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Perceptions about teacher profiles and good educational practices in higher education: a comparative study from the perspective of future teachers and technical professionals

Percepciones sobre los perfiles del profesorado y de las buenas prácticas educativas en educación superior: un estudio comparativo desde la perspectiva del futuro profesorado y profesionales técnicos

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to analyse, from a comparative inter-group perspective, the perception of the teaching profession of the 21st century have the students in initial training of the Degree in Teaching (Infant and Primary) and Physical Activity and Sport in comparison to students in training in the Degree in Business Administration, Public Administration and Accounting and Auditing (n = 443). It aims to approach this symbolic universe in terms of the teaching functions to be developed (pedagogical, professional, related to the environment, professionals and techniques), to adapt to what they consider to be good educational practice. The methodology applied was quantitative, performing both a descriptive analysis (means and standard deviation) and an inferential analysis (ANOVA) of the data obtained. A validated *ad hoc* questionnaire, factored in the aforementioned teaching functions, was used as a data collection instrument. Starting from the hypothesis that the perception constructed by the students, in general, agrees with the social constructivist teaching model, it is verified that the future educators give higher priority to the social interaction planning skills and for their part, future professionals in the world of finance and business, to teaching planning as management.

Keywords: teacher profiles; constructivism; higher education; teaching model.

Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación es analizar, desde una perspectiva intergrupal comparada, la percepción que de la profesión docente del siglo XXI tienen los y las estudiantes en formación inicial del Grado en Magisterio (Infantil y Primaria), y Actividad Física y Deporte, en comparación con los y las estudiantes en formación del Grado en Administración de Empresas, Administración Pública y Contabilidad y Auditoría (n = 443). Se aborda este universo simbólico en cuanto a las funciones docentes (pedagógicas, profesionales, relacionadas con el entorno, profesionales y técnicas) para adaptarse a lo que consideran una buena práctica educativa. La metodología aplicada fue cuantitativa, realizando tanto un análisis descriptivo (medias y desviación estándar) como un análisis inferencial (ANOVA) de los datos obtenidos. Como instrumento de recogida de datos se utilizó un cuestionario *ad hoc* validado, factorizado en las funciones docentes mencionadas. Partiendo de la hipótesis de que la percepción construida por el alumnado concuerda, en general, con el modelo de enseñanza constructivista social, se comprueba que los y las futuras educadoras otorgan mayor prioridad a las habilidades de planificación de la interacción social, y los y las futuras profesionales del mundo de las finanzas y la empresa, por su parte, a la enseñanza de la planificación como gestión.

Palabras clave: perfiles docentes; constructivismo; educación superior; modelo de enseñanza.

1. Introduction

Teacher and student roles in the teaching-learning process are undergoing changes stemming from the knowledge society, the impact of new technologies and the changes introduced by the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In a context that questions the educational institution as a temple of wisdom and authority, there is a growing consensus to reinforce the socialising role of schools and teachers in 21st century education. Teachers are to become guides and managers of learning in a horizontal exchange of knowledge, within a network of interdependent, more democratic relationships (Gronn, 2000).

In 1996, the Delors report announced that, faced with the new challenges of comprehensive, creative, active and decisive learning that taught individuals how to be themselves, schools were responsible for their learning in collaboration with the family and society. Consistent with this, the new educational challenges of the 21st century offer a learning that focuses on the demands of society; inclusion; the intercultural integrative approach; democratic civic values; the active participation of students; dialogue with the educational community; the effective use of digital technologies and new cooperative methodologies; mobility and exchange; and supporting educational research. Consequently, a new teaching profile is necessary, one that is trained and interested in fostering permanent dialogue with the educational community, which goes beyond transmitting certain knowledge, and also teaches skills and abilities that enhance autonomy and cognitive independence, offers personalised attention and fosters a constructive educational innovation (Espinoza *et al.*, 2017). These elements will shift teachers' organisational centrality towards the teaching-learning processes of a distributed and shared pedagogical leadership, encouraging students' learning and academic improvement within a context that is favourable to the professional development of both teachers and students (Kilinç *et al.*, 2015).

The focus on studying the effectiveness of teachers' professional development is of constant interest in research (Jacobs *et al.*, 2020; Liu & Liao, 2019). There are studies exploring the new characteristics of the teacher-student role and education based on competencies, attitudes and value (Hsieh *et al.*, 2017). Other studies analyse the students and teachers' perception (Huang & Napier, 2016) in public and private universities (Klafke, *et al.*, 2020); the mechanisms for the construction of the teaching profile in university training (Alsina *et al*, 2019), its dimension from a comparative perspective (Authors *et al.*, 2020), and the educational quality received (Akareem & Hossain, 2016) as well as its impact on learning (Keržič *et al.*, 2018).

Other studies that investigate the area of students in higher education are also worth mentioning, such as students' and teachers' perception of motivations and training needs (Gallard & Vázquez, 2016) and learning expectations (Martín *et al.*, 2015); the characteristics of a 'good teacher' and 'good practices' (Berasategi & Orcasitas, 2014); satisfaction with training methodologies and innovative methodologies (Hershkovizt & Forkosh-Baruch, 2017); the attitude towards innovative learning environments that use ICTs (Smørvik & Vespestad, 2020; Rasmitadila *et al.*, 2020; Authors, 2020); the perceptual comparison between teachers and students on learning methodologies (Carrió *et al.*, 2018) and the role to be played (Restrepo & Navío, 2016); teaching influence on students' affectivity and motivation (Uludag, 2016); inclusion in higher education (Kantor & Proekt, 2019); teaching coexistence (Sevilla *et al.*, 2017); the gender issue in training

(Habib & Álvarez, 2018) and other areas such as ethnicity in the perception of teaching quality (Dicker *et al*., 2017) and on topics such as civic construction or European identity (Mendez *et al*., 2019). Furthermore, students' perception of the teachers in training in regard to the role to be played in their future as a 21st century teacher and a comparison with their opinion of it from another completely different training field, requires further historiographic analysis. Hence, the importance of this study.

This study is based on the paradigm of social constructivism in education by Lev Vigotsky to define students' cognitive construction of the definition of the teaching model. A pedagogical model is understood as any theory and practice that creates a structure that is above any particular way of acting and thinking. In students' minds, this model is structured by the relationships produced between the social environment and the self, to configure a new mental construct. Thus, the hypothesis used to define a model is that this new mental construct is built, firstly, by students' perception as a result of socialisation in a formative context, closely associated with the traditional autocratic and unidirectional model of teacher authority; and secondly, by the desire of a social constructivist model, of teachers as democratic educational leaders, focused on the personal and formative development of students, favouring affective relationships, a focus on students and shared teaching guidelines with the educational community (Bush & Glover, 2012).

All subjective perception is conditioned by the changing interests, needs and expectations that each individual has at a given moment and reality, characteristic of the subjects present (Flagel, 2015). This is in line with the Weberian 'ideal type', which considers that the model, in this case a 21st century teacher, is a mental construction that has a utopian character, obtained through a cognitive exaggeration of certain elements of reality, which do not correspond to the real world, although they are not a contradiction with it either. Thus, the model is built on the basis of two universes: the ideal perception, what should exist according to a construct that has been socialised; and the real perception, based on what has been experienced and the real training needs that are available (Hewitt & Maloney, 2000). In effect, the construct on which teaching practices lie is a two-dimensional reality between the observable, reality, and the motivations that define what should be (Zabalza *et al*., 2013). Therefore, the categorisation of an abstract teaching prototype is conditioned according to the reality experienced as learners, of how they understand it through: their socio-educational integration, progress, interpersonal relationship and their own personality; as well as according to the expectation of what they consider should be a hypothetical projection, made up of the values and elements of the school culture on teaching effectiveness.

The motivational, affective, emotional and satisfactional aspects generated from learning determine students' perception of it (Martín *et al*., 2015), as do performance, achievement, academic relationships, and affective teacher-student relationships; and, therefore, the projection that teachers exercise on students' academic development (Cansoy & Parlar, 2018). In this way, the expectations and individual educational purposes established in the training experience lead to a certain degree of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, in turn resulting in their acceptance or not of a type of teacher, but always subject to changing conjunctures and socialisation processes. Thus, the satisfaction and dissatisfaction, school success or failure that learners experience within the formative praxis, structures their desire to improve —which coincides with the perception of what should be, with a critical and uneasy opinion of what is known— the reality that they live, mostly one-way learning (Mateos, 2009). Within patterns of a given teaching culture, if observers consider that

teachers have favourably carried out an action or attitude, the positive perception of what should be increases based on that contextual situation. Similarly, their perception is limited when they experience unfavourable results. A dilemma between expectations with the teaching practice and the needs of the institution creates a context of misunderstanding, failure, uprooting and lack of communication that affects the teaching-learning process and school performance (Hernández & García, 2013).

Today, social reality requires a more democratic pedagogical model to transmit, reflect and apply dialogue and freedom (Tahull & Montero, 2013). In line with Hutchins' theory of distributed cognition from the 1980s, and according to the competency needs of the 21st century information, knowledge and digital society, the characteristics of today's teachers should be based on a more democratic, free teacher-student relationship, a result of the process of joint construction of knowledge, in a space of cooperation and respect (Zapata, 2011). That is, in line with the social constructivist paradigm and sociocultural theories, towards what is understood by a distributed and democratic leader teacher, who fosters growth in the subject's learning process, and is focused on the quality and academic improvement of that student, who operates in a collaborative, cooperative working community, based on the mutual interdependence of all participating agents (Johnson *et al.*, 2015).

In the same vein, the characteristics valued by students of an effective teacher are those that lead to: reflection on their activity and professional improvement; enthusiasm for what they teach; planning their teaching process according to their students' characteristics and context; fostering reasoned learning within cooperative methodologies; and improvement and challenge in learning through an effective feedback loop (Duarte, 2013). That is, the use of strategies focused on students' constructive reasoning and their learning produced in an environment of cooperation and two-way interaction (Mateos, 2009). Indeed, we have gone from considering deductive and normative pedagogy as an optimal and effective model, to one that is more inductive; from a pedagogy that followed normative, conventional, predesigned standards, to a more functionalist and pragmatic one, aimed at training competencies that stimulate personal development and social integration, in a process of social learning (Cabero & Romero, 2010). These students' perceptions are in line with what has been established as 'good practice' for 21st century teaching, that falls within the constructivist paradigm, as autonomous, active and collaborative learning, adapted to the needs of students to overcome possible difficulties (Zabalza, 2012). That is, working in favour of learning: relational, meaningful, autonomous, collaborative and divergent thinking interdisciplinary learning (Jerí, 2008). For this reason, it is essential that the school environment is given importance within the constructivist paradigm, and that teaching methods foster students' comprehensive performance, so that the hypothetical perception of the teaching model is consistent with it.

The skills and level of development of the generic competencies of the teaching profession have recently been addressed by Amor and Serrano Rodríguez (2019) in more than 1,200 students of university degrees in education and other groups (teachers and graduates), coming from 23 Spanish universities. The results obtained reported poor training in instrumental linguistic and technological competencies. This type of analysis has been completed, with special emphasis during the health crisis by COVID-19, with online teaching competencies (Badiozaman & Raymond, 2021) from its pedagogical, communicative, technical and time management dimensions.

Likewise, international studies focused on the analysis of intercultural teaching competence from the dimensions of openness, classroom management, enriched lesson design, social initiative, and storytelling have gained strength (Okken *et al.*, 2022). However, there are no studies from a comparative perspective that consider geographically diverse, but integrated, university population samples. The closest recent studies, carried out from a geographically diverse perspective (Europe, Latin America and Australia), examine expert teachers' perceptions of the competencies associated with the teaching profession (Castañeda *et al.*, 2021), thus excluding future teachers.

Thus, understanding the characteristics that define competencies according to students' perceptions, which go beyond the purely pedagogical, is essential. We refer to professional, educational and management characteristics, in close contact with the environment and those which seek to collaboratively reach the ultimate goal of education. For this, two different worlds have been selected for comparison: a group training future teachers, which also includes Sports Sciences teachers, as they are also part of the Faculty of Education, and will mostly all work in the world of teaching; and a group studying business administration and management. All of them from an international perspective. With this, we intend to at least explore teaching practice in diversity and the appropriateness of applying specific actions based on context, experience and expectations, especially from a student perspective in initial teacher education (González & Pino, 2014).

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Research design

In order to understand university students' perceptions of what 21st century teachers' characteristics, competencies, skills and qualities should be, a cross-sectional non-experimental research design was used. The participants were organised according to the subject they were studying, in order to identify, analyse and compare potential intergroup differences regardless of their geographical origin. A non-probabilistic convenience sampling and, therefore, non-random sampling was carried out in the reference population (university students), according to the researchers' ability to access the field of study and the suitability of potential participants to the research objectives.

The study followed three work phases: first, a theoretical review was carried out on the previous scientific literature on the constructivist paradigm, the construction of students' subjective perception on the teaching practice, studies into good practices in the field of education, as well as teaching profiles. Second, the instrument was designed and validated with the collaboration of teachers from other national and international universities. Third, the questionnaire was distributed among the participants and the information gathered in them was collected. Finally, the data obtained was analysed and interpreted, and proposals were made to improve teacher education and training.

2.2. Participants

A total of 443 undergraduate and postgraduate students from three European countries (Portugal, Spain and France) agreed to participate in the research. They were natural groups, formed by the centres in which they study. Its distribution by sex was 321 females (72.4%) and 122 males (27.6%). The age of the sample was between 18 and over 45, distributed into four subgroups (Table 1).

Table 1.
Relative frequencies by studies, sex and age

Degree	*n*	f_i	Sex		Age			
			Men	Women	18-22	23-25	26-44	45+
Early Childhood Education	116	26.1	19	97	76	19	20	1
Primary Education	169	38.1	41	128	128	26	10	5
Physical Activity and Sport Sciences	1	0.3	0	1	1	0	0	0
Business Administration	90	20.3	34	56	67	20	2	1
Public Administration	1	0.3	1	0	0	1	0	0
Accounting and Auditing	1	0.3	1	0	0	1	0	0
Other[a]	65	14.6	26	39	51	8	4	2
Total	443	100	122	321	323	75	36	9

For the study, the participants were grouped according to what they were studying. Group 1 comprised the Early Childhood Education, Primary Education and Physical Activity and Sport Sciences degrees. Group 2 comprised the Business Administration, Public Administration, Accounting and Auditing and other degrees (Sciences -Physics, Chemistry, Food Technology-, and Engineering -Computer Science, Civil and Industrial-. The distribution responds to the fact that Group 1 is made up of future teachers in training, while Group 2 receives more technical training, and has a wider variety of career options other than education.

2.3. Instrument

A questionnaire adapted to the research objectives and designed ad hoc was used as a data collection instrument (Table 2).

Table 2.
Instrument items

n.	Item
11[a]	Education linked to the improvement of skills and behaviors: promoting personal and professional development, through critical and fair judgment about reality and about themselves (comprehensive education).
12[a]	Promote teaching based mainly on the transmission of information and knowledge.
13[a]	I dominate in the knowledge of the subject that he teaches, at a conceptual level.
14[a]	Mastery of the teaching-learning pedagogical methodology, based on competencies and focused on the student: teacher as guide and mediator of active and cooperative learning, as well as attention to diversity.
15[a]	Use an alternative method to the teacher's oral presentation: discussion groups, laboratory practices, cooperative work, presentation by the students, etc.
16[a]	Carry out an interdisciplinary curricular strategy, flexible in group work.
17[a]	Innovate in didactic programming and curriculum planning: creativity.
18[a]	Meaningful and inclusive curriculum adaptation.
19[a]	Continuous and formative evaluation based on learning results, feedback, feedback, etc.
20[a]	Investigate the educational fact and the teaching-learning processes in order to improve teaching practice.
21[a]	Continuous and personalized tutoring.
22[b]	Define and specify learning objectives and strategies in communion with the rest of the teachers, psycho-pedagogues and students to improve the teaching-learning process.
23[b]	Respect and support the professional practice of fellow professionals, as well as collaborate with colleagues and with the staff of the center.
24[b]	Encourage cooperation between families and teachers, and the rest of the educational community.
25[b]	Show the utmost respect for the educational project.
26[b]	Show the utmost respect for the educational project and the rules of the center.
27[b]	Promote coexistence in schools: based on values and social learning.
28[c]	Exercise professionally not only to be teachers and educators of a school, but also to participate in the private and business world as educators.
29[c]	Contribute to the development of the teaching authority, to the defense of teaching rights and to the social dignity of the teaching profession.
30[c]	Communication skills and abilities: dynamic and communicative.
31[c]	Exercising managerial or other management responsibilities with dedication.
32[c]	Professional mobility to other educational centers and experiences (national and international).
33[c]	Interpersonal skills: favors participation and positive feedback.
34[d]	Academic training of content related to the discipline.
35[d]	Didactic and pedagogical training.
36[d]	Commitment to continuous training, updating and recycling.
37[d]	Digital competence.
38[e]	Planning, organization and methodical in each class.
39[e]	Manage the objectives, goals and results of the T-L process.
40[e]	Reasoned justification of the methodology used.

[a] = Pedagogical. [b] = Relationship with the environment. [c] = Professionals. [d] = Formative. [e] = Techniques.

The instrument comprised 40 items organised into content blocks: the first was related to the sociodemographic characteristics of the sample and its consent to participate (items 1-10: consent to participate, age, sex, location, father's profession, mother's profession, father studies, mother studies, course you take, and degree or studies carried out.); the second referred to pedagogical aspects (items 11-21); the third was about context (items 22-27); the fourth focused on professional characteristics (items 28-33); the fifth asked about training issues (items 34-37), and the sixth corresponded to technical qualities (items 38-40). Answers to the questionnaire were made on a five-point Likert-type scale where 1 corresponded to strongly disagree and 5 to completely agree.

To estimate the adequacy of internal consistency and overall model fit, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed with 350 students. For this purpose, the maximum likelihood method was used and the goodness-of-fit measures necessary to check for optimal model fit were calculated. The following fit indices were obtained: $\chi^{2/gl}$ (parsimony fit ≤ 5.00) = 3.150, Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA ≤ .06) (absolute fit) = .041, Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR ≤ .08) (absolute fit) = .053, Comparative Fit Index (CFI ≥ .90) (comparative fit) = .985, Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI ≥ .90) (comparative fit) = .938. Consequently, it can be confirmed that the model presents an adequate quality and internal consistency around the five factors / theoretical dimensions defined from the scientific literature, and integrated by the items included in the applied instrument: Pedagogical dimension, dimension relationship with the environment, professional dimension, formative dimension, and technical dimension.

The statistical consistency of the factorial model, confirmed in the indicators reported by the CFA, is the result of the contrast and adjustment suggested by two previous exploratory factor analyses (EFA). According to the results obtained, it can be stated, therefore, that the factor structure of the scale and its suitability for assessing teaching competencies in the 21st century is adequate.

Finally, to corroborate the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated. The result obtained (α = .966) confirms the existence of a high and adequate internal consistency for the proposed study.

To obtain empirical evidence on content validity, the inter-rater agreement technique was applied (Pedrosa *et al.*, 2014). The evaluation criteria (pertinence, sufficiency, relevance, coherence and clarity) were measured on a scale of 1 to 4 points, where 1 implied non-compliance with the criterion and 4 implied excellent compliance. In order to determine the degree of agreement, the Fleiss Kappa coefficient was calculated. The results obtained are satisfactory, with an optimum strength of agreement ($K \geq 0.81$), in the fulfillment of each criterion for the five factors (M_o = 3-4).

2.4. Procedure and data analysis

The questionnaire was administered via email and hosted in the free application Google Forms. Students received the questionnaire at their institutional email and were informed of the objective of the research study, as well as the confidentiality with which the responses would be treated. Similarly, they were asked for consent to use their answers in the study. The questionnaire was applied in February 2021. However, the forms remained open from February to March 2021. To answer the research objectives, descriptive analyses (means and standard deviation) were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Statistics) and AMOS 26 version 23 for Windows.

To check the normality of the data, histograms of each item in the questionnaire were analysed, as well as the Q–Q plots. The normality of the values was observed in all of them. Similarly, we carried out the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to verify that the level of significance was greater than .05, confirming the normal distribution of the data. After performing the descriptive analysis of the items, and having checked the assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity in its distributions ($p > .05$), a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for independent samples was applied. Likewise, the effect size was calculated using Cohen's *d*.

The study was conducted according to the guidelines of the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association Declaration), thus guaranteeing the ethical-philosophical commitment and indeclinable respect for human dignity, privacy, physical and moral integrity as well as the protection of personal data in the treatment of the survey and throughout the course of the research.

3. Results

3.1. Descriptive analysis

Table 3 shows the values obtained in the descriptive statistics. The results indicate that students' perception of the qualities and competencies a 21st century teacher should have from a pedagogical perspective, concur with the various areas analysed here. In this sense, the results show a significant consideration of all of them, with the exception of item 12, with mean values greater than 4 ($M \geq 4.15$) and a dispersion of the responses given of less than 1 ($SD \leq 0.944$). All these values highlight the importance and need to train teachers in training in such content (Table 3).

Table 3.
Descriptive statistics

	M	*SD*
11[a]	4.37	0.829
12[a]	3.65	0.788
13[a]	4.22	0.749
14[a]	4.45	0.815
15[a]	4.35	0.881
16[a]	4.21	0.897
17[a]	4.43	0.838
18[a]	4.40	0.875
19[a]	4.33	0.885
20[a]	4.33	0.854
21[a]	4.28	0.905
22[b]	4.33	0.814
23[b]	4.39	0.826
24[b]	4.33	0.725
25[b]	4.41	0.771
26[b]	4.40	0.765
27[b]	4.50	0.759
28[c]	4.26	0.789
29[c]	4.22	0.743
30[c]	4.50	0.741
31[c]	4.23	0.758
32[c]	4.16	0.730
33[c]	4.44	0.756
34[d]	4.15	0.944
35[d]	4.46	0.758
36[d]	4.55	0.662
37[d]	4.53	0.679
38[e]	4.39	0.820
39[e]	4.40	0.774
40[e]	4.29	0.850

[a] = Pedagogical. [b] = Relationship with the environment. [c] = Professionals. [d] = Formative· [e] = Techniques.

We can clearly see that participants consider that a 21st century teacher should: have command of a teaching-learning pedagogical methodology that is constructivist, based on competencies and centred on students; be a guide and mediator of active and cooperative learning (item 14); be attentive to diversity (item 18) and adapt educational assessments to students (item 19); implement new innovation strategies such as: discussion groups, laboratory practices, cooperative work, and expositions (item 15); foster interdisciplinarity (item 16) and creativity (item 17); encourage critical thinking (item

11); master disciplinary content (item 13); take renewal into account in their training (item 20); and develop personalised tutorial activities adapted to the subject (item 21) (Pedagogical dimension) ($M \geq 4.21$, $SD \leq 0.905$). Likewise, very positive results were obtained when participants were asked about the interrelation of teachers with other teachers, specialists such as psycho-pedagogues, other staff in the centre and the rest of the educational community (items 22, 23 and 24) ($M \geq 4.33$, $SD \leq 0.826$). Additionally, the values obtained on the importance of taking into account the educational project and the centre regulations (items 25 and 26) and promoting coexistence in educational centres based on values and social learning (item 27), also showed high scores ($M \geq 4.40$, $SD \leq 0.771$) indicative of the importance given to these areas by the sample.

If we look at the Professional dimension, students' positive perception towards future teachers' training in communicative skills (item 30), mobility (item 32) and adaptation to the business world (item 28) is confirmed ($M \geq 4.16$, $SD \leq 0.789$).

Regarding the Formative dimension (items 34 to 37), although the scores given to the variables are high ($M \geq 4.15$), much importance is given to a commitment to continuous training, updating and recycling (item 36, $M \geq 4.55$, $SD \leq 0.662$) and training in digital skills (item 37, $M \geq 4.53$, $SD \leq 0.679$).

Finally, the Technical dimension (items 38 to 40) also presents positive mean values ($M \geq 4.29$, $SD \leq 0.850$), which denote the importance students give to the relevance of planning, organisation and methods used in the classroom.

3.2. Inferential comparative analysis according to the studies carried out

Based on the results obtained (Table 4), we can confirm that there are significant differences between the two groups analysed (Group 1: Early Childhood Education, Primary Education and Physical Activity and Sport Sciences degrees. Group 2: Business Administration, Public Administration, Accounting and Auditing and other degrees) in the variables studied.

The confidence interval limits for the difference indicate that for variables from 11 to 14; variables 16, 17, 19, 20, 21; variables 25 to 35 and variables 37, 38 and 40, in both the groups studied, the value 0 is not included within the confidence interval limits, indicating that, in these items, the equality of means hypothesis can be rejected, as confirmed by the results obtained from the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) for these variables (Table 4).

Table 4.
Group averages by item and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) according to studies

	Degree				
I^n	Group 1	Group 2			
	M (SD)	*M (SD)*	*F*	*p*	*d*
11[a]	4.34 (0.822)	4.43 (0.842)	1.207	.379	
12[a]	3.26 (1.188)	4.38 (0.866)	109.283	.001**	0.701
13[a]	4.06 (0.840)	4.52 (0.789)	30.771	.004*	0.559
14[a]	4.41 (0.848)	4.52 (0.748)	1.960	.232	
15[a]	4.40 (0.859)	4.28 (0.919)	1.724	.290	
16[a]	4.19 (0.897)	4.25 (0.898)	.608	.337	
17[a]	4.38 (0.870)	4.51 (0.773)	2.259	.210	
18[a]	4.41 (0.897)	4.38 (0.836)	0.122	.824	
19[a]	4.33 (0.880)	4.34 (0.896)	0.020	.932	
20[a]	4.30 (0.866)	4.40 (0.831)	1.506	.351	
21[a]	4.30 (0.906)	4.24 (0.907)	0.468	.559	
22[b]	4.30 (0.851)	4.39 (0.739)	1.089	.380	
23[b]	4.40 (0.847)	4.39 (0.790)	0.006	.907	
24[b]	4.42 (0.925)	4.17 (0.907)	7.573	.008*	0.272
25[b]	4.36 (0.764)	4.49 (0.781)	2.750	.103	
26[b]	4.35 (0.771)	4.49 (0.748)	3.284	.099	
27[b]	4.49 (0.807)	4.52 (0.666)	0.231	.748	
28[c]	4.10 (0.954)	4.85 (0.664)	28.363	.002*	0.859
29[c]	4.85 (0.865)	4.14 (0.789)	4.862	.009*	0.846
30[c]	4.40 (0.788)	4.87 (0.614)	13.498	.002*	0.630
31[c]	4.11 (0.887)	4.63 (0.762)	14.645	.004*	0.649
32[c]	4.07 (0.980)	4.64 (0.805)	8.767	.007*	0.614
33[c]	4.43 (0.762)	4.45 (0.702)	0.044	.902	
34[d]	4.09 (0.991)	4.47 (0.712)	3.571	.068	
35[d]	4.45 (0.783)	4.27 (0.843)	0.072	.856	
36[d]	4.50 (0.757)	4.49 (0.773)	0.016	.978	
37[d]	4.40 (0.809)	4.48 (0.722)	1.177	.353	
38[e]	4.36 (0.838)	4.44 (0.787)	0.949	.427	
39[e]	4.41 (0.788)	4.39 (0.749)	0.019	.906	
40[e]	4.26 (0.872)	4.35 (0.808)	1.322	.288	

*$p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. I^n = Dimensional item. [a] = Pedagogical dimension. [b] = Dimension Relationship with the environment. [c] = Professional dimension. [d] = Formative dimension. [e] = Technical dimension.

The results returned in the analysis of variance show the existence of significant differences in the evaluation of the pedagogical dimension that a 21st century teacher should have in relation to the studies analysed. Thus, in the variables related to importance given, participants studying technical degrees gave training in knowledge of the subject

being taught (p = 0.001, d = 0.71; p = 0.004, d = 0.559) greater importance than teachers in training, with medium and medium-high effect sizes. This also occurs with the professional dimension variables; technical students believe that it is important for teachers to exercise their studies professionally as not only educators at a school, but also in the private and business world (p = 0.002), valuing it very positively with an average value close to 5 (*Completely agree*), and with a high effect size (d = 0.859). Furthermore, it is the technical and management training students who believe that communication skills and abilities (p = 0.002); the exercise of managerial or other management responsibilities (p = 0.004) and professional mobility to other educational centres and experiences (p = 0.007) are important compared to the group of teachers in training. In general, significant differences were found between participants (Group 1 and Group 2) for these variables, with higher mean values in all variables for Group 2 (technical degrees), and with medium effect sizes ($d \geq 0.614$).

Conversely, although with a low effect size (d = 0.272), teachers in training gave greater importance to areas associated with relationship with the environment, such as cooperation between families and teachers, and with the rest of the educational community (p = 0.008), and the variable related to contributing to the development of the teaching authority, the defence of teaching rights and the social dignity of the teaching profession (p = 0.009) with a high effect size (d = 0.272).

4. Discussion and conclusions

The knowledge and digital societies are changing the educational field. This means that the society must learn how to be competent at a procedural, attitudinal and cognitive level, in order to adapt to the demands of an increasingly changing and fluid context. For this reason, the challenge facing the 21st century teacher is that they need to modify their vision of being a mere transmitter of knowledge, and their perspective of educational leadership and of a teaching authority based on meritocracy and individuality (Tallone, 2011), to a view of bidirectionality between teacher and student, and a shared authority that emphasises active and participatory learning, creativity and self-realisation (Balduzzi, 2015). For this, a relational attitude is required, in which pedagogical knowledge and, above all, social competence supports the integral development of the subject (Elliot *et al.*, 2013).

Students' perceptions depend on the experience and expectations placed on the training process, built by attitudes and beliefs of the particularity of each case (that are created from their learning, personal history, ideology, culture, education, interactions, etc.), and the desire to improve that process (Guerra & Lobato, 2015). As we have seen, in general, in the two sample groups, socialised responses are addressed within a pedagogical approach to teaching-learning that falls within the social constructivist, realistic-reflexive paradigm (Alsina *et al.*, 2019): teachers able to exercise a distributed, democratic and influential leadership (Harris, 2009), whose mastery of the subject and intervention in learning involve effective teaching, training in values and development of skills; and a pedagogical leadership, which enhances communication and interaction as the maximum expression of teachers' personalities (Segovia & Cabello, 2017), producing actions of construction, inquiry, participation and reflection, focused on improving students' learning (Anderson, 2010). Indeed, the results of this work have shown the interest of enhancing the effectiveness of individual learning, within a concept of good

practice that addresses educational quality, personalised attention to the learner, their interests and expectations, and exercising active learning. Within such a space, teachers become a guide, who distribute responsibilities in interpersonal relationships, and who always seek students' participation in the teaching-learning process. This is what is understood by the leadership exercised by the teaching staff, and that it should be more a reality than a concept, concerned with the results of learning in shared management teams (Muijs & Harris, 2007).

On this basis, students from the Faculty of Education gave a higher valuation to the pedagogical and formative competencies in relation to new methodologies, curricular adaptation, a formative and continuous assessment, fostering a comprehensive learning, the application of the teaching-learning paradigm, continuous and updated training in the didactic and digital field, and research for educational improvement. They gave lesser consideration to items related to traditional paradigms, which see the teacher as a mere transmitter of knowledge and an expert in the conceptual domain of the discipline. Regarding the relationship with the environment, a high valuation was given to issues related to: encouraging collaboration with the family, the educational community outside the centre and coexistence, and respect for the centre's regulations and educational project. However, the centre's interpersonal and professional relationships, i.e. collaborating with other teachers, students and psycho-pedagogical staff, received a lower valuation. In regard to techniques, management outside the classroom, apart from pedagogical planning, is not given too much importance, compared to the rest.

Despite the fact that both groups in the sample share the same teaching profile, there are differences motivated by the very context in which their experiences and expectations are socialised, of what should be. Regarding teaching competencies —at pedagogical-didactic, professional, technical and training levels and in relation to the environment— for Childhood and Sports Sciences teacher training students, procedural cognitive competencies are a priority, those that facilitate the teaching work itself and didactic and pedagogical intervention strategies, through use of new technologies, to encourage a cooperative environment of coexistence in a horizontal sense, taking precedence over a conceptual mastery of the material to be taught (Kruszewska, 2020). If they value strategy planning, it is within the classroom to set in motion the concept of cooperative work, of affective and personal social and environmental interaction; to carry out meaningful and reasoned self-learning. Thus, students mainly praise all the accepted teaching functions following the inter and intrapersonal competences (being), faced with the need to develop the relational level, to guide and stimulate learning, according to civic values and behavioural norms in a bidirectional and social constructivist sense (Giacobbe, 2016). This is what is understood by a leadership focused on achieving the improvement of learning, from a social and shared attitude (Rhodes *et al.*, 2008). In fact, the professional part of directive and administrative management is not considered much by them. There is a more traditional vision that separates administrative and school management from pedagogical management.

It is interesting that students in the field of business training and administration give greater relevance to intellectual pedagogical competencies (knowing)—the disciplinary domain and permanent academic training, as a set of knowledge and methodologies that can reliably develop the material to be studied—than to professional, technical and training competencies in relation to methodical planning by objectives, in a symbiosis of administrative and pedagogical management, management and mobility tasks, with

a view to professional opportunities in the private and business world; and, in regard to the environment, they value communication competencies. In other words, teachers should favour a constructivist model that, while giving importance to the subject in the teaching-learning process, highlights the mechanistic, pragmatic and functionalist facet of pedagogy. The model falls under an instructive leadership framework, focused on management for the quality of teaching (Bush & Glover, 2014).

Therefore, we conclude that they share the same ultimate purpose, following the classification by González & Pino (2013) of a teaching style that is: cooperative, which favours cooperation and collaboration activities; innovative, which contributes new methodological ideas; creative, which provokes creative, autonomous, open responses from students; and participatory, which provides students with the possibility of intervening in the teaching-learning process, in a reciprocal and bidirectional and socialising manner, and which provides a climate of social coexistence based on values. Conversely, they differ in the importance attached to the methodology of how to carry it out. One believes planning should lean more towards a social, cultural and ethical focus, to reach knowledge guidelines linked to coexistence and personal and affective relationship between teacher and student, in order to shape one's personality, characteristic of a non-managerial and non-hierarchical leadership, and distributed, shared and focused on more effective learning (Lumby, 2013). The other, a more mechanistic planning, that highlights the cognitive, methodical management, competency of specialised knowledge, profile of a managerial leader, methodical direction of the learning process, and the technological trend, centred on the fulfilment of objectives and content. That is, typical of a managerial leadership fused with learning, which highlights the functions of management and planning as an educational organisation (Hoyle & Wallace, 2005), without falling into an administration in itself, and associated with shared and learning values (Rutherford, 2006).

Thus, our hypothesis is corroborated: in this initial training stage, student perception comprises a teaching-learning pedagogical approach, of the social constructivist paradigm, of teachers understood as working under an educational leadership framework that works and influences the other participants, with the aim of improving the quality of management and learning processes, capable of predetermining areas of social relationship democratically (Northouse, 2012). However, in order to determine the possible heterogeneity and population characteristics of the countries participating in this study, future work should focus on the identification and analysis of intergroup geographic differences (ANOVA), and control for its potential influence as a covariate (ANCOVA) on the variables explained.

Regarding the limitations of the research, we believe that the study should be extended to a more qualitative phase in order to corroborate the defended hypothesis more reliably. The instrument used foresees a module that includes the referential values that the 21st century teacher should have, on an attitudinal level, according to the perspective of teachers in training and a space for open questions to explain what they understand by leadership and teaching authority. Both variables have been selected because they relate the teaching functions studied in this work with attitudinal competencies, describing whether or not the cognitive universe of the subject, based on the educational practice of teachers, corroborates or not, and to what extent, with the constructivist-social paradigm highlighted in this study.

Finally, the educational implications of the results obtained derive in the need to apply specific actions depending on the context, experience and expectations, especially from the

perspective of students in initial teacher training. The exploration of the teaching practice and its perceptions, from the formative diversity, is useful in the design of study plans and in the teaching activity itself, regardless of the students' professional goals.

5. Contributions

All authors made significant contribution to the manuscript, reviewed, and approved before the submission. Final version of paper was reviewed and approved for submission by all the authors.

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7. Conflict of Interest

On behalf of all authors, the corresponding author states that there is no conflict of interest.

8. Availability of data and material

The datasets used or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

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