

## *THE SCHOOL AS MEDIUM: BETWEEN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMERCIALISM*

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### **Abstract:**

Despite flourishing in-school marketing, there has been little coverage of this hybrid phenomenon in national scientific studies. Hence the importance of this research, which takes a macro-meso-micro sociological approach to analyze this paradigm in schools seen as a new medium. The guideline questions, rooted in a biased consumer society in the process of cultural reassignment are as follows: which social win-win relationship practices or legitimacy/visibility ones transacted by the state, the market and civil society are evident in their interaction with the school system?; how do in-school marketing activities square with public-private organisations' corporate responsibility?; are the ethical parameters of legislated and self-regulated best practice principles synonymous with consensus? Another purpose was also testing a Working with Schools Best Practice Principles as a self-regulatory tool aimed at school decision-makers to analyze how schools and their partners can build an ethical and responsible relationship.

These aims were approached by recourse to representatives of the management committees of '2.º and 3.º ciclo' (10-15 year olds) school groups via questionnaires, and public-private stakeholders via semi-structured interviews.

Our results lead us to negate hypotheses which speak loudly of 'school marketisation' and the prevalence of responsible cultural archetypes based on Best Practice Principles. They also lead us to support the hypothesis describing ideologically antagonistic positions and to conclude overall that the reproduction and conception of these cultural-marketing practices symbolically repositions the school through a 'liquid modernity.'

**Key Words:** in-school marketing, school commercialism, corporate responsibility, Working with Schools