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REASONS FOR ENTRY INTO INITIAL TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

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Abstract: There are many reasons why teachers work as professors; the interesting thing is that in pedagogical careers as well as in other disciplines, there are applicants who are not clear about their vocational interests, sometimes they do not wish to pursue these studies and feel obliged to remain in a career that does not convince them. Therefore, the university has a great challenge to ensure that even though they do not like what they are studying, they know how to find elements that will make them fall in love with their profession. Pérez and Blasco (2001), argue that in the entrance to a given career there is an underlying inclination motivated by various reasons towards an area of work or profession, which would explain why a person wishes to approach it and delve deeper into it, in most cases becoming the profession of a lifetime. In particular, an adequate career choice is vital, since an unmotivated teacher may represent weaknesses and a threat to the achievement of the goals of the educational process, with negative social consequences for students. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation constitute the sum of forces that energize actions in school practices so that users can receive opportunities for a liberating education.

Keywords: Teacher motivation, educational practice, liberating education.

INTRODUCTION

In general terms, the problem lies in the difficulty of the institutions to know in a timely manner the characteristics and motivations of the new students entering the bachelor's degree programs in education, in order to identify in depth the diversity that allows designing the specific action plan for teacher training and particularly the development of competencies in each of the graduates to practice teaching according to the dimensions that frame the professional teaching service in basic education. These problems are described in the following sections.

The Ministry of Public Education (SEP), the governing body of education in Mexico, has sought to promote in the last three decades, teacher training with emphasis on the preparation for the implementation of a competency-based curriculum, which is one of the educational trends motivated by the recommendations of international organizations, including the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (Moreno, 2014).

Due to the current demands in which education is immersed, the responsibility of training teachers has been transferred to institutions of higher education other than Normal Schools (EN); this phenomenon has occurred in parallel with the need for Normal School teachers to perform, in addition to their teaching functions, educational research tasks on the various problems in the classroom, in schools, in teacher-student interactions, among other studies.

Within the framework of the Educational Reform implemented in Mexico (2012), teacher preparation represents a pillar to achieve educational quality in compulsory education; however, efforts are being made to select suitable teachers to enter the professional teaching system, but there are still difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers to replace those who will retire during the next 5 to 10 years (Juárez and Comboni, 2014).

Similarly, the 2018 Curriculum for teacher training in the Bachelor's Degree in Educational Inclusion cannot be left aside as a support, because this forms the professionals of inclusion today, the change in teacher training is a key piece to achieve the educational objectives of today's society, "In the Curriculum, educational inclusion is not an end in itself, it is a strategy to achieve the goal that no one is left without a quality education, nor those who have a disability, severe learning, behavioral and communication difficulties, for being outstanding or talented" (SEP, 2018).

In the teacher training institutions of most of the federal entities, selection processes are developed for applicants who wish to enter Teacher Training Colleges (EN), so each institution has established admission mechanisms in response to its own needs, however, there is currently no national regulation for the selection of new students for initial training programs, which has led to the acceptance of applicants in the EN who do not have the appropriate profile to be trained as basic education teachers. In 2003, the Ministry of Public Education (SEP) issued recommendations to regulate admission, but it was not possible for all teacher training institutions to comply with all the criteria (Guevara and González, 2004).

Although there is no national agreement that establishes as mandatory the application of standardized selection criteria, the SEP issued a series of national provisions to be applied before starting the selection process corresponding to the 2004-2005 cycle, with the purpose of continuing to strengthen the regulation processes of initial training services and admission to teacher training institutions (Guevara and González, 2004).

Several studies with teacher training populations, such as the one conducted by Yañez, Gamboa and Mendoza (2015), have analyzed socioeconomic and academic variables using different methods, trying to generate entry profiles and analyzing which are the variables for school success. However, when answering the question of who are the applicants to enter the Normal School, new questions may arise such as: why do they choose the teaching profession, what are their reasons for choosing it, do we really know who enters the Normal School?

The challenge for teacher training schools, within the framework of the educational reform and in the run-up to the implementation of a new educational model in Mexico, lies in knowing in greater depth the abilities, skills and attitudes of aspiring teachers in or-

der to determine the choice of the best ones, since the current teacher education system warrants it, but it is equally relevant to know the reasons why aspiring teachers choose a career in teaching, This will put the teacher training schools in a better position to define the diagnosis that will lead to implement the appropriate intervention that is congruent with the needs of capable teachers, considering the characterization of the applicants to include in the training actions elements that enhance their strengths and develop towards the improvement of the areas of opportunity by reducing their weaknesses.

In this way, it is possible to work collegially in the teacher training schools to detect the diversity of the students and contribute to the necessary support for the production of good teachers.

Some of the questions that teachers of the first courses of the Teacher Training Colleges ask themselves every year are: why have these young people chosen this career, what do they expect to find here, what goals do they hope to satisfy with these studies? It is common to hear various interpretations about the perception of teachers regarding new students in the EN, which try to explain some answers to the questions raised; among the most frequent that can be heard are: "He entered because his father is a teacher! He entered the degree in Special Education because he did not get a place in the Primary School! He entered because he can get a place!

The problem with the above assumptions is that so far, there are no studies with scientific validity that explain what are the reasons that influence young people to choose the teaching profession in Sonora.

Therefore, in a certain way it is natural to perceive that there is a theoretical-methodological lack to explain why the teaching profession is chosen in the State of Sonora. The lack of clarity at the moment of describing the motives of choice could be one of the central elements to justify the present work. Based on this idea, Roness (2011) refers that knowing the reasons why the teaching profession is chosen should be of great interest to educational researchers, since the OECD (2005) points out that both the quality and the detriment of the profession depends, among other variables, on why the career is chosen.

Another aspect that justifies the present report is that previous studies have not evaluated in depth academic, socioeconomic and personal characteristics. Variables such as parents' occupation are superficially analyzed, although it is not classified whether their parents are teachers or occupy other non-teaching functions in educational institutions, whether they have had previous experience with teaching, what perception they have of the profession, and most importantly, what are the reasons for choosing teaching.

Considering that in the 2015-2016 school cycle, the national enrollment of Teacher Training Schools amounted to 104,213 and only in the state of Sonora there was an enrollment of 3,364 students (DGESPE, 2016). However, for the 2016-2017 school year, an increase of 10.5% of students who are enrolled in a teacher training institution was identified, reaching a record number of 3,762 students, of which 3,102 correspond to Normal Schools (IFODES, 2017), a situation that evidences the need to know in depth the reasons that students have for entering Normal Schools, in order to establish educational policies to ensure permanence and favor the attainment of the graduate profile of future teachers. The teacher training system requires timely information on the characteristics of students, authorities and teachers, in order to design and implement various strategies and policies that promote a more solid academic formation (Garay, 2001 and Guzmán, 2011). The research conducted on Teacher Training Colleges, "spaces considered as initial training spaces, can produce knowledge that not only have

an impact at the time of training trainers, but also that this knowledge allows rethinking the educational work at the basic education level" (Cruz, 2014, p. 69).

GENERAL APPROACH OF THE STUDY:

To characterize the applicants to enter the Escuela Normal for training as special education graduates in the state of Sonora and to describe the reasons why they choose the teaching profession.

THEORETICAL REFERENCES

This section provides a historical perspective on initial teacher education at the national and state levels, focusing on primary, special and physical education graduates. For the purposes of this study, it is pertinent to address primarily the Teacher Training Colleges (EN) as a whole and then inquire about their particularities.

Yañez, Vera, González and Medina (2012) have conducted research with the purpose of describing personal, academic and socioe-conomic characteristics of 761 students who represented the totality of students who entered the eight ENs in Sonora, finding that the normalista students had high school averages close to excellence (8.99), came from middle class backgrounds and the predominant educational level of their parents was high school.

A study conducted to identify the socioeconomic variables of the applicants of the 2011 generation of the eight ENs of Sonora, composed of 1903 applicants, of which only 761 (40%) were admitted and 1142 (60%) were rejected, was able to identify the motives and elements of greatest influence in choosing the career. It was concluded that the parents of the accepted students had 1.5 years more schooling than those who were not admitted. In addition, it was found that accepted students had access to better technological conditions and

equipment, such as computers and Internet. This confirmed that socioeconomic variables had an impact on access to Normal Schools (Yañez, Gamboa and Mendoza, 2015).

Another study by Yañez, (2013) analyzed the impact of the admission criteria of the ENs on the academic performance of the first year of studies, to identify the differences between the State Public Universities of the region, by means of a predictive model using multiple linear regression, it was found that such variables predict the academic performance of the first year of studies by 30%, R2=.30 Finding that the Normal Schools are the ones that apply the most rigorous filters to select their students, being the minimum average of eight, a score of 1000 points in the EXANI II test and a maximum age of 21 years the main components of such criteria.

METHODOLOGY

TYPE OF STUDY

The present study is a quantitative approach with a descriptive cross-sectional non-experimental design. According to Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2010), non-experimental designs are systematic and empirical investigations in which the independent variables are not manipulated because they have already occurred. Inferences about the relationships between variables are made without direct intervention or influence and these relationships are observed as they have occurred in their natural context. These same authors indicate that descriptive cross-sectional studies collect data at a single point in time. Their purpose is to describe variables, and to analyze their incidence and interrelation at a given moment. "It is like taking a photograph of something that happens."

POPULATION AND SAMPLE

The universe of the present research is very diverse, which influenced the categorization of the participants into four subpopulations covering the entire population of applicants to the 2014 admission process for the bachelor's degrees in elementary education (ByCENES, CREN), special education (ENEE) and physical education (ENEF).

SAMPLE

The total of the subpopulation participated, composed of 133 applicants for the Bachelor's Degree in Special Education. In terms of gender, 93% are women, which seems to indicate that this profession is not very attractive to men. The average age is 18.10.

TECHNIQUES AND INSTRUMENTS

The FIT Choice Scale by Richardson and Watt (2006) was used, which was translated from English into Spanish by a team of experts in the language. The instrument has 54 items that are distributed in the dimensions of the theoretical model mentioned. The first 38 items are answered based on the following statement: "I chose to be a teacher because"; and are Likert-type with response options ranging from 1 completely false to 5 completely true. The rest are questions and/or statements that evaluate the perception of the teaching profession with options ranging from 1 totally disagree to 5 totally agree.

PROCEDURE

In the 2014 admission period of the Normal Schools of Sonora, the two instruments were applied to the ENEE applicants, with the technical support of four teachers of the Academic Body of the institution. Due to ethical aspects, the survey was carried out with the consent of each subject. Each applicant received instructions on how to answer the instrument and some considerations regarding the objective of

the study were described. The instrument was implemented in a single session and in groups. The average time for answering the instrument was 15 minutes, and at the end of the session it was verified that all the items had been answered. Subsequently, the EXANI II test scores were requested from the school services department, and the classification of accepted and non-accepted applicants was made.

For the statistical analysis, the SPSS program was used to obtain frequency analysis, in addition to performing a parametric test for a single sample of Student's t-test, using the same software as a tool and taking the theoretical mean of 3 as a reference.

The Student's t-test for a sample allows to test whether it is possible to accept that the population mean is a given value. A sample is taken and the test allows to evaluate whether it is reasonable to maintain the null hypothesis that the mean is such a value.

It is worth mentioning that almost all the items follow a positive distribution, which means that scores greater than 3 represent a positive characteristic with respect to the example question:

I chose to become a teacher because I have the skills to be 1, 2, 3, 4,5

The alternative career and social persuasion dimensions were not recoded and were maintained with their original distribution, example:

Did anyone encourage or suggest you to choose a career other than teaching? 1, 2, 3, 4,5 Scores below 3 would represent a positive characteristic.

Similarly, a confirmatory factor analysis was carried out with the principal components technique and varimax rotation, since in all cases it was assumed that the dimensions of each of the scales of the instrument were orthogonal, the factor weights were obtained and the best factorial configuration associated with the theory was decided. Those items that did not reach a factorial weight of

0.400 in the chosen solution were discarded. The items that remained within the dimensions of the FIT Scale were analyzed through Cronbach's alpha statistic, in order to observe their internal consistency and decide on the relative importance of each one of them.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

CHARACTERIZATION OF THE BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

The study analyzes the particularities of the candidates to become special education graduates; in three sections: 1 academic characterization, 2 socioeconomic characterization and 3 characterization of factors that influence the choice of the teaching profession in the Special Education degree of the ENEE; but for this paper only those corresponding to section 3 are shown.

CHARACTERIZATION OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CHOICE OF THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN SPECIAL EDUCATION DEGREE OF ENEE

ENEE applicants perceive themselves as candidates who possess the skills required to perform as a teacher, which has motivated them to choose teaching in special education (Table 1).

Factor	Media	D.S.	t-test	Sig.
Teaching skills	4.43	.46	35.34	.000

Table 1. Comparison of means for the factor self-perceptions.

Regarding the values factor, the highest score was "working with children or adolescents" with a mean of 4.64 (S.D.= .46, t= 40.92), which is paramount in the selection of future special education teachers (Table 2).

On the other hand, in terms of personal utility, it was found that job security is a factor that influences the choice, as well as spending time with the family; as in the rest of the institutions evaluated, social utility stands out from personal utility, that is, young people consider it more important to make social changes than to have financial stability or vacations to visit their family. Likewise, the applicants consider themselves to have the skills to perform as teachers (intrinsic value).

Table 3 describes the main findings; it was found that the population studied refers that the teaching profession requires high levels of specialization (x=4.18, t=23.64), although the scores indicate that not all of them perceive it with a high demand (x=3.34, t=8.29), that is, they do not consider that being a special education teacher implies long hours of work or a considerable level of effort. This can be interpreted positively, since not considering high demand can be contrasted with high scores on teaching skills and intrinsic value.

In terms of career or profession remuneration, the applicants conceive teaching as a profession with high social status and competitive salaries, although it is worth noting that the applicants to the LEE were the ones who obtained the lowest scores with respect to salary perception in all the institutions evaluated.

Table 4 presents the results obtained in the factor "socialization influences" he distribution of the results followed the same trend as the rest of the normal schools, it can be said that the future LEEs have been encouraged by family and friends to choose teaching in special education, as indicated by the scores of the sub-dimension of social influences (x=3.96, t=11.30). Similarly, applicants report having had satisfactory experiences with teaching during their academic career (x=4.29; t=19.72).

On the other hand, when referring to the sub-dimension of social persuasion, intended to describe whether both friends and family members of the applicants have tried to persuade them not to choose special education teaching, although the mean refers that most have not been persuaded at some point (x= 2.30, t=8.46), the scores are lower than all the degrees, indicating that most of the candidates were not persuaded not to choose LEE.

The ENEE applicants reported being satisfied with the choice of becoming teachers (4.79, t= 20.50), in addition, the scores showed that the population that decided on the Bachelor's Degree in Special Education, did so as their first choice, a trend found in the normal schools (Table 5).

This is the end of the results section, which will be followed by a general analysis of the sample of the population evaluated and an indepth analysis of the fulfillment of the project's objective.

CONCLUSIONS

The general objective of this study was to characterize aspiring special education teachers and to describe the reasons why they choose this profession. To achieve this, academic and socioeconomic indicators were used, in addition to the FIT model. It is confirmed that the best averages and previous school trajectories according to (Yañez, Gamboa and Mendoza, 2015), correspond to the applicants of the bachelor's degrees in elementary and preschool education, however, the applicants to enter the Bachelor's Degree in Special Education, present lower high school averages. Supporting this notion, several studies point out the importance of the previous school trajectory with respect to obtaining a good performance in higher education, since it is expected that students who have developed a certain level in high school will repeat it in college (Chain, Jácome and

Factor		Media	D.S.	t-test	Sig.	
Intrinsic		4.64	.46	40.92	.000	
Personal utility Value Social utility	Occupational safety	3.97	.74	15.47	.000	
	Family time	3.65	.86	8.73	.000	
	Shaping the future of teenagers	4.59	.47	38.90	.000	
	Achieving social equity	4.13	.65	19.86	.000	
	Social utility	Make a social contribution	4.45	.50	33.17	.000
	Working with children	4.68	.49	39.27	.000	

Table 2. Comparison of means for the factor values

Factor		Media	D.S.	t-test	Sig.	
Perception of the profession Personal utility Social utility	Personal	Specialization	4.18	.57	23.64	.000
	utility	High demand	3.34	.81	4.84	.000
	Social utility	Social status	3.93	.56	19.19	.000
		Salary	3.50	.65	8.82	.000

Table 3 Comparison of means for the factor Perception of the task or profession.

Factor		Media	D.S.	t-test	Sig.
Socialization influences	Social persuasion	2.30	.98	8.14	.000
	Previous teaching experience	4.29	.75	19.72	.000
	Social influences	3.96	.90	11.39	.000

Table 4 Comparison of means for the factor Socialization influences.

Factor	Media	D.S.	t-test	Sig.
Alternative career	1.49	.66	31.08	.000
Satisfaction with the choice	4.79	.77	20.50	.000

Table 5 Comparison of means for alternative career and satisfaction

Martínez, 2001; Cú, Mass and Saravia, 2008; Nava, Lara and Ortega, 2006). This makes it a variable that should be given relevance in the establishment of the requirements requested by HEIs in their admission processes.

Although in the present work we did not measure the incidence of academic trajectories and socioeconomic factors on access to the normal schools evaluated, studies by Yañez (2013), Yañez et al. (2014) and Yañez et al. (2015) have shown that these are predictive not only of access, but also of academic performance in the first year of studies.

On the other hand, as far as the factors of the FIT model are concerned, it is evident that the members of the sample refer to having selected teaching as a profession for intrinsic and altruistic rather than extrinsic reasons, which leads to the following conclusions:

- Applicants are considered to have the ability to teach.
- It can be said that in Sonora, teaching is chosen for its social utility rather than for personal value. The choice is made for the pleasure of working with children and making a social change in future generations.
- The applicants consider teaching as a profession that requires training and specialization, however, for them it does not refer to a high demand because they are willing to prepare themselves.

- Those who choose teaching in special education have a positive perception of the profession, describing it as having a high social status, although there are differences in considering teaching as a competitive salary.
- The vast majority of applicants report not having been persuaded to become teachers, or not to do so.
- The desire to become a teacher is influenced by previous experiences with teachers.
- Further analysis is required for the factor of socialization influences, as it was not analyzed whether having a teaching relative determines entering normal school.

- Applicants who choose to become teachers in Sonora are satisfied with their choice and education degrees are their first option.

It can be concluded by alluding that in the state of Sonora, people who decide to become special education teachers do so with conviction and for reasons that may determine their interest in training and eventually becoming outstanding teachers (Kyriacou and Coulthard, 2000). Likewise, it is of vital importance to highlight that the FIT model was relevant to evaluate the factors that influence young people to choose teaching in special education in the state of Sonora.

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