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Pedagogical Model of Education Studies at the University of Málaga

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This paper sets out to analyse and understand the training processes of education professionals that are taking place at the University of Malaga and what pedagogical models are being implemented and their relationship with the possibilities for change in the education system. In this faculty, teachers of pre-school and primary education, pedagogues and social educators are trained. The training of educators in Spain is heavily regulated by the central government, therefore, this study is presented as a case study of a more global reality.

The training of education professionals is always in the spotlight of educational policies as well as biased ideological debates. Most of the time these debates are conducted according to one's own ideologies and the beliefs and assumptions about education that they imply, but they are rarely contrasted with rigorous research or critical diagnosis. We are dragging behind us traditions based on established ways of doing, and professional models that assume pedagogical models based on institutional cultures and not on educational knowledge (Kincheloe, 1998). For their part, documents from international organisations involved in education, such as UNESCO (2015), insist on the role of teachers and educational agents in the processes of change and transformation of education, as one of the necessary factors for the improvement of society and the achievement of the democratic principles and values of justice, freedom, equity, solidarity and diversity. The document states that "we must therefore rethink the content and objectives of pedagogy and teacher training" (p. 58). The challenges facing teachers nowadays make new demands on their training, which are not always present: diversity, the climate crisis, interculturality, as well as situations arising from new learning scenarios and social relations, through the mediations of the digital world (Martínez & Fernández, 2018; Freire, 2012; Cobo & Moravec, 2011). How are current pedagogical models in faculties of education addressing these emerging situations, both from the point of view of content and practices?

This project, promoted by the Research Institute for the training of education professionals, brings together 15 teachers from different areas of knowledge in an interdisciplinary, open and complex proposal. We start from the idea that current training processes assume an established framework, from institutional traditions, and their epistemological, ontological and ethical frameworks in which the institution's training actions are framed, as well as the regulatory framework that establishes the conditions for their development, both at macro, meso and micro levels (Leite, et al. 2017; Márquez et al. 2022). This also involves taking into consideration the university institution and its educational, political, social and cultural characteristics.

To this end, as specific objectives, we set out to analyse the point of view of the various state about the educational processes that are being developed: Training processes, structure of teaching work, personal trajectories, professional representations, etc. (Korthagen, et al., 2006). An epistemological study is also proposed on the design of university studies, in the light of current training proposals from educational theories and research; to assess the professional development of the faculty's graduates and their assessment of their strengths and weaknesses, as a result of their professional practice; to generate a diverse, complex and democratic discussion forum among the groups involved; to create a forum for discussion among the groups involved in the process; and to promote the development of the faculty's teaching staff and their professional development.

Methodology, Methods, Research Instruments or Sources Used

We propose qualitative research with a biographical-narrative perspective. The methodological strategies are proposed in three phases:

Phase 0. Elaboration of a personal narrative by each member of the research team about their training experience, as a student and as a teacher. The framework of understanding shared by the research team is sought.

Phase 1. Approach to the field.

- Semi-open interviews with representatives of the different levels of the faculty: students (12, 3 per specialty), teaching staff (12, 3 per specialty) and, as far as possible, graduates (8, 2 per specialty). They will be taken from levels and degrees: first and final term students, from the 4 degrees of the faculty and, where appropriate, from the different mentions or specialties; teaching staff from the different departments and areas, different teaching categories, and with different lengths of service at the centre.

- Interviews with academic responsables for the centre in their different areas of responsibility: Dean's office, department directorships, coordinators of the different areas

Phase 2. Discussion.

- Inter-school focus groups for the analysis, assessment and interpretation of the results of the interviews. Four focus are proposed: access, didactic models, learning contents, practicum.

- Discussion group with agents external to the faculty, such as: educational administration, professional and trade union organizations, management, inspectorate, etc.

Phase 3. Document Analysis.

- Analysis of the content of the official documents and regulations of the Faculty of Educational Sciences, to understand the educational and training model that takes shape in them. In this sense, at least documents covering the three levels of normative concretion will be reviewed: Faculty, University, State.

With a view to the final report, it is of interest that it be openly debated both in the faculty itself and in Malaga society, and therefore dissemination strategies based on discussion, debate, public presentation, etc. will be designed. In addition to the conventional academic means of disseminating research advances. It is therefore proposed that the results be presented at a seminar for reflection with interested parties, to discuss the results obtained and venture possibilities for future action to improve the training model of the faculty. This seminar will be attended by faculty members, in service teachers, education professionals from different fields, representatives of the schools and academic authorities of the province with responsibilities in education.

Conclusions, Expected Outcomes or Findings

The results that are initially emerging can be differentiated in terms of students and teachers:

STUDENTS

- The students' professional expectations are linked to their biographical trajectories linked to family patterns and previous experiences with teachers. They also focus the teaching profession on a welfare, service and care function.
- Students do not question the established training model. They maintain a very structured view of education. In this sense, they question the practices of collaborative work and co-evaluation, even though they recognize their educational potential.
- Perception of competitiveness linked to the obsession with qualifications, as opposed to learning. This leads to a strong pragmatism in their own training and an over-emphasis on the practical dimension. This implies a lack of theoretical and conceptual solidity, although there is some frustration at not having learned enough.
- Good assessment of the atmosphere and human relations in the faculty, with a good assessment of the teaching staff, especially in terms of their human qualities.

TEACHING STAFF

- They have very different backgrounds, but show a strong motivation for education, often linked to social and political commitments. The university as a profession is not usually the first professional choice. Sometimes this choice is linked to experience with some teachers when they were students.
- They hold the profession in high esteem in intellectual terms, but their training orientation is biased towards a technical approach. Focused on the transmission of knowledge with models that they know do not work, although they recognize that there is also social and citizenship training.
- Feeling of strong personal involvement: I am a teacher 24/7. This is also related to the obligation to do research to be able to develop a university teaching career.
- Questioning of students for their lack of commitment and motivation.

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