



Improvement of Professional Competences in University Education

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Abstract

The last decade is marked both in professional and academic by competency-based work. Training and professional unemployment represent spaces for the implementation of professional skills. This study carried out through mixed quantitative and qualitative methodology in the community of Castilla - La Mancha with a total of 57 professionals of social education, presents the results on the relevance of certain competences to the detriment of others aimed at improving praxis professional in this field of knowledge and social intervention. The results present the competencies related to mediation, technology and new fields of professional performance as the most important for professionals.

1. Introduction

The Bologna declaration marks a process of convergence towards a European higher education area. This process constitutes a before and after in the educational model currently in force. Among the objectives formulated in Bologna, it is necessary to emphasize the need to formulate academic, competency development and professional qualification criteria that can respond to the educational, labor and social challenges demanded by today's society (García and Pérez, 2008). In the words of Sáez (2009) if we focus the reflection, what is being proposed, after all, is a "different conception of what should be the professional training." One way of leading the debate, which it can not address here in depth, is to try to understand the concepts that are handled and the reality that they feel called around them. The mastery and use of this toolbox by future graduates entails, at least, to move from discipline-based training (which does not mean denying them but only taking them as a means, never an end in itself) to a Training related to the action of professionals in the different situations (Sáez, 2009). The purpose of this study is to facilitate the rapprochement between different actors in favor of the development of social education in Castilla La-Mancha, through the elaboration of shared contents and adequate to the current legislation and the current social situation. We hold the study on three specific axes of work. Analysis has been carried out on the perception that the different agents have on the role of training of social educators and the acquired competences and lastly an analysis will be made on the adequacy of the contents of the degree of Social education and its curricula and the adaptation of these to the new institutional and social demands.

2. Méthod

A longitudinal quantitative study was carried out through the design of a questionnaire with two different blocks. The questionnaire contains a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1 in total disagreement and 5 in total agreement). Key actors from the main public and private organizations in the province of Toledo have been involved in employing social educators in their structures and programs. A total of 57 employers and professionals from the most representative organizations in the educational and social field, the so-called third sector, have participated.

3. Results

Table 1 presents the results of the perception of the professionals about the questions collected in the first part of the block of the questionnaire. It should be noted that the overall perception about the formation of the social educator in general is 3.23 where the highest score has been in the added value that the educator gives to his organization as a professional, with a total of 4.26 points out of 5, On the other hand, the lowest score is awarded to the appropriate training wing for educational and social innovation and to lack of knowledge about relevant contributions to their field of work by Pedagogues and by social educators.

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Table 1: Perception of training in social education

	Mean	Desv.
1. Is the education of the educator adequate to current demands?	3,16	0,88
2. Does the educator have adequate training for educational and social innovation?	2,91	0,89
3. Does the educator have the capacity to bring novelty to the work of the institution?	3,88	0,91
4. Does the educator have clear knowledge of the institutions and entities where he / she carries out his / her work?	3,31	0,82
5. Does the educator have clear knowledge about the current legislative situation?	3,00	1,10
6. Does the educator have the necessary tools for the planning of the work, from a formative point of view?	3,38	0,87
7. Does the educator professionally add value to the work done by the institutions or entities?	4,26	1,00
8. Do you know of projects or proposals relevant to your work prepared by social educators?	3,50	1,16
9. Do you know models or tools relevant to your work proposed by social educators?	3,28	0,96
And pedagogues?	2,59	1,13
10. Do you consider that the current training of the social educator facilitates their insertion in the workplace?	3,03	1,09
And pedagogues?	2,42	0,97

In table 2 we present the results on general competences. In it we can see how the communicative and relational capacity in working with individuals and groups and the critical and self-critical capacity linked to the analysis of social reality and an ethical and responsible commitment in the exercise of the profession would be the competences that obtain a higher score Close to 1 which places them among the priorities for professionals. Otherwise we have the competence for oral and written expression at professional level and ability to use other languages and express themselves in other languages that obtains the score closest to 8 that is the consideration of lesser relevance of the competition.

Table 2: General Competences of the Degree of Social Education

	Median
[Communicative and relational ability in working with individuals and groups]	3,00
[Critical capacity and self-criticism linked to the analysis of social reality and an ethical and responsible commitment in the exercise of the profession]	3,00
[Competence of observation and autonomous learning in the social and personal interaction with agents, groups and diverse sociocultural contexts]	4,00
[Competence to work in plural and interdisciplinary teams]	5,00
[Creative and entrepreneurial capacity for the design, implementation, management and evaluation of socio-educational projects]	3,50
[Capacity to promote and develop social networks and contribute to the dynamization and improvement of socio-educational institutions, from an integrative educational perspective]	4,00
[Capacity for information selection, knowledge management and ICT management from a critical and reflective perspective]	6,00
[Proficiency in oral and written expression at professional level and ability to use other languages and to express themselves in other languages]	7,50

In table 3 we can see the transversal competences. In this case the ability to develop interventions and socio-educational actions, from a sensitivity and perspective focused on respect for human rights, ecological principles and values of democratic culture and Dexterity to adapt to new and complex



situations, innovate and Building an educational relationship based on the development of individual autonomy and collective responsibility appear as the most relevant competencies.

Table 3 Transversal Competences of the Degree of Social Education

	Median
[Ability to develop interventions and socio-educational actions, from a sensitivity and perspective focused on respect for human rights, ecological principles and values of democratic culture]	2,50
[Capacity for the implementation of socio-educational programs and actions promoting the recognition of cultural and linguistic diversity, universal access for persons with disabilities and full equality between women and men]	3,00
[Knowledge of the different social, cultural and educational policies oriented to the development of the citizenship and of a participative society]	4,00
[Competence to promote processes of educational mediation oriented to the coexistence and the resolution of conflicts]	3,00
[Dexterity to adapt to new and complex situations, innovate and build an educational relationship based on the development of individual autonomy and collective responsibility]	2,50
[Ability to assume the need for ongoing training and professional development, based on the reflection and evaluation of one's own educational practice.]	5,00

In table 4 we present the results on specific competences. As can be seen, the average range of results is more in line with the lack of evaluation by the professionals on these competences, they give less importance than the previous ones, the results present a range of answers closer to positions away from the positive valuation. However, the competence Capacity to detect, analyze and assess in a reflective way demands and socio-educational needs is maintained with a 3 among the highest rated among professionals.

Table 4: Specific competences of the Social Education Degree

	Median
[Understanding of the theoretical, historical, cultural, political, environmental and legal references that constitute the human being as the protagonist of education]	9,50
[Knowledge and understanding of the trajectory of Social Education and the configuration of its field and professional identity, as well as the current contexts and areas of social intervention]	9,50
[Ability to detect, analyze and assess in a reflexive way demands and socio-educational needs]	3,00
[Ability to design, implement and evaluate strategies, plans, programs, projects and socio-educational actions in various contexts and areas]	4,00
[Capacity to develop, manage and evaluate means and resources for socio-educational action]	6,00
[Theoretical and methodological domain for socio-educational and community intervention]	5,50
[Capacity to implement and develop processes of social participation, sociocultural animation and community development]	7,00
[Ability for the counseling and educational accompaniment of individuals and groups]	4,50
[Capacity to coordinate and manage socio-educational facilities and services]	7,00
[Capacity to generate and promote social networks]	7,00
[Mastering educational strategies for the management, supervision and training of professionals and other groups]	8,00
[Competence for the elaboration and interpretation of documents and reports characteristic of the professional performance]	10,00
[Capacity of commitment to the development of the professional culture, through the formation, the professional exchange, the connection with the professional schools and the projection of the Social Education]	9,00

5. Conclusions

The specific competences show the importance that is given from the professional world to the analysis and interpretation of the realities and the design of proposals for the intervention on it. Perhaps this can lead us to propose a basic training methodological model that allows greater contact with work contexts. Through the implementation of contact methodologies (Moreno, Barranco and Diaz, 2015) or work based on seminars and / or professional laboratories. Social innovation (Morales and Moreno, 2016) is another key element for social change and transformation.



The need to maintain a synergistic and fluid relationship with employers' organizations, both public and private, is also essential. This linkage constitutes one of the pillars that allow and favor the transition between academic life and work life based on common values, curricula, resources and results. A clear commitment to innovation within the framework of higher education should be based on the study of professional environments and the social reality of the environment, fostering common spaces of encounter and reflection between university and employers (Moreno, 2012).

The whole of the professional and academic community must make a clear commitment to operating a public service and committed to social reality, placing training and research and practice on a common plane that amplifies the possible impact of the work undertaken.

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