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Assessing the curriculum and profile of pedagogical professionals for new employment opportunities

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to analyze the extent to which students and teachers in the Degree in Pedagogy perceive the training they receive is consistent with employment opportunities in specific professional areas. To do so, we have examined the relationship between students' and teachers' perceptions on the training they receive and its connection to employment opportunities through a descriptive, exploratory, and correlational study. The results show that students perceive the courses in the Degree in Pedagogy enhance professional and employment opportunities to a lesser extent than teachers deem. For both groups, the area of the Degree in Pedagogy with the greatest representation in the professional world is that of 'Research and Education'. Additionally, both groups believed that the practical training students receive is highly useful for their professional career. The 'Society and Culture' and 'Training and Business' areas were found to be the less represented throughout the degree.

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Introduction

As both a scientific discipline and an area of occupational development, the field of pedagogy in the 21st century is faced with the challenge of redefining itself, since economic, political, and social context from the last two decades has brought about changes that demand an urgent re-evaluation of the field's training profile and its professional potential.

Traditionally, the content and form of higher education syllabi have been established by academia. However, in both the United Kingdom and Europe, this model has been contested and reviewed with the aim of improving its efficacy and promoting the preparation of students for the job market (Lowden, Hall, Elliot, & Lewin, 2011; Powell

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& Walsh, 2018). This change of paradigm has entailed a reinforcement of and transformation in students' professional skills as well as in the adjustments leading to an adequate development of the Degree (Kostogriz & Peeler, 2007).

The demand to prepare students for a greater employability has led to significant changes in the courses in the Degree in Pedagogy at many universities. Most notably, new pedagogy for employability that requires students' involvement in the design of their own future has been proposed (Bennett, Knight, Dockery, & Bawa, 2020). This new direction has shaped syllabus content, and competencies have been designed to achieve the aforementioned goal (Pegg, Waldock, Hendy-Isaac, & Lawton, 2012).

Consequently, this new model requires higher education institutions to provide training designed to respond to the demands of current society (Riera & Civís, 2008; Lillis & Bravenboer, 2020; Neary & Amsler, 2012). Higher education institutions have been internationally identified as a key factor in the training and professionalization of future pedagogues and/or scholars (Barr & Tagg, 1995; Gibbs, 2009; Gosling, 2001; Hanbury, Prosser, & Rickinson, 2008; Trigwell, Prosser & Waterhouse, 1999). For example, the case of the Institute for Apprenticeships & Technical Education (IATE, 2020) in the United Kingdom provides valuable data about training programs in the field of Education and Pedagogy to which other studies, such as the one presented here, can be compared.

The aim of this study is to review the syllabus of the Degree in Pedagogy at the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU) as well as to examine the profile of undergraduates enrolled in the degree so as to evaluate new employment opportunities the degree offers. On the one hand, we examine the perception that students and educational community belonging to the Degree in Pedagogy have on job opportunities for pedagogical professionals. On the other, we want to see if teachers and students believe any of the areas in which job opportunities for pedagogues are divided within the Degree in Pedagogy is better represented than others. To do so, we worked on creating a Professional Map of Pedagogy based on previous studies that grouped job opportunities in three main areas: 1) *research-education*, 2) *society and culture*, and 3) *training and business* (Marko & Altuna, 2016). Additionally, we asked students about their opinions regarding the relationship between job opportunities and courses offered in the Degree in Pedagogy. Moreover, teachers were asked about how their courses contribute to the development of each of the job opportunities defined in the map.

Through the examination of the study plan of the Degree in Pedagogy at the UPV/EHU, and in accordance with the European training model pertaining to this area, we aim at improving its efficacy and adequacy. To achieve this aim, we identify the changes that need to be carried out to promote students' inclusion to the job market and we analyze how these can be implemented in current job markets. Ultimately, our goal is to analyze the training offered in the Degree in Pedagogy and evaluate its coherence with career opportunities in specific areas and, by doing so, to provide students with the competencies for new job profiles in the area.

Paradoxes of the profile of pedagogical professionals

Literature in the field points out that, more often than not, pedagogy professionals are associated with the sphere of formal education, specifically, with guidance and counseling in Primary and Secondary schools (González, Martínez, & González, 2015; Rosales, Torres,

Sánchez, Jiménez, & Cabezas et al., 2018;). Nevertheless, pedagogy professionals also work in other areas that have to do with general education (non- formal), innovation, research, culture, training, and business (Tejada, 2001; Fornasari, 2017).

In the past decade, there has been a movement of education professionals in the United Kingdom that advocates for a school-centered initial teacher- training program. The tenets of this movement are a step back since they are based on limited understandings on what teachers are. Essentially, they view teachers as technicians and crafts-people, which is a similar conception to the more classic concept of pedagogy (Orchard & Winch, 2015). This shift to increased emphasis on school-centered provision has been going on for some time now and, thus, it is long standing, which raises some concern. The classical concept of pedagogy was linked to the Greek term *paidos*, meaning child, and *ageing*, guiding, or conducting. The pedagogical professional was therefore the person charged with instructing children. The first paradox when it comes to interpreting the concept is that, nowadays, the figure of the pedagogical professional is not just linked to the stages of childhood, as little remains of the initial conception of pedagogy beyond the name. It is now more appropriate to speak of *andragogía*, which focuses on instructing and educating human beings for a 'lifelong learning' (Knowles, 1972; Smith, 2017).

Together with this paradox, there is another one arising from the lack of direct or specific job opportunities for pedagogical professionals. Furthermore, the current globalized job market context is neither predictable nor stable, which undoubtedly affects the transition to the job market (Llanes, Figuera, & Torrado, 2017). Nevertheless, the spectrum of functions and jobs attributed to pedagogical professionals is unknown to students enrolled in the Degree in Pedagogy (Ruiz & García de La Barrera, 2013; Curtin & Hall, 2018; Sansom, 2019).

In the same vein, and due to the lack of knowledge and recognition of a specific field of action, the general public tends to get confused between the fields of Pedagogy, Pedology, Psychology, Philosophy and Anthropology (De La Herrán, 2012; Curtin & Hall, 2018). At the academic level, both college students and teachers find it hard to understand that education, teaching, formative learning, and training programs in which both areas converge can be subjects of study and work by the pedagogical professional (Robinson, O'Loughlin, Kearns, & Sherwood-Laughlin, 2019).

Changes in educational studies and training

In just a few decades, qualifications in Pedagogy have varied considerably, both in terms of period of study and number of years, as well as the diversity of curricula and courses offered (Curtin & Hall, 2018).

Since the approval of Spanish Royal Decree RD 915/92 (Official State Gazette of 27 August 1992), which establishes the minimum content of the Degree in Pedagogy, a map of core courses was designed to be taught in Spain. The same courses -at least in terms of nomenclature- made up the Degree in Pedagogy in all the territory.

However, the subjects that appeared in the Study Program for the Degree in Pedagogy in Spain vary in each university as they depend on the choice of compulsory, optional and freely chosen courses made by each Faculty. In the *White Paper* on Pedagogy and Social Education (Villa, 2004), the courses offered by universities and their different itineraries are described. This may have favored new areas of work in pedagogy, but it has also

complicated the recognition of Pedagogy study programs in Spanish universities (ANECA, 2005). In 2005, the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA [Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación], 2005) advocated for a new design of the Degree in Pedagogy, where 60% of the core courses would be taught by all universities and the remaining 40% would be chosen by each of them, depending on the context and the professional profile they sought (ANECA [Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación], 2005a).

A year later, the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science (MEC, 2006) published a plan for the organization of university teaching in Spain, with guidelines for the creation of renewed degrees, considering the new scenarios created for higher education as a result of the Bologna agreement (European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2018; Karseth, 2006). In this new framework, the Degree in Pedagogy was reduced from 5 to 4 years, which meant that its courses and study programs had to be reorganized. This led to a major cutback in the itineraries that had existed until then and to the disappearance of optional and free choice courses. Thus, the specialty in pedagogy was reduced and it became difficult to identify specific job opportunities for pedagogy undergraduates, despite making major efforts to redefine them by creating a map of job opportunities for pedagogical professionals (Marko & Altuna, 2016).

In our opinion, the starting point to solve these issues is to base pedagogy training on students' acquisition of a strong education epistemology as well as to detect job market requirements to respond to real needs in real contexts. In this line, numerous studies indicate that the ability of adaptation and the commitment to the identity, development and professional ethics are two of the competencies that most contribute to students' training, career management abilities and, ultimately, the promotion of employability (; Van der Heijde, 2014).

This is the reason why training in Pedagogy involves the following objectives: 1) to enable teachers to support the learning of children most effectively; 2) to provide students with theoretical and practical training that envision the phenomenon of education integrally, which includes the knowledge of the principles required for the analysis, organization, and development of educational systems and processes; 3) to give students practical and multi-skilled training that equips them for a career in specific areas (the social, school, and business spheres, etc.).

With this in mind, we want to make an emphasis on the need of utilising renewed curricula that facilitates the inclusion of the job market as a basis for the development of knowledge, skills, and identity throughout university training (Dall'Alba & Sandberg, 1996; Fuller, 1996; Guile & Griffiths, 2001).

Based on the current definition of job opportunities for pedagogical professionals and their formative needs -in terms of knowledge and application of educational sciences in a specific employment context-, this study considers the following question: Are the courses taught in Pedagogy useful for job opportunities for the modern-day job-market?

The functions and job opportunities of pedagogy

The functions of pedagogy have been established and described for several decades now; for example, the Professional Statute of the Pedagogical professional, approved in the III State Congress of Pedagogical professionals in Ciudad Real, already defined

them (Benedito, Millan i Guasch and Amadó, 1986). Different professional areas were established in it, among them: a) *formal education* jobs such as the management of an institution or the supervision of the education system, psycho-pedagogic services and study guidance, and the design and preparation of curricular materials; b) *social and justice area* services such as work in social rehabilitation and Special Needs Education centers, educational administration, second-chance education, nursery or rural schools, and socio-cultural facilitation; c) *formative, innovation and research* duties such as university teaching, educational technology and the media, research, development in education and innovation as well as ongoing training and lifelong education of adults.

Many of these career opportunities have been historically linked to formal education, mainly to the training of primary education inspectors, school heads, high school teachers and university professors (Viñao, 2008). These options, however, have decreased over the years, forcing people to find new opportunities in non-formal education, an area in which other qualifications come into play, on a competitive basis (Cunningham & Ladd, 2018). Therefore, some of the job opportunities for pedagogues are still linked to formal education areas such as school management and study counseling, although these are usually private or semi-subsidized (Moss & Petrie, 2019). Another common job is the design and preparation of curricular materials for textbook publishers or companies that produce teaching materials. Nevertheless, pedagogical professionals are increasingly present in the business and employment sectors, where they provide coaching services (Viñao, 2008; Cunningham & Ladd, 2018).

One of the main fields of job opportunities for pedagogues has been the business area for some time now. An example of this can be found in the Career Prospects of the Pedagogical Professional in Companies as stated in Viladot's (1992) study. Some other instances are pinpointed in research studies, articles, and books on pedagogy in the world of work (Fernández-Salinero & De La Riva, 2016), where the importance of ongoing training in companies is highlighted (Aramburuzabala, 2012). Additionally, pedagogues' role in the design and orientation of training programs to achieve company objectives is also acknowledged (Pineda, 2002).

These job prospects in the business world also require qualifications in specific topics of the field. If pedagogical professionals are to widen their options, courses and additional programs in the Degree in Pedagogy must include notions about the business and working world (Viladot, 1992). Innovative pedagogy and implementing ICT should also be considered for this same purpose (Avidov-Ungar & Forkosh-Baruch, 2018). Regarding this matter, González et al. (2015) argue that the curriculum in the Degree in Pedagogy should combine aspects related to the needs and skills required in the 21st century. For this to happen, research on modern society's requirements regarding pedagogical professionals and the specific skills they need is indispensable (Pineda, Ciraso, & Armijos, 2018).

The research context: the pedagogy course and its particular features

When all the undergraduate degrees were redesigned in Spain, three-year degrees were favored against four-year ones. At this time, a curricular planning model based on course modules was chosen to define the new curricula in the Pedagogy Degree, which took into

account a predefined student profile (Rekalde, Martinez, & Marko, 2012). At the same time, the renewed structure facilitates learning both inside and outside the classroom and makes connections between courses, subjects, and topics (Zabalza, 2004).

As shown in Figure 1, the degree consists of seven quarterly (compulsory) modules, of which two are coursed in the first three academic years and one in the fourth. Additionally, some optional subjects are offered at the beginning of the degree, as well as curricular practices and the end-of-degree project in the final stages. Each of the modules has been defined based on three aspects: 1) the internal curricular consistency of the subjects, 2) the skills developed in it, and 3) the *Interdisciplinary Module Activity* (IMA), in which students are able to demonstrate the skills defined in each module.

The report on the Degree in Pedagogy presented to ANECA [Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación] (2005) states: ‘The pedagogic approach to the modular structure makes sense in that it is materialized in a global and multidisciplinary activity, through which the student shows the skills required for the module. It also serves as a means of encouraging teamwork among faculty and overcoming a purely disciplinary vision’ (Faculty of Philosophy and Education Sciences, 2009, p. 47).

The Degree in Pedagogy is connected to other qualifications in several ways. It shares the first three modules with the Degree in Social Education, and it also facilitates the entry of students from higher levels of Vocational Training. Likewise, it has two bridge courses that give easier access to graduates from the degrees in Social Education and Primary Education. In these two degrees, students from the Degree in Pedagogy have also an easier access to them.

An attempt to give more importance to the professionalization of pedagogy has been made by the Coordination Committee of the Degree in Pedagogy for several years. Since 2012, a new line of work has been implemented, in which a series of initiatives have taken place, the most notable being:

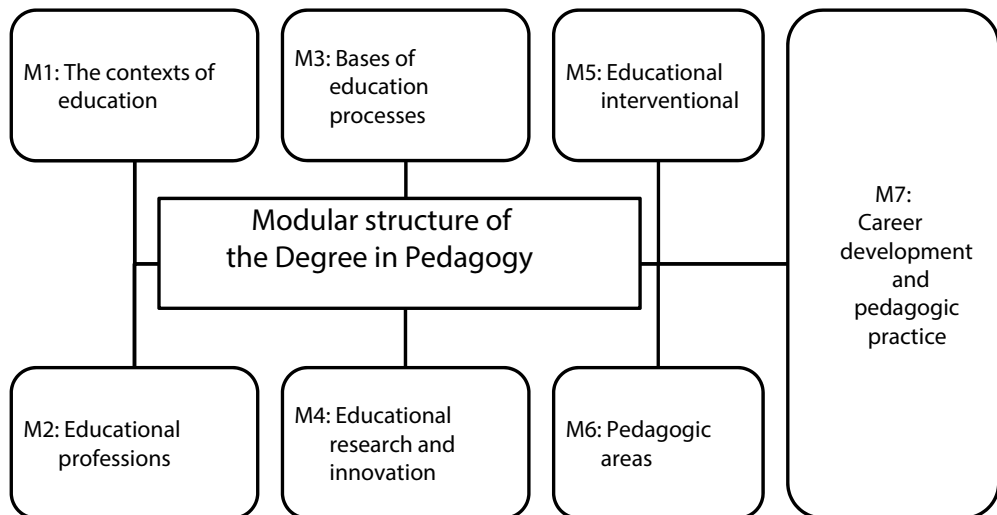


Figure 1. Interdisciplinary Modular structure of the Degree in Pedagogy Source: (Marko & Altuna, 2016).

- (1) An exploratory study based on a rather generalized social perception – which tends to be quite poor and uninformed- of the pedagogue’s profession. This research was initiated at the Faculty of Philosophy, Education and Anthropology in 2012 and it aimed at identifying and updating knowledge about the professional spheres in which pedagogical professionals are now working in the Basque Country. At the same time, one of its main purposes was to create resources for students which provide them with a clear vision of job opportunities related to their studies and the training itineraries available.
- (2) The creation of an initial Career Map of Pedagogy. After analyzing the data from the mentioned study, a map that classified the main domains in which pedagogical professionals work was designed. The map has been revised and updated in a group discussion of the Committee of the Degree in Pedagogy.
- (3) An inter-university seminar/workshop. As part of the Conference of Deans of Education, the Faculty organized a seminar with twelve other attending Faculties. The professional profiles of the Degree in Pedagogy were examined by analyzing the reports and websites from attending universities. In this way, the profile of pedagogues and their professional opportunities were outlined, and the Career Map was presented.
- (4) The development of resources to guide students. Audiovisual resources have been created and a link to the Career Map (see [figure 2](#)) has been provided. Specifically, a video with interviews to pedagogical professionals belonging to diverse professional areas has been supplied. At the same time, a website with videoclips that contain information on professional areas, working environment, organization, and the functions a pedagogue carries out has been made available.
- (5) The Map has been used in counseling activities for students as well as in information fairs and open days. Additionally, students in the Degree in Pedagogy have worked with the Map to become aware of the areas they can work in and the profiles they can have.
- (6) This project was carried out in the 2015/2016 academic year and its goal was to redefine the cross-cutting skills listed in the Degree in Pedagogy. Similarly, these skills were also specified and scaled through the degree so as to give students a better opportunity to develop their professional profile (Eizagirre, Altuna, Pikabea, Marko, & Perez, 2017).

Taking this context into account, the general aim of this research is to analyze students’ and teachers’ perspectives on the adequacy of the training for the current job market the Degree in Pedagogy offers. Moreover, we want to examine perceptions on the consistency of the training offered and whether this instruction covers specific career areas such as social services, education or business. Additionally, this study proposes new and improved definitions of the professional paths available in the Degree in Pedagogy as well as defining their profile.

More specifically, the research questions that contextualize this study were:

1-To what extent do pedagogy degrees adequately cover professional dimensions of pedagogy?

2-Is there any professional area in pedagogy degrees that is not adequately covered?

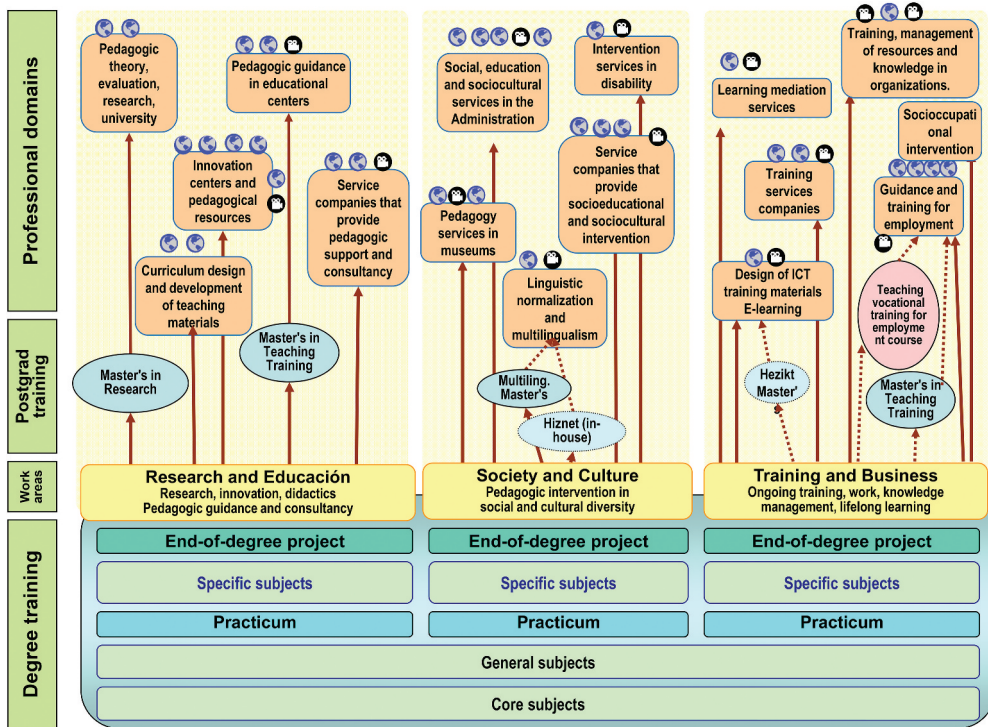


Figure 2. Career Map of Pedagogy in the Basque Country Source: (Marko & Altuna, 2016).

3-What are the perceptions of students and teachers regarding the training adequacy pedagogy degrees offer?

With these questions in mind, the objectives that this study pursues are 1) to learn which professional areas of pedagogy are best covered in the Degree in Pedagogy at the University of the Basque Country according to students, 2) to examine the professional dimensions of pedagogy that the courses of the Degree in Pedagogy cover according to teachers, and 3) to identify converging and differing perceptions among students and teachers regarding the job opportunities the Degree in Pedagogy offers.

Methodology and methods

Design

A descriptive, exploratory, and correlational study, named ‘ex post facto’ (Kerlinger, 1983), was carried out. Participants were selected according to particular characteristics. The study aims at determining the relationships that exist between students’ and teachers’ perceptions of the Degree in Pedagogy regarding the training offered and its connection to job opportunities rather than seeking causality. Thus, the goal is to examine occurrences happening to each stakeholder and not proving a particular hypothesis.

Given the particular context -the Degree in Pedagogy in the Faculty of Education, Philosophy and Anthropology- our research can be considered a case study

(MacPherson, Brooker, & Ainsworth, 2000) as it aims at exploring the perspectives of the individuals that are experiencing the situation or phenomenon in question. An inductive approach was chosen, which had as an objective to study the adequacy of the training and practice periods offered in the Degree in Pedagogy. In this case, the study was conducted in the same context researchers belonged to.

A quantitative methodology was chosen for the study, in which students and teachers had to complete a questionnaire. Nevertheless, there are certain limitations to this approach that have to be pinpointed. On the one hand, answers were chosen at random, which reflects participants' perceptions on a topic rather than their actual reality. On the other, respondents might choose their answers according to what they are expected to answer (i.e. social desirability) or what the interviewer wants them to answer (Canales, 2006; Echevarría, 2016). To face these challenges, the questionnaire was designed by qualified professionals and statistical analyses were used to ensure its internal consistency. Regarding the ethical considerations, the study was analyzed and approved by the Ethics Commission of University of the Basque Country (Report M10/2021/187).

Participants

131 subjects took part in this study, of which 83 participants were 4th year students and 48 were teachers of the Degree in Pedagogy. The cohort is not probabilistic and intentional (Hernández, Fernández, & Baptista, 2006) because the participants met the criteria established in this research (e.g. holders of a degree and a specific academic level). As for ethical procedures, all participants agreed to take part in the research study by completing ethical consent forms. In the same way, participants were informed through an informative email about the whole process.

Measuring instruments

An ad hoc questionnaire (see Table 2) that was designed based on the Career Map of Pedagogy in the Faculty of Education, Philosophy and Anthropology (Marko & Altuna, 2016) was used to identify the functions and competences of the pedagogical professional. Two versions of the questionnaire were created: one for students and another one for teachers. The questionnaire contained 15 closed points that can be grouped in the following areas containing 5 possible pedagogy jobs (career opportunities) in each one: Research and Education; Society and Culture, and Training and Business. For the student questionnaire, the questions were designed to examine the extent to which they considered each career opportunity is represented in the courses of the Degree in Pedagogy. As for the questionnaire for teachers, it contained specific questions regarding the usefulness of their course in terms of career opportunities. The answers were scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5 points, where 1 meant 'completely disagree' and 5 'totally agree'. It was filled both in paper and online; students completed it on paper while teachers used an online modality. For both, the estimated duration was of fifteen minutes. Regarding the reliability of the questionnaire, a Cronbach's alpha of .903 was obtained, with 15 elements that guarantee the internal consistency of the questionnaire.

Procedure

The steps taken were:

1. Preparation of the questionnaire in its two versions (paper and online) and having the whole process approved by the ethical committee at the university.

The survey was based on the Career Map of Pedagogy, which envisages both the new formative scenario and a redefinition of job opportunities for pedagogical professionals (Marko & Altuna, 2016).

2. The completion of the questionnaires by students and teachers.

The questionnaire was filled in collectively by students in class time once they had completed the Degree in Pedagogy, i.e. at the end of their fourth year in 2016–2017 and 2017–18. Teachers were contacted via e-mail, which contained a letter explaining the objectives of the research study and a link to the questionnaire. In the first year, all the fourth-year students and teachers responded, which meant collecting the opinion of at least one professor for each course taught in the Degree in Pedagogy. In the second year, other fourth-year students who were attending class were contacted to respond the questionnaire.

Statistical analysis

The data was analyzed using SPSS version 25. In order to carry out the analyses, all the variables were converted into Z scores to avoid the disparity of ranges. A variable was created for the parametric statistical analyses and the differences between the variables were studied (job opportunities) according to Field (2009), which was observed to have a normal distribution.

In order to study the possible differences in the perceptions of students and teachers regarding the representation of job opportunities in the Degree in Pedagogy, T-tests for related samples were conducted. Student's T-distribution was also analyzed for independent samples to determine whether the differences between the perceptions of the students and faculty are significant. Finally, the effect size was calculated using the d-Cohen test, where $d = .20$ was considered low, $d = .50$ average and $d = .80$ large or high (Cohen, 1988).

Results and discussion

Both teachers and students consider that one professional area is better covered than others in the Degree in Pedagogy. The 'Research and Education' field obtained the highest score ($M = 15.87$, $SD = 3.253$), which means that the students from our sample believed this was the area most represented in the Degree in Pedagogy. In contrast, the 'Society and Culture' field was the one scoring lowest ($M = 13.39$, $SD = 3.953$), thus, students saw it as the least represented area. The difference of 2.482 is statistically significant [$t(83) = 6.03$, $p = .001$, $d = .682$]. When comparing the 'Research and Education' component to 'Training and Business' ($M = 13.61$; $SD = 4.128$), we also found a statistically significant difference of -2.253 [$t(83) = -4.98$, $p = .001$, $d = .598$]. In these two cases, the effect size is average or moderate. In the comparison between 'Society

and Culture’ (M = 13.39; SD = 3.953) and ‘Training and Business’ (M = 13.61; SD = 4.128) the difference is $-.229$, not statistically significant [$t(83) = .591, p = .556$].

In more detail, after analyzing each professional area and space within the scope of ‘Research and Education’, the *1. Pedagogic theory evaluation, research, university career opportunity* was the most represented one according to students, followed by *4. Pedagogic guidance in education centers*. Regarding ‘Society and Culture’, the most represented opportunity was *8. Services for intervention in disability*, whereas *7. Pedagogic services in museums* was the least represented in the entire Degree in Pedagogy. Finally, in ‘Training and Business’, the only difference in terms of students’ perceptions was in *13. Design of ICT/ e-learning material*, which was considered the least represented in this area (see Figure 3).

Professional areas of pedagogy that teachers consider covered in the degree in pedagogy

As for teachers’ perceptions about their courses’ coverage of the mentioned professional areas, they perceive that the ‘Research and Education’ (M = 18.73, SD = 3.36) field is the one most represented, which was also the case in students’ perceptions. For teachers, the least represented area is ‘Society and Culture’ (M = 16.08, SD = 3.85) with a -2.646 difference when comparing it to ‘Research and Education’. After conducting a T-test analysis [$t(48) = -4.72, p = .001, d = .726$], we found that this difference was statistically significant. When comparing ‘Research and Education’ to ‘Training and Business’ (M = 15.65; SD = 4.12), the difference between them was of -3.083 , which we found to be a statistically significant difference after conducting a T-test [$t(48) = -5.95, p = .001, d = .811$]. In these two cases, the effect size is average and large, respectively. When

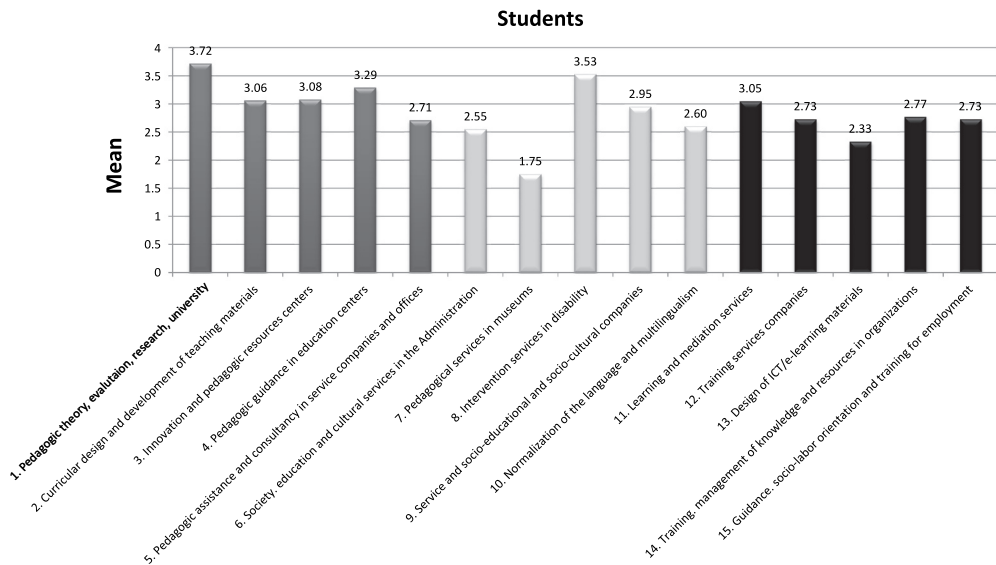


Figure 3. Differences between students’ perceptions in terms of a career opportunity Source: in-house.

analyzing the difference between ‘Society and Culture’ ($M = 16.08$, $SD = 3.85$) and ‘Training and Business’ ($M = 15.65$; $SD = 4.12$), we found a non-statistically significant difference [$t(48) = .782$, $p = .438$].

From the teachers’ perspective, and examining job opportunities in detail, there seems to be a balance between the three areas and the 15 career opportunities. The professors believe all of them are well represented in the courses of the Degree in Pedagogy.

However, despite the fact that differences between job opportunities are small, there is at least one variation within the ‘Society and Culture’ area in relation to the opportunities in 7. *Pedagogical services in museums*. Teachers feel that this area is less included in the Degree in Pedagogy, which varied in comparison to the rest (see Figure 4).

Differences between faculty and students

Students’ and teachers’ means were compared to see the possible differences in their perceptions about the adequacy of the representation of the professional areas in the Degree in Pedagogy in the Basque Country. Results showed that, in general, teachers believe that all the professional areas of Pedagogy are more represented in the Degree in Pedagogy to a greater extent than students do (see Figure 5).

As teachers’ views differed from students’ perceptions, an independent samples T-test was conducted to analyze if the differences were statistically significant.

In the light of these results (see Table 1), and following the student T-test analysis, we saw that the differences between students and teachers in ‘Research and Education’ are significant [$t(129) = 4.792$, $p = .000$] and the effect size is high ($d = 2.746$). Statistically significant differences are also observed in ‘Society and Culture’ [$t(1.129) = 3.79$, $p = .000$]

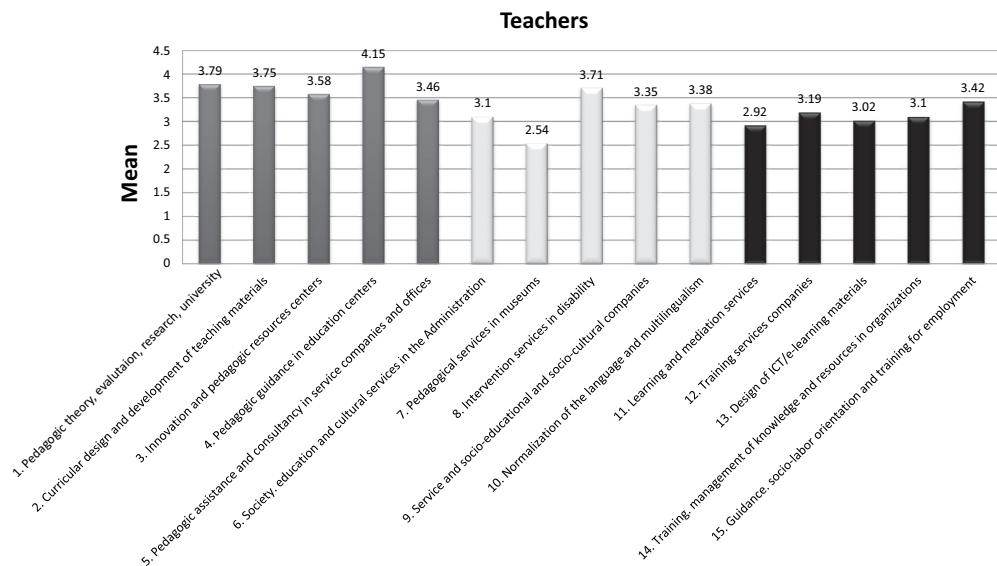


Figure 4. Differences between the perceptions of teachers in relation to job opportunities Source: in-house.

with a moderate effect size ($d = .682$). Finally, although significant differences exist in ‘Training and Business’ [$t(1.129) = 2.68, p = .000$], the effect size is considered low ($d = .486$).

Additionally, when conducting a students’ T-test to compare mean differences between students and teachers regarding perceptions about job opportunities, there was a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of 4 out of 5 of the aspects we considered. Specifically, in numbers 2. *Curricular design and development of teaching materials*; 3. *Innovation and pedagogic resources centers*; 4. *Pedagogic guidance in education centers* and 5. *Pedagogic assistance and consultancy by service companies*.

Regarding ‘Society and Culture’, the significant differences found were also in 4 of the 5 fields: 6. *Society. education and cultural services in the Administration*; 7. *Pedagogical services in museums*; 9. *Service. socio-educational and socio-cultural companies*, and 10. *Normalization of language and multilingualism*.

Finally, in the ‘Training and Business’ field significant differences were found in three of the measured aspects. Concretely, in 12. *Training services companies*; 13. *Design of ICT/e-learning material* and 15. *Social and employment guidance and training services for employment*.

As detailed in Table 2, teachers perceive that certain job opportunities in which statistically significant differences were found ($*p < .05$; $**p < .01$; $***p < .001$) are more represented in the Degree in Pedagogy than the students do. This is the case in 11 of the 15 job opportunities studied, of which 5 have very high statistical significance

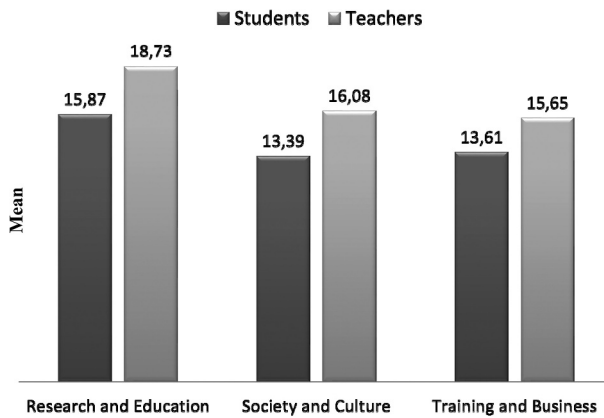


Figure 5. Differences between teachers and students regarding the representation of the job opportunities Source: in-house.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for students and teachers.

Professional areas	Students (N = 83)		Teachers (N = 48)		t-student t	gl gl	Sig. p	Effect Size d-Cohen
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD				
Research and Education	15.87	3.25	18.73	3.36	4.792	129	.000	.863
Society and Culture	13.39	3.95	16.08	3.85	3.796	129	.000	.682
Training and Companies	13.61	4.20	15.65	4.12	2.682	129	.000	.486

Source: In-house.

Table 2. Mean differences in job opportunities between students and teachers.

Items	Students		Teachers (Faculty)		t-Student t	Effect Size d
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
1. Pedagogic theory, evaluation, research and university	3.72	.860	3.79	.944	.425	–
2. Curricular design and development of teaching materials	3.06	.929	3.75	1.158	3.524***	.673
3. Innovation and pedagogic resources centers	3.08	.913	3.58	1.007	2.901**	.524
4. Pedagogic guidance in education centers	3.29	1.153	4.15	.850	4.859***	.812
5. Pedagogic assistance and consultancy in service companies and offices	2.71	1.110	3.46	.898	3.971***	.718
6. Society, education and cultural services in the Administration	2.55	1.015	3.10	1.115	2.881**	.519
7. Pedagogical services in museums	1.75	1.069	2.54	1.414	3.376***	.650
8. Intervention services in disability	3.53	1.040	3.71	.874	1	–
9. Service and socio-educational and socio-cultural companies	2.95	1.070	3.35	.934	2.171*	.388
10. Normalization of the language and multilingualism	2.60	1.136	3.38	1.142	3.743***	.681
11. Learning and mediation services	3.05	.987	2.92	1.088	.708	–
12. Training services companies	2.73	1.094	3.19	1.085	2.288*	.419
13. Design of ICT/e-learning materials	2.33	1.072	3.02	1.101	3.54**	.633
14. Training, management of knowledge and resources in organizations	2.77	1.028	3.10	.973	1.822	–
15. Guidance, socio-labor orientation and training for employment	2.73	1.083	3.42	1.069	3.488**	.636

Source: In-house

(items 2, 4, 5, 7 and 10, $***p < .001$), 4 are highly significant differences, and 2 have a moderate statistical significance (items 3, 6, 13 and 15, $**p < .01$). The effect sizes of these differences are moderate in most cases, with an average of an effect size of $d > .5$ (Cohen, 1988).

Conclusions

This study highlights the importance of bringing academic training and social and job market requirements together in an attempt of providing students a focus that meets real market demands. In this way, it situates students at the center of pedagogical studies and makes them the core of all formative action. The Degree in Pedagogy will continue to make improvements to reach solid educational proposals which answer to a well-designed curriculum that permits the interchanging of experiences and good practices (especially in the globalized world we live in).

After carefully analyzing our data, we can conclude that the Degree in Pedagogy engages with the professional areas of the field of pedagogy to a great extent. In other words, the Degree in Pedagogy offers students with ample preparation for job opportunities in the current job market. At the same time, one of our aims was to analyze the areas of the Degree in Pedagogy that need to be improved. In this sense, our results show there is a need of promoting the areas of ‘Society and Culture’ and ‘Training and Business’, as these were the ones participants perceived to be less represented.

Over the past 30 years, one of the professional areas most closely associated with the profile of pedagogy professionals has been school guidance services. This field has become the most frequent professional environment for pedagogy graduates. However, new social demands call for new competences, and even new roles. We saw that the professionals and faculty working in Higher Education value these new emerging skills and duties and share them with students. Consequently, new spaces continue to be

created, along with new employment opportunities (Sanchez Lissen & Sánchez Franco, 2017). Moreover, the fact that new syllabi include more practical training makes it fundamental for the profession to ensure good practical work centers, combined with effective practical work tutoring.

As for the specific objectives proposed, we observed that students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the representation of job opportunities differed. More precisely, teachers feel that the areas are covered to a greater extent than students do.

When analyzing students' and teachers' perceptions regarding the professional environment, significant differences between these two groups were found. This was more acute in the case of the 'Research and Education' area, which all the participants felt it was the best represented field in the Degree in Pedagogy.

An interpretation of teachers' responses might be that educators are better prepared and equipped in the field of 'Research and Education' since their work is directly linked to it and, therefore, this is the professional area they know best. Hence, they might be able to transmit and address this field better, either consciously or unconsciously.

Furthermore, the curriculum of the Degree in Pedagogy offers many courses related to 'Research and Education' in its first two years, which are part of the core of the degree. It is not until the third year that courses related to 'Society and Culture' and 'Training and Business' are given. Since 'Research and Education' courses are the core of the Degree in Pedagogy, more teachers perceive their course is directly related to it. Ruíz & García de la Barrera (2013) point out students usually perceive the 'Research and Education' area to be considerably represented in the Degree in Pedagogy as both specific and cross-curricular courses cover it to different extents.

When analyzing job opportunities in detail, we see that the 'Pedagogical services in museums' professional area, which was part of the Map of the Professionalization of Pedagogy, is perceived to be barely covered. Both students and teachers feel this area is less included in all the courses in the Degree in Pedagogy.

In conclusion, our results show the importance of balancing societal demands, especially if they come from the private sector, and the scientific syllabus of degrees in Pedagogy. By doing so, broader public values will not be compromised, nor will they pose a threat to the international position higher education holds (Powell & Walsh, 2018). Nevertheless, in order to complete our data, perceptions of teachers and students need to be compared to pedagogical professionals' views. In this way, we would be able to determine the extent to which the Degree in Pedagogy trains competent and well-equipped professionals for their working life.

Additionally, the use of the Professionalization Map allowed us to identify professional areas inherent to the field of pedagogy and relate them to the perceptions and needs of teachers and students. In this way, we were able to analyze their views regarding professional functions and the syllabus of the Degree in Pedagogy, which gives us the opportunity of making further improvements.

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