This article addresses the critical inequities and challenges facing public education. Despite the Ministry's efforts to improve access and quality, significant gaps remain, hampering the effectiveness of the system. One of the major problems is the insufficient funds allocated to state institutions, leading to a lack of foundations that translates into a lack of suitable teaching resources, unfavorable learning modalities and limited opportunities for experimentation for students. Various schools struggle to provide basic facilities. Lack of laboratories hampers the practice of scientific research, while deficient libraries limit access to educational materials. Furthermore, the shortage of highly skilled and experienced teachers exacerbates educational disparities, also leading to divergences in learning outcomes between urban and rural areas. Furthermore, the curriculum is often criticized for being outdated and disconnected from the needs of learners. Most feel that it does not provide them with relevant knowledge. It emphasizes memorization and unification of texts, oppressing creativity and analytical design. This conventional method does not encourage them to deal with

problems, but simply to meditate on information. As a result, they may have difficulty adapting their knowledge to concrete situations and may not have the practical skills needed to learn successfully. All these conditions directly affect the capacity of education in these institutions. Add to this that this education meets the needs of families who cannot access private schools. The inability of public schools to provide good quality education, combined with the fact that private schools are expensive but offer enormous opportunities for educational and social success, highlighting the current extent of social inequities. The existence of such an educational system associated with undeniable differences, jeopardizes the future of the school and also constitutes a real obstacle to the economic and social development of the country. To address these challenges, the Ministry of Education has undertaken several initiatives to develop education. One such intervention is “Education for All,” which aims to ensure adequate access to education. Through this program, the government has built new schools and provided transportation services to remote areas, and is also working to update the public school curriculum to make it more consistent and responsive to the needs of students. In this regard, Mousaaid (2022) explained that, according to Benmoussa, the ministry’s project is primarily focused on creating conditions that enable children to complete their compulsory education, develop the necessary skills to reach their full potential, and receive social support from the State and partners involved in an inclusive approach (author's translation). Despite these advances, new challenges continue to emerge, but at present, Morocco is still far from this goal and the gap still persists.

IV. THE GROWING SECTOR OF PRIVATE EDUCATION

Private education has evolved over the past decades, particularly in large Moroccan cities. On the other hand, it is presented as a booming sector, attracting middle-class families looking for better educational opportunities for their children and highlighting the growing demand for quality education. This sector is initially known for its successful academic projects, qualified educators and modern facilities. Indeed, it has well-equipped classrooms that allow teachers to give special attention to each learner. In addition, emphasis is placed on hands-on learning through the introduction of creative methods such as the use of technological tools in the classroom, project-based learning, and others. This promotes an interactive teaching environment in which students can increase their skills and become more involved in their teaching. For these reasons, the Moroccan government supports the development of private education in order to provide full access to education. Therefore, Vision 2030 calls for the deployment of this sector, particularly for purposes not listed, as a collaborator of the Ministry of Education to stimulate the progress of education accessible to all. However, the Ministry does not benefit from a quality reference framework for private education to ensure the absence of exaggerated registration costs and the choice of students by educational institutions. Without such a framework, Morocco will struggle to achieve its vision of private education and mitigate the negative impacts on integrity and equality. In order to enrich the private sector through the investment of public funds advocated by the strategic vision, specific precautions must be taken to avoid deviating from the notion of equality of opportunity. In other words, this will only reproduce and intensify the accumulations already present. As stated by CSEFRS (2015), private education constitutes one of the components of the Moroccan School and a stakeholder in the efforts of global and equitable generalization of education, particularly at the level of compulsory education, diversification and improvement of the quality of the national educational offer and the encouragement of excellence with a view to equity and equality of opportunity. Despite its rapid expansion, private education remains exposed to various clashes such as excessive tuition fees and fierce competition between private schools. Indeed, many families are worried about the future of their children and who have lost faith in state schools, choose these institutions selectively. This has amplified the number of institutions that are continuously deploying and enriching their programs to excite students and distinguish themselves from the rivalry.

V. CONCLUSION

Overall, this contribution aims to provide a deep and nuanced understanding of the current landscape of French-language education in the Moroccan context. It highlights the strategic vision needed to address the various challenges facing public education. Furthermore, it emphasizes the crucial recognition of the significant expansion and impact of private institutions in Morocco, which often set a higher benchmark for academic achievement and accessibility to resources. By examining these dynamics, the article aims to foster a debate on

how to cultivate a more equitable educational environment that takes into account both the public and private sectors. It highlights the need for collaboration between policy makers and education stakeholders to design sustainable solutions that improve the overall quality of education. The ultimate goal is to ensure that all students, regardless of the type of institution they attend, have access to a quality education that prepares them for future opportunities. Indeed, the Moroccan state must rethink its education policies and efforts and strive to develop a clear perception of educational reforms aimed at achieving equity and equality of opportunity. This is unlikely to happen when there is a proven conflict of interest between official claims that education reform is necessary and the practices of those in power, who may not take into account the interests of society. The rise of inequities disunites society and, ultimately, destroys social cohesion. National policy must commit to reunifying a polarized society through genuine renovations in the education sector, one of the most important pillars of development.

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