A Brief on the History of Teacher Preparation and Teacher Development Patterns in The United States, 1800s-2000s

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Abstract

This paper discusses salient patterns in the history of teacher preparation, including tensions and institutional politics that influenced the programs' content, time, and quality, during the 1800s to the 2000s. A discussion of dominant institutional evolutions and changes, from normal schools to universities, analyzes and problematizes the disabling effects on the construction of teachers and teaching. Furthermore, the paper cautions about how such an impact carries on with the pathologization of practicing teachers and the consequences of framing teacher development.\ conceptualization and practices.

Keywords: Teacher Preparation History, Teacher Development History, History of Teacher Education, Politics of Teacher Preparation

1. Introduction

Neoliberal ideology and corporate interests have historically been influential in advancing the agenda of privatization of public education and even more so in contemporary times in advancing educational policies in very diverse countries and in very different regions of the world (Ball, 2012). These policies tend to globalize teaching methods, curricular content, the organization of schooling, the evaluation of teaching effectiveness, and control and budget functions, which, according to Joel Spring (2004), contribute to the decline of the nation-state, including the erosion of union power, because they advance the interests of corporations whose purpose is economic gain and a clear division of labor where the beneficiaries are those who control those same corporations at the expense of the general public. It is also problematic that governments, intergovernmental organizations, and educators often accept these policies as legitimate and usually desirable options (Apple, 1990; Ball, 2012; Labaree, 2008; Schneider, 2019; Spring, 2004). An example is given in the reforms and changes in the function, organization, and academicization of the teaching profession that have been proposed for decades and, in some cases, implemented in the United States and are often proposed to other countries that attempt to reorganize the teaching profession and education (Frazer, 2007).Consequently, to facilitate the analysis and discussion of this type of proposal, this paper presents a brief overview of teacher education in the case of the United States (USA). This case presents information that may be relevant in the analysis of proposals and implementations of policies and reforms related to the teaching profession in other countries since, in the USA, the evolution and changes in teacher preparation and professional development have been very problematic (Schneider, 2018).

Teacher education in the United States, in general, is uneven in level and, in some cases, intellectually poor, as it focuses on preparing teachers to be effective and efficient technocrats, maintaining the current social system and serving it as functionaries in the social reproduction of a class system under the guise of providing access to all (Grinberg & Birnbaum, 2022). Given this reality, it is imperative to reaffirm an alternative vision using the concept of the teacher as someone who continues to learn throughout life to interrupt this reproduction and educate for a transformation advancing social justice (Freire, 1998; Goldfarb & Grinberg, 2005; Grinberg et al, 2006; Grinberg, 2021; Kincheloe, 2006), and to understand that the vision of the teacher and his or her role are constructions that can be disputed and that respond to ideological perspectives and interests. For reasons of functionality and interests, historical and contemporary reforms have also criticized the teaching profession and the professional development of teachers as ineffective, but under a vision of education based on the training of

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docile workers and employees and officials domesticated within the existing social system, exercising hegemonic power within a system of truth (Foucault, 1979, 1980, 1990; Anderson & Grinberg, 1998).

According to this argument, not only initial preparation but also the professional development of teachers are fundamental elements in reform discourses that attempt to improve the so-called "quality" of teaching and learning, which have been constituted as globalizing discourses (Spring, 2004) and normalizing discourses (Grinberg et al., 2006).

The purpose, then, is to problematize the dominant discourses on which the proposals for "growth" and professional development are based since, in general, they tend to reinforce the reproductive function and not the transformative one (Freire, 1998; Kincheloe, 2006; Segal, 2005). The idea is to warn about their possible implications since a proposal is not intrinsically necessarily bad or necessarily good, but its value depends on the discourses- practices and the routines of control and normalization in specific and contingent contexts (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998; Cherryholmes, 1988). Therefore, a primary function of this work is to problematize these discourses-practices inherent in the proposals for reform and transplantation of schemes from one national context to another, using historical lenses (Foucault, 1978).

First, the paper presents issues that have historically impacted the direction of teacher preparation, such as the influence of markets in the constitution of the curriculum and the effects of internal politics and tensions within the university. Then, the focus is on problematizing the contemporary dangers of the pathologizing current dominating teacher professional development.

2. Historical Conditions in Teacher Education

Studying the history of teacher education helps us to identify how different programs took on various characteristics in other contexts since, as Goodlad (1990) argues, past reforms have failed to improve the quality of teacher preparation because they were generally under-reported. For example, several historical studies have helped us to identify some themes that have prevailed for a century and a half. Some of these themes are the constraining influences of markets on curriculum and teacher preparation reform, the influence of political struggles over resources and program content at the university level, and the characteristics of participants in terms of gender, social class, and expertise (Labaree, 1992, 1994; Rury, 1989; Warren, 1989). These factors combined have contributed to the low status of students and faculty in these programs, the low regard for their quality and content, the narrow view of teacher education as reduced to a set of instructional methods that avoid conceptual and intellectual work, and the existence of short programs with easy admissions, low and straightforward demands and expectations, and little sense of purpose (Frazer, 2007; Goodlad, 1990; Grinberg, 2005; Herbst, 1989; Labaree, 2008; Urban, 1990; Segal, 2002; Warren, 1985, 1989).

With the growth of a free public school system that aimed to provide opportunity for all students regardless of their social, ethnic, or religious background, politicians and educators such as Horace Mann pushed for the growth of teacher training colleges for the preparation of future teachers for the primary grades as early as the 1830s and 1940s in the Northeast and later in the 1950s in the South and Midwest. These schools provided a secondary-level education to provide pedagogical knowledge that would standardize teaching practices. In a way, the ideology of meritocracy, that given equal opportunities, individuals would succeed according to their ability and dedication, dictated the need to guarantee well-trained teachers, and these teacher-training colleges served that purpose. There were several other reasons for the development of the Normal school, including pressure from women in education organizations, who were calling for more opportunities for young women who did not have access to better education, as well as the idea at the time, based on inspectors' reports, that women were far superior as primary school teachers. Another important reason was the need to meet the demand for teachersin the face of the growth of free public schools, with female teachers receiving much lower salaries than male teachers (Price & Grinberg, 2009).

2.1 Markets

Market considerations have often determined the policies and content of courses in teacher education programs (Warren, 1985). For example, the size of the workforce and the demand and supply of teachers have seriously affected program curricula and the processes of licensing and employing teachers. All this without paying much attention to professionalism or considering what we know from research (Sedlak, 1989) because markets have determined who enters the career and the job quality (Labaree 1994, 1995, 2006). It is interesting to note, for example, that during the 19th century and much of this century, despite high demand for teachers, the supply was never sufficient, as certification or licensure became a requirement for employment, while salaries remained low (Sedlak, 1989). In this regard, many programs (particularly teacher training colleges) not only provided the credentials needed to practice, validated by the state, but also attempted to meet the demand for teachers by accepting large numbers of students (Labaree, 1993). Historically, teacher-training colleges and their later

evolution into post- secondary institutions and regional universities sought to provide an efficient way to meet teacher demand (Goodlad et al., 1990; Grinberg, 2005; Labaree, 2006; Liston & Zeichner, 1990). Short, low-cost programs were offered to many students, risking the " product " quality to meet the demand (Labaree, 1993, p. 18).

Another form of market pressure came from consumers of these programs, who were not necessarily interested in becoming teachers (Herbst, 1989; Labaree, 1993),especially with the expansion of the Normal school into geographic areas where there were no secondary schools during the second half of the 19th century. Many students, mostly young people who attended the Normal school for geographic convenience and because it was free, wanted a credential with broad exchange value that would allow them to enter the white-collar labor market, thus producing a phenomenon in which the interest of many was the credential per se and not the content of the curricula. This is consistent with the ideas of Collins (1979), who states that the labor market in the United States has not always responded to expert knowledge but instead to the power arrangements of the professions that monopolize the provision of credentials since the credential is supposed to guarantee knowledge. Since the geographical location of the Normal schools later converted into regional universities was convenient for a large number of students in rural areas or areas far from urban metropolises, and given the low cost of education in these institutions because they were public and because they wanted to attract many students due to the demand for teachers. Therefore, the low admission requirements, the students who did not have access to other schools or who could not travel chose this path of study because it was the most affordable (Herbst, 1989), not the ideal one.

Since the Normal school was free and easily accessible, it provided a working- class or peasant population with the opportunity to access a credential that allowed them a certain level of social mobility by being able to enter the white-collar labor market when they graduated. In addition, since local congress members were very interested in meeting voters' expectations, and the normal school was a public institution that could provide credentials, these politicians exerted pressure. They succeeded in passing state laws to fulfill their promises of access to education. Consumer demand for these credentials forced the Normal school to expand the curriculum to meet needs and skills in areas other than teaching (Herbst, 1989; Labaree, 2006). Over time, having to offer more courses and then more study programs produced a shift from the traditional institutional approach to preparing teachers, later becoming regional universities towards the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

In the 1920s, the vast majority of teacher training colleges became teachers' colleges, first offering two years of post-secondary study to obtain a teaching credential and soon developing into more established institutions offering a four-year bachelor's degree, which also aimed to elevate the status of the teacher by obtaining a tertiary degree parallel to other areas of professional study (Grinberg et al., 2006). After the end of World War II, these colleges significantly increased their enrollment, as war veterans were eligible for scholarships and special programs to further their education. The four- year teachers' colleges took advantage of the immense resources that the government gave to institutions that accepted veteran soldiers to increase resources, improve and build new facilities, including student housing, and, of course, expand their programs and the degrees offered, with the teaching degree being one option among others. Therefore, as Altenbaugh and Underwood (1990) state, the programs offered had to be expanded to respond to the market of potential students, mostly men. In this way, the preparation of teachers ceased to be the institutional priority, giving way to the increase of liberal arts and other more remunerative professions for graduates of these colleges.

2.2 Internal University Politics

Because of these new markets of students who expected to obtain degrees that were not limited to teaching, teacher preparation programs were losing importance as the main reason for the existence of these institutions. In turn, colleges and universities became victims of tensions and internal politics, mainly due to the new competition to attract students that arose between different faculties within the same institution, the need for faculties and chairs to obtain more significant production of credit hours per student to justify their programs, the distribution of internal funds for the benefit of one program and to the detriment of others, and for issues of prestige and status (Warren, 1995).

Initially, internal institutional pressures forced teacher education programs to expand their curricula with courses in departments of science, humanities, arts, social sciences, and other faculties (Herbst, 1989; Ogren, 2005). These pressures arose because the numbers of students that education departments could provide to other programs were needed to justify the very existence of different faculties and academic departments, which would not have been able to survive without these students from teacher preparation programs in education or at least to justify their own budgets and academic positions for more professorships and tenure.

This resulted in more hours of study outside the education faculty and fewer hours in education, given that there was and still is a set number of credit hours required for graduation that was mandated and regulated by

the state. This sacrifice of credit hours in education meant, first, a decline in quality because the number of hours of professional learning was limited, thus forcing a focus on immediate technical needs such as the need to know how to plan or how to maintain discipline in the classroom, at the expense of intellectual aspects such as subjects in the philosophy and history of education. Second, these limitations regarding the number of subjects further limited resources for the departments or faculties of education because they produced fewer credit hours. Students and programs were shared with academic departments without interest in teacher preparation (Labaree, 2004). This affected the quality control of the programs concerning content and pedagogy because the teaching models of professors in other subjects outside of education have not been and often continue not to be valid models from which learning could be applied that is not simply mimetic (Goodlad, 1990; Kincheloe, 2006).

Also, by sharing students, the decision-making process lost its independence, requiring approval from other faculties in case of proposing curricular changes. The faculty and teaching staff lost control, as Rugg noted, stating that no program can be effective if it is not controlled by the teachers who are responsible for it (cited in Warren, 1985:11). The fragmentation and lack of coherence of the programs was a consequence of having to share responsibilities with other areas and with other teachers who did not have teacher education as a priority and interest.

These teachers from other fields aimed to advance knowledge in their field, and many needed to prepare to teach since, as Dewey (1904) observed, being a good mathematician did not mean knowing how to teach mathematics. Furthermore, many of these teachers had been educated at research-focused universities, where by the end of the 19th century, many doctorates were being awarded, and the evaluation of these professors was based on scientific productivity, not on teaching. To them, the culture of the teacher training school was something foreign and generally perceived as low status and lacking intellectual rigor. As Urban stated: "These teachers, many of whom were university- trained, introduced into teacher training institutes the academic values of their own disciplines, which did not involve the purpose of preparing teachers as the primary objective of their work" (1990:65). However, institutional growth meant that professors of what were Normal schools and then teachers' colleges at tertiary level now had a university level, raising their professional status, but not being considered equal by professors of other academic areas (Labaree, 2006; Zeichner, 2009).

2.3 Gender, Class, and Status

Most of these new teachers had no similarity or affinity with the education professors either in terms of their social class or gender, since in the Normal school, many of the professors were women who had been teachers in the past, many of them from working-class backgrounds, while the new teachers were middle- and upper-class men with a different cultural capital than the teachers of teachers; and trained in distinguished universities since very few granted the degree of doctor in a specific discipline (Ginsburg, 1987; Lanier & Little, 1986; Grinberg, 2005). In turn, the students were different since the education departments attracted mostly working-class women because it was usually the only higher education to which they had access (Altenbaugh & Underwood, 1990; Ginsburg, 1988; Ogren, 2005; Rury, 1989). These differences established a status asymmetry between education and other programs, placing education far below.

Nevertheless, ultimately, the institutional evolution movement did not arise out of intellectual expansion and rigor but rather out of a need for expansion and exchange value of the credentials granted (Collins, 1979; Frazer, 2007; Popkewitz & Brennan, 1994; Labaree, 1994). In other words, the preparation of teachers does not necessarily improve by adding academic subjects at the university level since the content related to teaching and the conceptualization of the educational process, which should have been expanded, was shortened, including more opportunities for classroom research (Grinberg, 2005). Of course, on the other hand, education students benefited in terms of academic content because these subjects offered in different faculties and programs went into greater depth and were more advanced in academic subject matter (Ogren, 2005; Frazer, 2007). At the same time, these students' credentials were now at the university level.

Within a few years, in virtually all universities that were normal schools in the past and in research universities that saw in teacher education a source of credit hours that would increase their income and, therefore, their budgets to fulfill their functions, teacher preparation was reduced to a block of technical classes, called methods, to some supervised practical experience in school for a few weeks and in some cases months, in a few occasions to some courses on psychological aspects of the student, and in rare cases some subject related to the philosophy and history of education (Grinberg, 2005). As a result, these programs needed to be more varied in content and lacking in a conceptual perspective, which the philosopher and educator John Dewey (1904) had already noticed at the beginning of the 20th century. In general, the vision was that of a future teacher as a technician, not as an intellectual, since by shortening the preparation time, they opted for curricula that provided the minimum skills to survive in the classroom, something that generally persists to this day (Chocran-Smith, 2006; Grinberg et al., 2006; Zeichner, 2009).

Public school districts, concerned about this limited preparation, eventually sought to improve teacher quality by requiring them to participate in various forms of professional development. Given that teacher preparation has been very limited in the university, the conceptualization of these professional development programs has generally been based on the idea that the teacher is not capable and cannot advance, grow, or develop on his or her own. The teacher development industry flourishes the more teacher performance is pathologized (D'Amico, 2020).

3. The Pathologization of the Teacher

There has been a problem with professional development discourses in the United States: the teacher's treatment as a recipient of improvement is because something is missing and wrong with them. The problem is created as systemic but with individual culpability (Anderson & Grinberg, 1998). This is evident not only in the programs offered for improvement but also in contemporary forms of evaluation, where the focus is on the teacher's responsibility for the failure of the system (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001; Nieto, 2003b). This is commonly called blaming the victim or pathologizing the individual.

The positive aspect is the concept that teachers are dedicated and meticulous inquirers into their practices as well as those of others, that they investigate their contexts and the conditions in which schools are located, that they understand how systems are organized, that they study cultural aspects, that they explore art and other forms of expression, and that they are of course interested in knowing more and more about children and youth, about the subjects they teach, and about the living conditions of their students (Grinberg et al., 2006; Grinberg, 2021). However, the discourse that categorizes and objectifies this growth and that institutionalizes these practices is immersed and rooted in a base of pathologization and surveillance of the teacher as an essential aspect of its proposals, as in the reports that dominated the 1980s of the National Commission on Excellence in Education "A Nation in Danger" (National Commission, 1983), or the documents of the Holmes Group "Teachers of Tomorrow" (Holmes Group, 1986).

Labaree (1992, 1994) explained that some reforms have benefited teacher educators but not necessarily classroom teachers.One of the dangers of these practices that pathologize the teacher is controlling the production of knowledge by dichotomizing, on the one hand, the producer-provider (expert) and, on the other, the consumer (practitioner). In this way, the teacher is denied the possibility of producing knowledge about practice based on his or her daily experience, and a hierarchy of division of labor, status, and professional knowledge is created (Cochran-Smith, 2006; Nieto, 2003a; Segall, 2002). In this way, the knowledge to be consumed is produced by experts who interpret and mediate the construction of realities and the constitution of truths, generally in a form divorced from and alien to the local conditions and particular experiences experienced by the teacher in specific situations and with particular meanings (Zeichner et al., 1998). The knowledge produced by teachers is treated as non-scientific, as an anecdote, and is generally not legitimized without the approval of the external expert (Anderson et al., 1994; D'Amico, 2022).

The consequence of constructing this pathology of the teacher is that if the teacher needs help, someone must provide the service and cure. Therefore, the outside expert must be the one. Professional development experts, instructional leaders, and other experts play a role similar to that of the psychiatrist and his patient, the doctor and the sick, or the judicial system and the criminal (Cherryholmes, 1988; Foucault, 1975, 1980).

A disease must be cured; if there is a crime, a system of punishment is needed; if there are teachers who cannot or do not know, then the expert steps in to provide the solution. While this has its rationale, there is also the danger of perpetuating diagnoses that justify the existence of an economy based on pedagogical pathology, with several experts justifying their existence because the teacher has been pathologized. If teachers had the conditions and capacities to organize themselves, create study groups, facilitate action research, and be able to assume leadership in the contextual situations of their practice, then the number of experts who dedicate themselves to "curing" would be significantly reduced (Anderson et al., 1994; Kincheloe, 2002; Nieto, 2002). However, the reforms and programs of the 1980s constructed the teacher as the sick person. They did not question how social structures, economic policies, school organizations, or university preparation constituted the circumstances of low quality in teaching (Ginsburg & Clift, 1990; Liston & Zeichner, 1990).

This circumstance facilitated the assimilation and awareness of being constantly watched by the teachers and, in turn, the internalization of self-surveillance (Cherryholmes, 1998; Foucault, 1979, 1990; Popkewitz, 2000). From this angle, the teacher's autonomy is restricted, a climate of little trust is created, and the focus of attention is on the teacher's behavior, ignoring the political, structural, cultural, and organizational conditions not only of that particular school where he or she works but of the system as a whole. The system's responsibility is generally lost, and the victim becomes blamed (D'Amico, 2020; Ginsburg, 1988; Kincheloe, 2002; Labaree, 1992).

Schools of education at universities in the United States have found a new space in these proposals by promoting programs to examine every day practices from a critically reflective perspective. They can interrupt oppressive practices that silence students, perpetuate discrimination, not provide learning opportunities, or shake up teachers who believed they were neutral (Cochran-Smith, 2006; Nieto, 2003a; Zeichner, 2009).

Paradoxically, then, these technologies of control established through the discourses of pathologization of the teacher have also served to create spaces as part of the solution if the teacher were to embark on a critical, problematizing, contextualized, situated inquiry, interrupting what is taken for granted, questioning everyday habits in specific places, acting as a critical and specific intellectual, which means that he or she is not outside the system. However, instead takes positions within it and seeks to decipher how everyday practices function as regimes of truth, preventing the imagining of alternatives that introduce an agenda of social justice (Foucault, 1980; Grinberg et al., 2006; Grinberg, 2024; Nieto, 2003b; Zeichner, 1991).

4. Conclusion

Historically, mediocre and short programs with little conceptual content have been offered, generally focused on technical practice. At the same time, professional development has a pathologizing discourse that ignores the contribution of everyday knowledge and ultimately impedes healthy growth. However, there have been opportunities to create and maintain programs that are oriented to educate a teacher- researcher with a critical stance, with a preparation that incorporates a type of individual and collective reflexivity to alter educational practices that are unjust, inhuman, and antidemocratic (Cochran-Smith, 2006; Liston & Zeichner, 1991; Zeichner, 2009). For this to happen, it was necessary not only to reconceptualize the contents of teacher education but to be able to imagine other institutional structures that are emancipated from the limiting and anti-intellectual legacy that the programs were forced to adopt historically, as it was discussed in the first part of this essay. It has also been necessary to break with the dependence created by the pathologizing discourses of the reforms and proposals that emerged, particularly in the 1980s. In conclusion, teacher preparation and professional development in the United States have yet to be coherent models; they have been problematic, and the institutional evolution of the Normal school, the teaching profession, and university programs has had mixed results.

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