

Contribution Details

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EERA Network: 22. Research in Higher Education

Alternative EERA Network: 10. Teacher Education Research

Ecologies of Learning, Training and Community Participation in Higher Education. Articulating Academic Knowledge and Experiences

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Proposal Information

We present part of the results of the Innovation Project "Ecologies of learning, training and community participation in higher education. Articulating academic knowledge and experiences" (PIE-193, 2019-2021) that we are developing at the Faculty of Education Sciences of the University of Malaga. The project investigates a training model based on co-involvement and commitment to educational and social projects that are sustained in the democratic school, social inclusion, coexistence and community.

We understand that higher education does not lie in the transmission from experts but in the professional awareness-raising based on reflection-on-action (Korthagen, 2010; Schön, 1998; Zeichner & Liston, 1996) or research in practice (Stringer, 2007; Stenhouse, 1987; Leite, Marquez & Rivas, 2018). In this sense, we start from the sequence research-action-participation to take a step further by enabling a way to link participants from different contexts, (academic and community), in pursuit of the transformation of education and society from dialogical relations in a double direction: the construction of shared knowledge and the horizontal relationship between university-public school with a common agency as well as advancing in teacher education from dialogic learning and social co-involvement (Rivas, Leite & Cortés, 2015; Rivas, Cortes & Marquez, 2018).

The collective work in the implication in the transformation of public schools linked to our teaching in the university, allows us, jointly, to establish firm foundations from two different cultures, the academic and the popular. This makes us go beyond the borders of the university institution to respond, together with other professionals, to the particular needs of the population, to advance in decision-making and in participation in common projects. As well as creating new areas of development for university teachers in relation to professionals in the social and educational field regarding their field of knowledge (Miller, 2003; Leite, Márquez & Rivas, 2018). Therefore, university learning in collaboration with social and educational democratic projects constitutes a rich field for critical training, analysis and thinking, forming part of the construction of the public.

Specifically, in the project that we present, we set two objectives: on the one hand, to investigate, based on experience narratives, how students who collaborate in projects of socio-educational transformation, learn. On the other, to develop spaces for practical communities for horizontal training between university, non-university and teachers in training, which allow a permanent dialogue to contribute to the improvement of public education.

In this way, we understand that collaborative learning and commitment from teacher training promotes:

1) Place experience as the center of learning in teacher training. Multiple and real learning contexts produce greater interactivity and relationship with diversity, as well as an exchange and dialogue of theoretical, practical and popular knowledge. The experience is situated as the axis of reflection in the training process and in the socio-affective dimension of professional learning. In this way they learn to cope and reflect on action in real contexts and emerging situations, taking part in challenging educational situations to ask ourselves questions, find resources and create materials. It allows you to share deeper thought by exchanging arguments and bringing them up for debate.

2) Territorial engagement and commitment to the public. We understand collaboration in school projects, or other public organizations, as a key piece to advance in the curriculum and in the teacher education. We share with Santos (2019) his perspective on the importance of university extension in higher education, highlighting the need to strengthen the relationship and link the faculties of education with the public school from the perspective of each academic subject.

Methodology or Methods/ Research Instruments or Sources Used

The approach that we propose is based on a narrative methodology (Cochran Smith & Little, 1999; Clandinin, Pushor & Orr, 2007; Corona & Kaltmeier, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2015), in a collaborative framework with research contributions from participatory action research (Rivas, 2009; Rivas, Leite, Cortes, 2015; Márquez, Leite & Rivas, 2017). From the analysis of narratives of experiences about volunteering, collaborative learning and participatory action-research, the knowledge included in them is re-constructed and understood, as a setting for the building of subjectivities and socio-political practices in the fields of education in higher education, public educational contexts and collaborative transformation processes.

Five Spanish universities, two Argentine universities and one Brazilian university, involved in teacher education, participate in the project. From the subjects taught in the undergraduate degrees, the following methodological strategies are investigated:

- (1) Building of links and a joint project between the teaching in the university and the educational and social transformation projects in the territory.
- (2) Sharing the process of interpretation and construction of meaning from collaborative work and learning, in dialogue with the different work contexts by interuniversity analysis groups.
- (3) Elaboration of the theories themselves as a process of individual and shared appropriation, with an essentially dynamic sense, from the dialogue between the participants from different universities in relation to praxis

Los grupos de trabajo interuniversitarios analizan las experiencias de estudiantes y colaborativas en los siguientes contextos:

Interuniversity work groups analyze student collaborative experiences in the following contexts:

- Practical communities of learning and social commitment, made up of groups of volunteer students who develop the subjects in multicultural public schools forming Learning Communities or engaged in transformative projects (Analysis of learning narratives linked to the different subjects involved).
- Analysis of disruptive trajectories in higher education. Trajectories of teacher education students belonging to historically excluded ethnic and cultural minorities such as: Gypsy Community, African immigrants, Quilombolas, etc., are analyzed (Analysis of life narratives, focus groups with university participants belonging to minorities).
- Narratives of interprofessional collaboration in processes of change with primary and secondary schools, management teams, NGOs, etc. (Analysis of collaborative narratives, focus groups).

Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings

The sense of transformation of the project we present goes far beyond decontextualized innovation practices. On the contrary, it is aimed to integrate training, reflection and educational and social transformation in the same space of thought and action; that is, thinking and doing together. This leads us to analyze the relationship between changes and the understanding of the world and how this is intertwined with educational actions in a shared ethical-political dimension in different contexts.

The progress of the project in the 2019-2020 academic year is orienting the analyses according to the different working groups towards the following aspects:

The training and collaboration experiences are orienting the analysis on the importance of living significant experiences in the training context by expanding personal action, educational and social debate in real contexts. We pay special attention to how this experience is internalized and the way in which each student accounts this experience and how they build the links between them, their school biography and the content of the subject (or subjects) involved in this project. It is also interesting to observe how the sense of belonging to the educational community emerges and its influence on their self-concept and expectations as teachers in the future.

The disruptive or counter-hegemonic trajectories of university students allow us the educational, social, political and cultural analysis regarding to personal identities and processes. Activism, academia, professional identity and social transformation from shared personal stories are articulated.

Collaborative and interprofessional processes of change put us in a horizontal dialogue between university, schools and social organizations, building common collaborative links in search of the improvement of the common. The collaboration accounts are evidencing the exchange of knowledge, dialogue processes and the construction of solidarity educational communities in network and focused on personal and institutional ethical-political relations.

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Session Details

22 SES 08 C: Paper Session

Time:

Tuesday, 07/Sept/2021:

4:00pm - 5:30pm

Session Chair: **Andrea Galimberti**

Paper Session