



**NETWORKS,
COMMUNITIES
AND PARTNERSHIPS
IN EDUCATION:
ACTORS, GOALS AND RESULTS**
**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF THE ESCXEL PROJECT**

Edited by:
Eva Gonçalves
Susana Batista

**NETWORKS,
COMMUNITIES
AND PARTNERSHIPS
IN EDUCATION:
ACTORS, GOALS AND RESULTS**

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF THE ESCXEL PROJECT**

Edited by:
Eva Gonçalves
Susana Batista

NETWORKS, COMMUNITIES
AND PARTNERSHIPS IN EDUCATION:
ACTORS, GOALS AND RESULTS
PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE OF THE ESCXEL PROJECT

Edited by:

Eva Gonçalves
Susana Batista

Scientific Committee:

David Justino
Rui Santos
José Tenedório
Susana Batista
Eva Gonçalves
Rossana Estanqueiro
Luísa Franco

Conference organized by:

ESCXEL Project – School Network for Excellence
CESNOVA – Centre for Sociological Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities of Nova University of Lisbon (FCSH-UNL)

With support from:

National Education Council, Portugal
Foundation for Science and Technology, Portugal
Travel Quality

Design and Cover: Teresa Cardoso Bastos Design

Property: ESCXEL Project - School Network for Excellence

Publisher: ESCXEL Project - School Network for Excellence
Edifício I&D, Avenida de Berna, 26-C, 1069-061 Lisboa
projectoescxel@gmail.com

Support: This publication was supported by the Foundation for Science and Technology, through CESNOVA – FCSH/UNL Strategic Project PEst-OE/SADG/UI4067/2014

Document Type: PDF/Online

ISBN: 978-989-97702-6-3

Lisbon, February 2016

FROM SCHOOL-FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS TO SCHOOL SEGREGATION: A MATTER OF SOCIAL INEQUALITIES

Ana Matias Diogo⁸

Abstract

In the last three or four decades the relationship between school and family, namely the development of school-family partnerships, has been recurrently and consensually identified as fundamental to improve education and to combat difficulties in the schooling process, such as school failure and dropout, which affect disadvantaged social groups more deeply.

One question we might ask is to what extent this type of intervention can counteract the pattern of inequalities that mark the relationship of the different social groups with the school in the context of the new constraints and possibilities that affect the family's relationship with the school.

We will reflect on these issues through a literature review, highlighting empirical results from research on the relationship of families with schools, focusing particularly on the Portuguese case. We shall start by revising the notion of school-family partnership and determining its boundaries, directing our attention to what is happening outside these partnerships and tackling the problem of social segregation in school populations.

Keywords: school-family relationship; partnerships; school segregation; social inequalities

1. Introduction

In the last three or four decades the relationship between school and family has been recurrently and consensually identified as fundamental to improve education and to combat difficulties in the schooling process, such as school failure and dropout, which affect disadvantaged social groups more deeply and are particularly prevalent in the Portuguese case.

The growing appreciation of the role that parents can play in the education system has been spreading worldwide, although we need to consider national characteristics that reflect the profound changes that have been occurring in many spheres, particularly as regards the type of state intervention, with the demand for a new model of regulation of the education system (Barroso, 2005; Magalhães, 2001; Whitty, 1996). In this context, and on the one hand, several measures have been implemented, such as the creation of new structures for school management and administration, territorially based positive discrimination policies, and the increase in public and private educational offers in order to transfer competencies to schools and local actors, but also to the market; and on the other hand, measures targeted at the evaluation of results, which have counterbalanced previous measures, essentially attributing the role of evaluator to the State (Magalhães, 2001).

Significant changes are at stake here since new constraints and options in the way families relate to schools have arisen (van Zanten, 2005). Thus, appeals have been made for parents to play a more active role. However, this participation conveys different meanings and introduces very different and even contradictory logics of school-family relationships (Sá, 2004; Silva, 2003; Whitty, 1996).

Among the calls for parental participation, the development of school-family partnerships has been seen as particularly promising in a wide body of literature that speaks to the empirical support of their impact (Epstein *et al.*, 1997; Hendersen, Karen, Jonhson & Davies, 2013). Generically these partnerships aim to bring together family and school (or community and school) and are mostly intended to be implemented in local contexts where the weight of social groups with low income and culturally unfamiliar with the school is higher.

One question we might ask is to what extent can this type of intervention counteract the pattern of inequalities that mark the relationship of the different social groups with the school in the context of the new constraints and possibilities that affect the family's relationship with the school?

⁸ University of the Azores, Portugal. Email: adiogo@uac.pt

We will reflect on these issues by conducting a literature review, highlighting empirical results from research on the relationship of families with schools, focusing particularly on the Portuguese reality. We shall start by revising the notion of school-family partnership and determining its boundaries, directing our attention to what is happening outside these partnerships and tackling the problem of social segregation within school populations.

2. School-Family Partnerships: Between Promises and Limitations

The call for the development of partnerships in the field of education emerged when new populations - unfamiliar with the school culture - entered the school environment and triggered the need to find answers to the problems posed by these new groups (Zay, 1996).

The definition of partnership conveys the kindness of the intention contained therein to the extent that it is anchored in the idea of the triumph of consensus over conflict. We remind, with Zay (1996), that the term derives from the Latin *pars, partition* that means division, separation, i.e., the very concept of partnership contains in itself the idea of an opposition. The notion of partnership will precisely enforce itself, as noted by Zay, "in a context that is both of crisis and social struggles, in which social partners have to negotiate (i.e., these partners initially are not in agreement but cannot avoid each other), and in which an ideology that has confidence in a presumed consensus that can override the conflict shall prevail." (Zay, 1996, p. 156).

However, many limitations have been identified in the development of these partnerships (cf. Sá, 2004; Silva, 2003). Several authors have drawn attention to the asymmetry of power and to the parents' model implicit in these partnerships.

In the Portuguese language, partnership is translated either by "parceria" or by "partenariado", but as observed by Silva (2003, p. 89): "Whatever the term used, the idea to be noted is that it covers basically a contractual relationship (whatever the concrete form of this contract) between two or more groups, in which all seek advantages, even if the relationship is asymmetrical in terms of power." With this definition in mind, when referring to the issue of asymmetry of power, the author also points out one of the major limitations of these partnerships. In this sense, Silva (2003) speaks of the school-mirror effect in school-family partnerships, because "it's the school that takes the first step, it's the school that presents ('imposes') purposes, it's the school that gives the means, it's the school that stays, in the end, equal to itself" (Silva, 2003, p. 89). Under an "ideological cover of egalitarianism", these initiatives reveal a form of school-centrism (Silva, 2003, p. 89).

Similarly, Sá (2004) draws attention to the pseudo-egalitarian rhetoric of partnerships, in which the "difference of perspectives and power that involves the 'partners'" (p. 149) is hidden and underlines a model of the "ideal/responsible parent" as a collaborator subordinated to the rules set by the school, particularly penalizing disadvantaged social groups.

Likewise, Davies (2005) points out that a concept of parental participation limited to the individual involvement of parents has prevailed and recognizes the failure of the implementation of school-family-community partnerships, even in a country such as the US. As a supporter of such initiatives, Davies (2005, p. 32) confesses that he is uncomfortable with the few progresses that have been made, given the efforts undertaken. The author asks: "why after years of discussion, books, conferences, state and federal laws to encourage parental participation, it still exists in so little amount in American schools?" And he compares these little progress with the large differences between the school experience of middle-class children and that of children of the underprivileged classes.

Thus, Davies recognizes that the school problem is broader, not confined to the participation of parents, because what is at stake here is the distribution of social opportunities that affect lower class young people and their families as regards their access to housing, health, employment, education and multiple key services for a dignified life, which in turn have a negative impact on their social and academic success.

Beyond the criticism directed at the nature and practice of partnerships mentioned above, and considering the relevance of situating the problem of school-family relationships in the context of inequality of social opportunities, we want to highlight particularly that the incentives for the development of these partnerships targeted at socially disadvantaged contexts can be seen as a relatively endogenous effort, i.e., circumscribed to these contexts and groups.

We do not mean that every effort carried out in the scope of school-family partnerships in a perspective of positive discrimination of the disadvantaged populations is vain and without effects. Also, we do not intend to assume that the only valid efforts are those made outside the school via the implementation of policies that can counteract social inequality themselves.

On the contrary, we intend to emphasize the limitations of these partnerships aimed at socially disadvantaged contexts if we ignore that such groups and contexts are part of a more complex network of relationships, i.e., it is important to take into account the overall distribution of educational opportunities within the different social groups and how they affect each other. We should also consider that this issue might become even more prominent given the more recent changes that have been affecting education systems in general.

The analysis of van Zanten (2005) points in this direction, highlighting that parents, seen in the sociology of education as the main agents accountable for the reproduction of social inequalities at school, currently have new conditions and opportunities to develop their action, as a result of the most recent economic, cultural and educational changes. Recalling that education is a positional good, as Collins (1997), van Zanten (2005) underlines that these new constraints and opportunities for parental action translate, more than ever, into a game in which “what a group wins, the other loses” (van Zanten, 2005, p. 156).

3. Outside Partnerships: The Social Segregation of School Populations

In the context of the changes that call for a stronger parental participation in the education systems, simultaneously there have been increasing trends towards giving more leeway to parents regarding the choice of school and encouraging competition between schools. In fact, among the criticisms made to the school-family partnerships, we find precisely the accusation that these incentives have coincided with the pressure for schools to compete with each other within a market logic (Sá, 2004) that began to be observed in countries such as the UK and the US with the advancement of “neoliberal policies” since the 1980s (Barroso, 2005).

The possibility to choose the school has become widespread, with its introduction in many countries or its reinforcement where it already existed. On the other hand, in countries where the choice of school is not permitted by law, private education has allowed parents important options (van Zanten, 2005).

In Portugal, the Government defined as one of its strategic objectives in education the progressive development of school choice by parents (Presidência do Conselho de Ministros, 2011), approving legislation that enables parents to have some flexibility in the choice of public schools (Circular No. 5048-B/2013) and showing intentions to extend the free choice to private education (Carriço, 2013).

In fact, in 2009, Afonso noted that in Portugal, despite the “mitigated educational neoliberalism” that has prevailed in recent decades, as well as the economic and financial crisis that began in 2008, which produced a cutback on the market and middle class consumption capacity, “the presence of market ideology (and its materialization) is still easily demonstrated in the different spheres of social life” including competition between schools (Afonso, 2009, p. 22).

In any case, even when free choice is not allowed, families with more resources still find a way to employ strategies that manage to bypass the regulations that would place their children in the school of their residential area (Ballion, 1986; Duru-Bellat & Mingat, 1997; Duru-Bellat, Jarousse & Solaux, 1997; Payet, 1997; Meuret, Broccholichi, & Duru-Bellat, 2001). Besides a number of middle class families (the wealthiest ones) who opt for private education, another set (the most culturally aware) actively looks for a good school within the public system (Heran, 1996). Parents seek thereby to make advantageous choices when it comes to enrolling their children in school.

Indeed, there is a significant body of research in the field of sociology, especially of Anglo-Saxon origin, showing that the different social groups do not exercise the choice of school in the same way (Ball, Davies, Miriam & Reay, 2002; Ballion, 1986; Bowe, Gewirtz & Ball, 1994; Coleman, Schiller & Schneider, 1993; Gewirtz, Ball, & Bowe, 1995; Meuret *et al.*, 2001; Nogueira, 1998; Rambla, 1998; Vieira, 2003). According to these studies the employment of choice strategies is more characteristic of the higher classes to the extent that they seek a “good school” (looking at indicators of academic quality and school environment), while lower class choices rely mainly on physical proximity. Moreover, Burgess, Briggs, McConnel, and Slater’s (2006) econometric

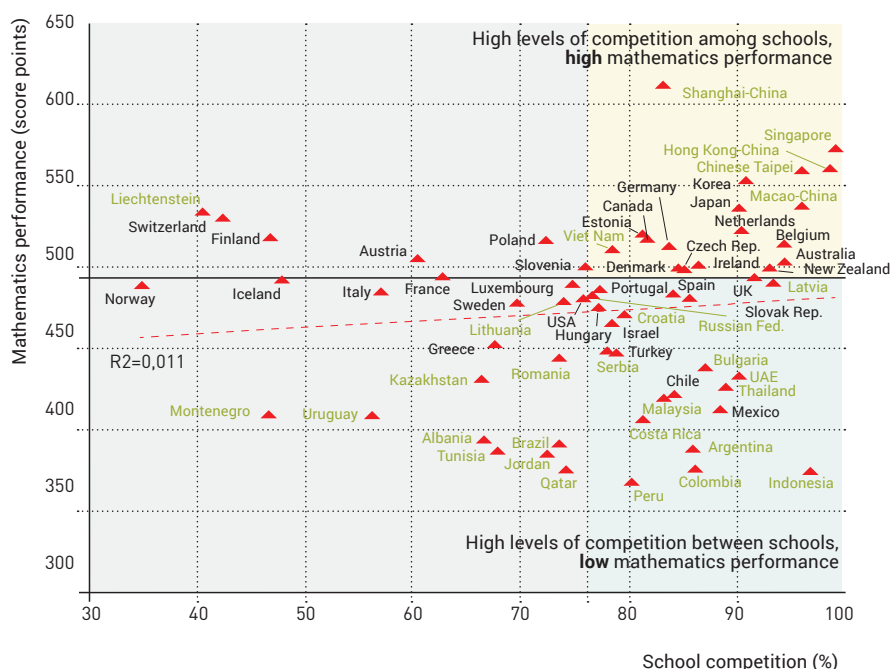
study on school choice in England analyses students who attended their local schools, and shows that, even controlling for location, poor students are less likely to go to good schools than non-poor students. The disadvantage of the lower classes results not only from their inactivity (deciding not to choose) and the lack of economic, cultural, and social resources that would enable them to make these choices, but also from the effect of the strategies developed by the higher classes which avoid the disadvantaged groups in their residential and school choices (van Zanten, 2005).

Associated with this unequal choice of school, research has also revealed growing social segregation between schools (Barthon & Oberti, 2000; Gewirtz *et al.*, 1995; Merle, 2014; Meuret *et al.*, 2001; van Zanten, 2005; 2013). The greater the parents' opportunity to choose the school their children will attend, the more schools tend to distinguish themselves, not only by their social composition, but also as unequal contexts of learning and socialization (Merle, 2014). The choice of school favours the coexistence of contexts that provide their students with important variations in their results, in their schooling experience, and in their aspirations, contributing to social reproduction (Duru-Bellat, 2007; Merle, 2014). Schools with a disadvantaged social composition tend towards laxer discipline, lower intensity of school work, lower level of requirements from the teachers, lower teachers' expectations for the students, and more teachers with less experience - all this combined results in worse conditions to develop an effective work (Duru-Bellat, 2007).

Thus, opportunities for choice and competition between schools, which have been seen by their supporters as profitable to the enhancement of education systems, have not actually helped to improve the learning environment and to make schools more effective. According to the PISA results for 2012 (OECD, 2014), taking into consideration OECD education systems, those with more competition between schools do not show better results (Figure 1).

Figure 1. School competition and mathematics performance

Source: OECD, 2014 (PISA 2012).



Besides the inexistence of improvement in the results, competition between schools can aggravate social inequalities. Countries with more competition between schools tend to have less social inclusion, i.e., there is greater segregation of the student population (Figure 2), which derives from the fact that parents from different social groups will make choices differently (OECD, 2014). Furthermore, education systems with greater competition between schools show a greater impact of the socioeconomic status of students in their PISA results (OECD, 2013) (Figure 3).

Figure 2. School competition and social inclusion

Source: OECD, 2013 (PISA 2012).

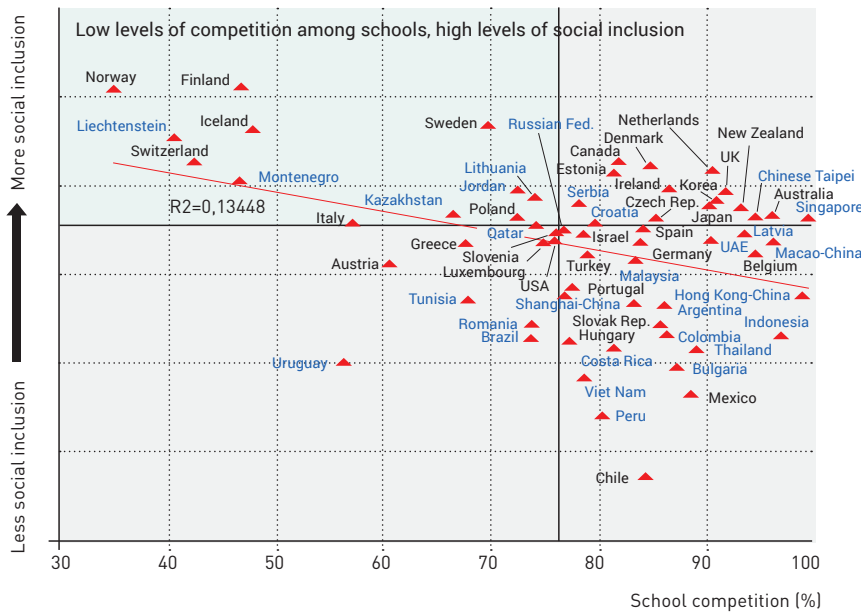
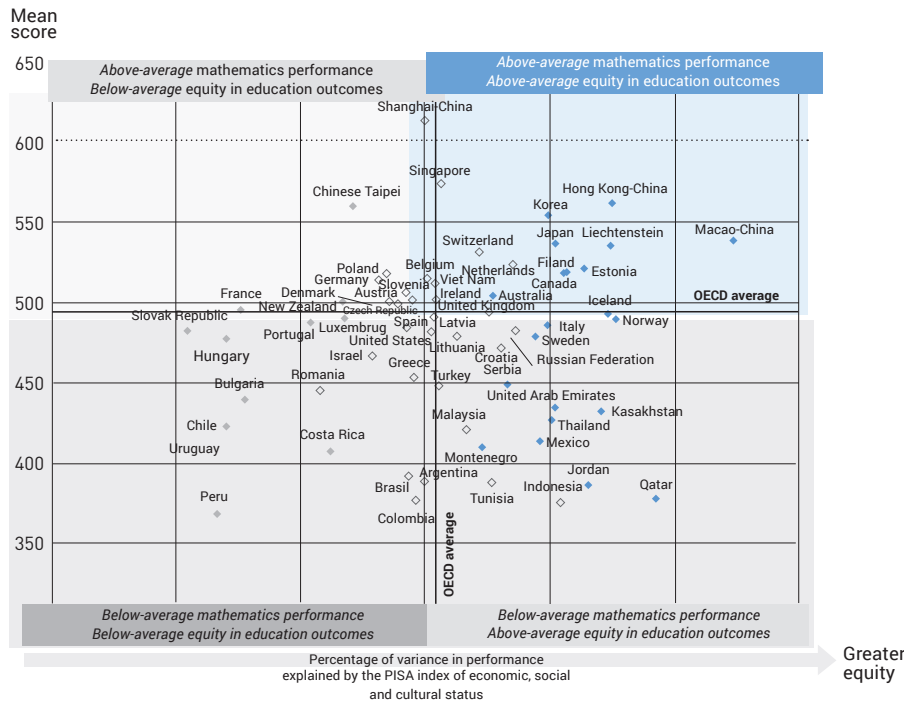


Figure 3 – Student performance and equity

Source: OECD, 2013 (PISA 2012).



- ◆ Strength of the relationship between performance and socio-economic status is above the OECD average
- ◇ Strength of the relationship between performance and socio-economic status is not statistically significantly different from the OECD average
- ◆ Strength of the relationship between performance and socio-economic status is below the OECD average

With regard to Portugal, as we can see in Figure 1, the country is located on the right lower quadrant, i.e., among those with the lowest results in mathematics and those with the highest levels of competition between

institutions (although it is close to OECD average on both counts). And this in turn is associated with high social segregation between schools (Figure 2). Portugal is also among OECD countries with the lowest levels of equity, i.e., where the socio-economic status of students weighs more in their results (Figure 3).

In a research we developed in the Azores (Diogo, 2013), a region with unfavourable schooling indicators in the Portuguese context, we found that the school attended - and namely its social composition - has an impact on the expectations of pupils of getting a higher education degree. The study was based on a survey carried out with 744 pupils at the end of basic education (9th grade of schooling) from eight public schools selected in the region. As can be seen in model 2 (Table 1), belonging to a school with a favoured social composition increases the odds of having expectations of furthering their studies in higher education if everything else is held constant. This means that low social status pupils that attend schools with a more favoured social composition tend to have higher educational expectations. In contrast, pupils with the same academic and social profile, when placed in schools with a disadvantaged social composition, will have lower educational expectations. Although these results do not allow us to draw conclusions on the effect of the degree of segregation in schools, they suggest that schools provide - through their social composition - contexts that stimulate unequally their students' schooling experience, which is in line with research evidence that has been gathered in the past few decades (Coleman, 1996, cit. in Cherkaoui, 1979; Duru-Bellat & Mingat, 1988; Thrupp, 1999). Therefore, concentrating students from working classes in schools with large numbers of classmates from the same social background implies that the school itself will reinforce the limitations of this social group.

Table 1. Expectations of obtaining a higher education degree, depending on individual variables⁹

| N=680 | Model 1 | | Model 2 | |
|--|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
| | β | Wald | β | Wald |
| Age | -0.602*** | 28.349 | -0.607*** | 28.387 |
| Portuguese Language classification | 0.492** | 7.910 | 0.485** | 7.292 |
| Mathematics classification | 0.642*** | 19.589 | 0.713*** | 22.758 |
| Gender | -0.929*** | 19.383 | -0.935*** | 18.729 |
| Parents' education | 0.324** | 11.295 | | n.s. |
| Working class (reference) | - | - | - | - |
| Upper-middle class | 1.274*** | 12.493 | 1.107** | 8.993 |
| Middle class | 0.477* | 4.159 | | n.s. |
| Favoured social composition of school | | | 0.033*** | 9.938 |
| Nagelkerke R ² (% Variance) | 47.8 | | 50.4 | |

* p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001

4. In conclusion

The data presented suggest that the solution for schooling problems - especially those that affect the most disadvantaged social groups - is not favoured by territorial segregation achieved through the concentration of students in homogeneous school contexts. Indeed, the evidence points to the negative effects of social segregation in school populations. Given the knowledge available, as Duru-Bellat (2007) notes, we seem to have two alternatives in terms of educational policies: either working on the effects of segregation, or seeking to avoid these effects altogether by reducing segregation.

⁹ See Appendix 1 for a description and frequencies of the variables used in the regression models and for a presentation of the social composition of schools.

When trying to solve the schooling problems experienced by disadvantaged groups with the development of initiatives such as school-family partnerships focused only on these populations - territorially concentrated - we are choosing the first alternative. This could mean that the problem is restricted to these populations, ignoring the societal contexts that have led to its creation in the first place particularly the relationship between different social groups. School-family partnerships will have a limited scope, if everything else remains unchanged, i.e., if we ignore the relationship between different social groups, mainly the strategies that each group employs as regards school contexts and other social groups. This implies considering the second alternative regarding educational policies, i.e., seeking to reduce social segregation in school contexts, achieving greater homogeneity in the quality of educational supply.

We do not mean that every effort in the scope of school-family partnerships is useless and that this kind of effort cannot be linked to the second alternative. As suggested also by Duru-Bellat (2007), positive discrimination measures in disadvantaged contexts are important because besides allowing students and families to compensate for their social disadvantage, these measures can promote the equalization of schools, improving the learning environment and the attractiveness of some schools, i.e., seeking to act on the social segregation of schools.

References

- Afonso, A. J. (2009). Nem tudo o que conta em educação é mensurável ou comparável: Crítica à accountability baseada em testes estandardizados e rankings escolares. *Revista Lusófona de Educação*, 3, 13-29.
- Ball, S. J., Davies, J., Miriam, D., & Reay, D. (2002). «Classification» and «Judgment»: social class and the «cognitive structures» of choice of higher education. *British Journal of Education*, 23(1), 51-72.
- Ballion, R. (1986). Les familles et le choix du collège. *L'Orientation scolaire et professionnelle*, 15(3), 183-202.
- Barroso, J. (2005). O Estado, a educação e a regulação das políticas públicas. *Educação & Sociedade*, 26(92), 725-751.
- Barthon, C., & Oberti, M. (2000). Ségrégation spatiale, évitement et choix des établissements. In A. H. Van Zanten (Ed.), *L'école. L'État des Savoirs* (pp. 302-310). Paris: Éditions la Découverte.
- Bowe, R., Gewirtz, S., & Ball, S. J. (1994). Captured by the discourse? Issues and concerns in researching «parental choice». *British Journal of Education*, 15(1), 63-78.
- Burgess, S., Briggs, A., McConnell, B. & Slater, H. (2006). School choice in England: background facts. *The centre for market and public organisation Working Papers*, 06/159. Bristol: University of Bristol, Department of Economics. Retrieved July, 20, 2015, from <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/cmpo/migrated/documents/wp159.pdf>
- Carriço, M. (2013, September 5). Governo vai aumentar liberdade de escolha na educação a partir de 2014/2015. *Jornal de Negócios*. Retrieved November, 20, 2014, from http://www.jornaldenegocios.pt/economia/educacao/detalhe/governo_vai_aumentar_liberdade_de_escolha_na_educacao_a_partir_de_20142015.html
- Cherkaoui, M. (1979). *Les paradoxes de la réussite scolaire: Sociologie comparée des systèmes d'enseignement*. Paris: PUF.
- Coleman, J. S., Schiller, K., & Schneider, B. (1993). Parent choice and inequality. In B. Schneider & J. S. Coleman, *Parents, their children, and schools* (pp. 147-182). Boulder: Westview Press.
- Collins, R. (1997). Niveaux d'études et stratification sociale: théorie fonctionnaliste et théorie du conflit. In J.-C. Forquin (Ed.), *Les sociologues de l'éducation américains et britanniques* (pp. 111-140). Paris: De Boeck.
- Davies, D. (2005). Além da parceria : A necessidade de activismo cívico independente para promover a reforma da escola urbana nos Estados Unidos da América. In S. Stoer & P. Silva (Eds.), *Escola-família: Uma relação em processo de reconfiguração* (pp. 29-48). Porto: Porto Editora.
- Despacho n.º 5048-B/2013, de 12 de abril, *Diário da República*, 2.ª série, n.º 72, pp. 12320(4)-12320(8).
- Diogo, A. M. (2013). Investimento das famílias em escolarização e contextos escolares. In A. M. Diogo & F. Diogo (Eds.), *Desigualdades no sistema educativo: Percursos, transições e contextos* (pp. 89-108). Lisbon: Mundos Sociais.
- Duru-Bellat, M. (2007). La ségrégation sociale, vecteur d'inégalités scolaires? *Observatoire des inégalités, March 1*. Retrieved November 21, 2014, from <http://www.inegalites.fr/spip.php?article651>.
- Duru-Bellat, M., & Mingat, A. (1988). Le déroulement de la scolarité au collège: le contexte 'faits des différences'... *Revue Française de Sociologie*, 19, 649-666.
- Duru-Bellat, M., & Mingat, A. (1997). La constitution de classes de niveau dans les collèges; les effets pervers d'une pratique à visée égalisatrice. *Revue Française de Sociologie*, 38, 759-789.
- Duru-Bellat, M., Jarousse, J.-P., & Solaux, G. (1997). S'orienter et élaborer un projet au sein d'un système hiérarchisé, une injonction paradoxale? L'exemple du choix de la série et de l'enseignement de spécialité en classe terminale. *L'Orientation Scolaire et Professionnelle*, 26(4), 459-482.
- Epstein, J., Sanders, M. G., Simon, B. S., Salinas, K. C., Jansorn, N. R., & Voorhis, F. L. (1997). *School, family and partnerships. Your handbook for action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Gewirtz, S., Ball, S., & Bowe, R. (1995). *Markets, choice and equity in education*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Hendersen, A. T., Karen, L. M., Jonhson, V. R., & Davies, D. (2013). *A escola também se vive cá fora*. Lisbon: Plátano Editora.
- Héran, F. (1996). École publique, école privée: qui peut choisir? *Économie et Statistique*, 293, 17-39.

- Magalhães, A. (2001). A transformação do modo de regulação estatal e os sistemas de ensino: a autonomia como instrumento. *Revista Crítica de Ciências Sociais*, 59, 125-143.
- Merle, P. (2014). L'affectation des élèves dans les établissements scolaires. *La Vie des Idées*, October 21. Retrieved October 22, 2014, from <http://www.laviedesidees.fr/L-affectation-des-eleves-dans-les.html>
- Meuret, D., Broccholichi, S., & Duru-Bellat, M. (2001). Autonomie et choix des établissements scolaires. *Les Cahiers de l'IREDU*, 62, 1-304.
- Nogueira, M. A. (1998). A escolha do estabelecimento de ensino pelas famílias: A ação discreta da riqueza cultural. *Revista Brasileira de Educação*, 7, 42-56.
- OECD (2013). PISA 2012 results: What makes schools successful? Resources, policies and practices (Volume IV). PISA, OECD Publishing. Retrieved November 3, 2014, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264201156-en>.
- OECD (2014, August). When is competition between schools beneficial? *PISA in Focus*, 42, 1-4. Retrieved October 31, 2014, from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/5jz0v4zzbcmv-en>.
- Payet, J.-P. (1997). *Collèges de banlieue: Ethnographie d'un monde scolaire*. Paris: Armand Colin.
- Presidência do Conselho de Ministros (2011). Programa do XIX Governo Constitucional. Retrieved November 20, 2014, from http://www.portugal.gov.pt/media/130538/programa_gc19.pdf
- Rambla, X. (1998). Social relations and school choice in Spain. *Mediterranean Journal of Educational Studies*, 3(2), 1-17.
- Sá, V. (2004). *A participação dos pais na escola pública portuguesa: Uma abordagem sociológica e organizacional*. Braga: Universidade do Minho.
- Silva, P. (2003). *Escola-família, uma relação armadilhada: Interculturalidade e relações de poder*. Porto: Afrontamento.
- Thrupp, M. (1999). *Schools making a difference: Let's be realistic!* Buckingham: Open University Press.
- van Zanten, A. (2005). New modes of reproducing social inequality in education: The changing role of parents, teachers, schools and educational policies. *European Educational Research Journal*, 4(3), 155-169.
- van Zanten, A. (2013). Efeitos da concorrência sobre a atividade dos estabelecimentos escolares. In N. Kravczyk (Ed.), *Sociologia do ensino médio: Crítica ao economicismo na política educacional* (pp. 93-125). São Paulo: Cortez.
- Vieira, M. M. (2003). Famílias e escola: Processos de construção da democratização escolar. In M. M. Vieira; J. Pintassilgo, & B. P. Melo (Eds.), *Democratização escolar: Intenções e apropriações* (pp. 75-103). Lisbon: Centro de Investigação em Educação da Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Lisboa.
- Whitty, G. (1996). Autonomia da escola e a escolha parental: Direitos do consumidor versus direitos do cidadão na política educativa contemporânea. *Educação, Sociedade & Culturas*, 6, 115-139.
- Zay, D. (1996). A escola em parceria: conceito e dispositivo. In J. Barroso (Ed.), *O Estudo da Escola* (pp. 151-165). Porto: Porto Editora.

Appendix 1

Table 2. Description of variables used in the logistic regression models

| Variable | Description |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Age | Between 14 and 20 years. |
| Gender | Dummy variable that opposes boy (1) to girl (0). |
| Portuguese Language classification | Level achieved at the end of the second period (ranging from 1 to 5). |
| Mathematics classification | Level achieved at the end of the second period (ranging from 1 to 5). |
| Parents' education | The highest level of education between the two parents, ranging from 0 (no schooling) to 5 (higher education). |
| Social class | Categorical variable with three categories, upper-middle class (including entrepreneurs, executives, managers, intellectual and scientific professionals, and intermediate technical professionals); middle class (including small business owners, clerical staff, and service employees), and working class (including manual labourers, independent workers of the primary sector, primary sector workers, unskilled employees in the service sector), decomposed into two dummy variables, in which the reference variable (0) is the working class. |
| Favoured social composition of school | Percentage of pupils from upper-middle class per school, according to the data collected in the first phase of this research, through the inventory of the composition of all 9th grade classes in the Azores. Ranges between 2% and 49%. |

Table 3. Variables used in the logistic regression models: percentages

| Variable | Frequencies |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Age | 14 years (31%); 15 (40%); 16 (18%); ≥17 (11%) |
| Gender | boys (43%); girls (57%) |
| Portuguese Language classification | Level 1 (0%); 2 (21%); 3 (54%); 4 (19%); 5 (5%) |
| Mathematics classification | Level 1 (0%); 2 (27%); 3 (45%); 4 (21%); 5 (7%) |
| Parents' education | No education (3%); 4th grade (22%); 6th (28%); 9th (15%); upper secondary education (18%); higher education (14%) |
| Social class | Working class (48%); middle class (30%); upper-middle class (22%) |

Table 4. Social composition of schools

| | Percentage of pupils from upper-middle class (favoured social composition of the school) | Percentage of pupils from working class |
|----------|--|---|
| School 1 | 2% | 74% |
| School 2 | 7% | 56% |
| School 3 | 8% | 66% |
| School 4 | 10% | 66% |
| School 5 | 11% | 46% |
| School 6 | 18% | 50% |
| School 7 | 33% | 48% |
| School 8 | 49% | 17% |