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Editorial

Research Trends in Education in Colombia: Documentary Review

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The society of knowledge and lifelong learning poses new challenges to education and educational research, which has shown a significant increase in recent decades. The latter has based its observation and production of knowledge on different thematic approaches that facilitate both the understanding of the complex processes experienced in schools and the measurement of their indicators. The objective of this text is to identify thematic trends that Colombian researchers are addressing according to the different challenges and social problems they face both within and outside the school environment. To achieve this objective, a documentary review was carried out of Colombian scientific journals in the area of education that are indexed in the main databases and citation indexes. The following sources were used: *Publindex* (all categories), *Redalyc*, *Scopus*, *Wos*, and *Scielo Colombia*.

Education research is a field with enormous possibilities for social development. In Colombia, the most relevant research dates back to 1978; since then, resources of different institutions have facilitated the exchange of ideas between study groups through the dissemination of unpublished research works in the field of education and pedagogy (Vélez-Medina, Ortiz-Salazar, Mosquera-Ayala, 2015). However, the lack of articulation between social, economic and educational needs and interests has generated low impact and decontextualization in educational research. One of the main difficulties when it comes to research is that research has been considered a requirement that must be met by institutions in charge of teacher training, but in many cases the lines of research are not sufficiently articulated to the problems of pedagogical knowledge (Quintero and Ruiz, 2004).

Currently, 15 Colombian scientific journals whose work is oriented to the study of education are registered in the above-mentioned bases and indexes. (See table 1)

Table 1. List of Colombian education journals

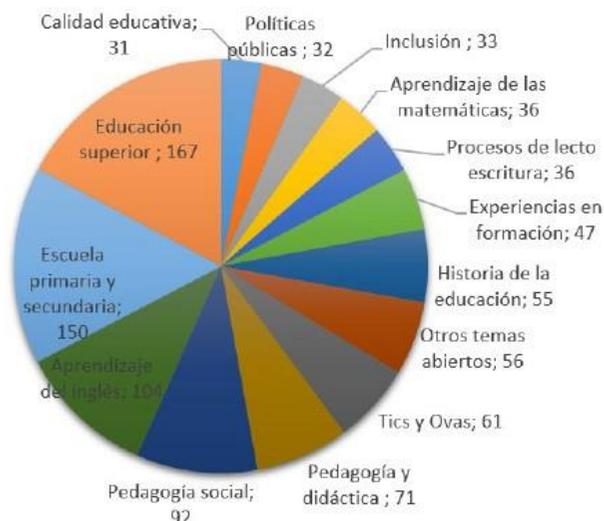
| Journal | Institution | Database o index |
|---|---|------------------------------------|
| <i>Magis</i> | Pontificia Universidad Javeriana | Publindex, Scopus, Redalyc, wos |
| <i>Práxis y Saber</i> | Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia | All databases and indexes |
| <i>Educación y Educadores</i> | Universidad de la Sabana | Publindex, Redalyc, Wos, Scielo |
| <i>Educación y Ciudad</i> | Instituto para la Investigación Educativa y | Publindex |
| <i>Folios</i> | Universidad Pedagógica Nacional | Publindex, Redalyc, Scielo |
| <i>Pedagogía y Saberes</i> | Universidad Pedagógica Nacional | Publindex, Scielo |
| <i>Revista Colombiana de Educación</i> | Universidad Pedagógica Nacional | Publindex, Scopus, Scielo, Redalyc |
| <i>Historia de la Educación Latinoamericana</i> | Universidad Pedagógica y Tecnológica de Colombia | Publindex, Redalyc |
| <i>How</i> | Asociación Colombiana de Profesores de Inglés - ASOCOPI | Scielo, Publindex |
| <i>Profile</i> | Universidad Nacional de Colombia | Publindex, Redalyc, Scielo |
| <i>Revista Latinoamericana de estudios Educativos</i> | Universidad de Caldas | Publindex, Redalyc |
| <i>Zona Próxima</i> | Universidad del Norte | |
| <i>Sophia</i> | Universidad La Gran Colombia | Redalyc, Scielo, Wos |

Source: Own elaboration

In order to identify a thematic trend in education research, a documentary search was carried out in each of the mentioned journals. For this purpose, a 4-year observation window was established and 13 categories were estimated. These were chosen based on the thematic offprint (subjects, areas and/or fields of research) used by education journal editors in the tables of contents, and the issues with specific themes published by each journal. In total, 975 articles that had been published in the 15 journals between 2015 and 2019 were consulted in order to recognize what kind of thematic inclinations teachers have according to the research topics; as well as the research needs that are generated within institutions. Several common factors were taken into account when choosing the journals, such as: location (Colombia) periodicity (six-monthly, quarterly) in order to obtain homogeneous data in relation to the characteristics of each journal.

The documentary review according to the 13 thematic trends proposed yielded the following results:

Figure 1. Categories of research trends in education



Source: Own elaboration

possible to identify which thematic trends are being played out among Colombian researchers (Graph 1). As can be seen, research carried out by teachers in the area of higher education predominated with 17.1%; it should be clarified that this category, in turn, was divided into two subcategories that were distributed as follows: university education with 38.3% and research in higher education with 61.6% of the total research found in this category (167).

These results also show that different improvement alternatives are being generated in relation to the school environment; 15% of the total literature reviewed in specialized journals was oriented towards the solution of problems from primary and secondary school onwards. No specialized editions were found in this trend in any magazine.

Similarly, the research found in the trend of English learning manages to position itself as the third most developed theme by teachers found for this study. It is important to mention that these findings, to a great extent, are due to the fact that two journals were found to declare their great area of knowledge in education; however, their research is specifically focused on the learning of English as a second language.

Returning to the results obtained, the topic that is located in the fourth place is that of social pedagogy with 9.4% of the total of investigations found in the review. In this category were taken into account all those articles that were oriented towards the learning of strategies to improve socialization or the satisfaction of basic needs of the being through the school environment. Nor were any thematic issues found in any journal for this category.

On the other hand, the category of pedagogy and didactics, although with fewer findings, also maintained a strong role in the results found (7.2 %).

A review of the latest editions published between 2015 and 2019 in education journals makes it

This is where the research that guided their development was located, in the variety of alternatives that allow teachers to have more means to do a better job in the classroom. This category was built by grouping these two concepts: *pedagogy* and *didactics*, which, despite being different, are closely related which allowed us to group them to obtain these results.

In the same line, the ICT and VLO (Information and Communication Technologies and Virtual Learning Objects) trend registered a percentage of 6.2%, also important for the analysis of this research. Here were located the texts that develop their object of study in the interactions with the technologies of the information and the communication: social networks, study of virtual platforms like Moodle, evaluation software (Dipro) and all those virtual tools that serve as support in the present society of knowledge.

Finally, the categories that had the lowest percentage of findings within the research will be analyzed together. In the tendency history of education, we found 5.6% in which the texts that study, analyze, and compare the history of education in its different moments, through authors and their main exponents, are classified. The experiences in formation showed a percentage of 4.8%; the processes of reading and writing 3.6%; public policies 3.2%, inclusion 3.3%; educational quality 3.1% and finally a last category "other open topics" in which a significant percentage was found (5.7%) due to the fact that there was a striking amount of articles that did not fit in any of the previous ones, however they were oriented to educational topics.

It is important to note that although the most developed education topic was identified by researchers (higher education), there is also a significant increase in two of the trends identified: the *learning of mathematics* and the *learning of English*; this, in relation to other research conducted previously, especially that conducted by Rincon-Zabala in 2016.

Although the difference in time is not very large, the dissimilarity between the findings is significant because Rincón-Zabala bases his research on the old Colciencias measurement model that was in place for the year he did his research, in which there were more journals indexed in that area of knowledge. However, many of them came out after the implementation of the new model that sought to filter the quality, visibility and permanence of research through international editorial criteria. Despite this, some trends coincide with the research developed by Murcia, Murcia & Urbina (2011). It is important to mention that although all these journals were affiliated with Colombian institutions, a large percentage of research was developed in international contexts in which contributions from countries such as Chile, Ecuador, Brazil, Argentina and Spain stand out. Finally, it is important to mention that the National Pedagogical University is the one that makes the most contributions to educational research in Colombia.

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