

LA VUELTA DEL HIJO PRÓDIGO: CREENCIAS Y OPINIONES DE LOS EX – ASESORES DE CEP SOBRE “ESCUELA Y EDUCACIÓN” DESDE SU REGRESO A LA ESCUELA

The return of the prodigal son: Beliefs and opinions of Teacher Centers' ex – advisors about education and schooling upon their return to schools

Juan S. Arencibia Arencibia

Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria

E-Mail: jarencibia@dedu.ulpgc.es

Juan Manuel Moreno Olmedilla

The World Bank (USA)

E-Mail: jmoreno@worldbank.org

Resumen:

La investigación que se presenta en este artículo persigue construir conocimiento sobre cómo se percibe, se trata, se transforma y evoluciona el capital cultural adquirido por los asesores en los Centros de Profesorado una vez que éstos regresan a sus destinos en los centros de primaria y secundaria. Nuestro trabajo se construyó sobre el extenso relato de doce ex – asesores de CEP acerca de sus concepciones, creencias y visiones sobre cinco grandes temas: educación/enseñanza, escuela como organización, Administración educativa, relaciones con los colegas en el centro, y las relaciones con los alumnos y sus familias. Se trataba de constatar si, en efecto, podíamos hablar o no de un *capital* cultural adquirido en el CEP, y en qué medida esa acumulación de aprendizaje y experiencia había hecho evolucionar e incluso cambiar de modo sustancial las posiciones y concepciones de nuestros sujetos sobre la enseñanza y lo escolar.

Palabras clave: capital cultural; conocimiento profesional; creencias; asesoría; servicios de apoyo.

Abstract:

The research project that is partially presented in this paper sought to increase our knowledge about the ways in which the cultural capital gained by agents of external support to schools in Teachers' Centers (CEP) is perceived, dealt with and transformed once they go back to their teaching duties in primary and secondary schools. Field work consisted of in-depth interviews to twelve ex – agents of external support, covering their auto-biographical experience, beliefs, views and conceptions on five broad issues: education/teaching, school as an organization, educational administration, relationship with fellow teachers in schools, and relationships with students and parents. The aim was to ascertain if it was in fact warranted to talk about a cultural capital acquired in Teachers' Centers (CEP), and to what extent such stock of learning and experience had shaped or even radically change the views and beliefs held by the participating subjects.

Key words: cultural capital; professional knowledge; broad; advice; support services.

Extended Summary

The research project that is partially presented in this paper sought to increase our knowledge about the ways in which the cultural capital gained by agents of external support to schools in Teachers' Centers (CEP) is perceived, dealt with and transformed once they go back to their teaching duties in primary and secondary schools. The study of their (auto) biographies allows for the emergence of both certainties and contradictions which are very useful to broaden our knowledge about the teaching profession and the, para- pseudo- or semi – profession of external support in education. The experience acquired by the ex – advisors while in the CEP amounts to be a privileged standpoint to position themselves about every educational issue at stake; and they can do it from two different but complementary perspectives and identities, the one related to teaching and the one related to external support to schools. This simultaneity clearly adds value to everything they have to say. Field work consisted of in-depth interviews to twelve ex – agents of external support, covering their auto-biographical experience, beliefs, views and conceptions on five broad issues: education/teaching, school as an organization, educational administration, relationship with fellow teachers in schools, and relationships with students and parents. The aim was to ascertain if it was in fact warranted to talk about a cultural capital acquired in Teachers' Centers (CEP), and to what extent such stock of learning and experience had shaped or even radically change the views and beliefs held by our subjects. Moreover, what the title of this paper calls the experience of the *prodigal son* was also relevant, i.e., to increase our understanding about the ways in which their new discourse, constructed in and from the CEP, *lands* in schools, adapts or rather collides and is modified, after the ex – advisers return to work in schools.

The years spent providing external support to schools from the CEP have strongly shaped the belief system of the ex – advisors about each and every major education issue: among many others, the new conception of the compulsory secondary school as a comprehensive one; the development of a global and long-term institutional conceptualization of the school; the realization that quality of education has more to do with the way the school as whole works and not that much with more or less brilliant individual performance; a substantial change in the way they conceive teacher's responsibility about students, their development and academic achievement; their active resistance to the myth that student cohorts get worse and worse overtime; a first-hand and hands-on knowledge about the school system as a whole and the corresponding recognition of the value of what teachers face and accomplish in levels other than their own; team work with their colleagues is seen not just as recommendable but as indispensable; teaching is conceived as an activity about which one should constantly ask questions; the relationship with students' families is seen as a professional duty of teachers; and the recognition or realization that any education administration faces all sorts of difficulties to implement its policies, which does not lead to giving up a critical view of educational authorities, but rather to the conditions for a more informed and learned approach to such criticism. This belief system taken as whole becomes a great value once the ex – advisors returns to their schools to be teachers again: it is true that it may undergo a certain tension derived from the initial reality shock; but then it tends to consolidate and get even more sophisticated. This is why it could be argued that these prodigal sons are not just reflective practitioners, but practitioners with a discourse.