Chapter 6 / Capítulo 6

Emerging pedagogies: AI, territory, and situated knowledges (English Version)
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Innovations and alternatives in research training in postgraduate education programs. Constructions in everyday life

Innovaciones y alternativas en la formación para la investigación en los posgrados en educación. Construcciones en el ámbito cotidiano

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ABSTRACT

In Mexico, postgraduate programs in education have increased, offering training programs with professional orientations as well as others focused on research training. This report examines the innovations these programs implement daily in their students' education. While we have theoretically considered notions of innovation as a top-down approach to educational spaces, we focus on the innovative, everyday practices undertaken by curriculum developers, practices that arise from the specific needs and orientations of their programs. Methodologically, we utilize narratives as a means of open dialogue to identify the characteristics, orientations, purposes, structure, and training processes of the postgraduate programs documented in this research. We maintain that innovation, when it emerges from within practices and as a condition of institutions and individuals, leads to the development of new proposals within postgraduate programs that place research at the heart of the training process.

Keywords: Graduate Education; Training; Research; Innovation.

RESUMEN

En México los posgrados en educación se han incrementado, se han ofertado programas de formación con orientaciones profesionalizantes y otros orientados a la formación para la investigación. En esta ocasiòn damos cuenta de las innovaciones que estos programas ponen en marcha cotidianamente para la formación de sus estudiantes; teóricamente hemos reflexionado en torno a aquellas nociones que colocan a la innovación desde propuestas verticales que llegan a los espacios educativos, nosotros centramos la atención en aquellas prácticas cotidianas innovadoras que los sujetos de desarrollo curricular llevan a cabo y que surgen de las necesidades y orientaciones propias de sus programas. Metodológicamente retomamos las narrativas como posibilidad de diálogo abierto para identificar las características, orientaciones, propósitos estructura y procesos de formación de los programas de posgrado que documentamos en la investigación; con ello sostenemos que la innovación cuando emerge del interior de las prácticas y como condición de las instituciones y los sujetos, conlleva a generar otras propuestas en los programas de posgrado que colocan a la investigación como eje central en los procesos de formación.

Palabras clave: Posgrado En Educación; Formación; Investigación; Innovación.

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we present part of the findings of the research: Innovations and alternatives

in research training in graduate education programs, carried out by the Academic Body for Research Training and Terminal Efficiency in Graduate Education Programs, of which two of the authors are members. It is essential to note that one of the purposes of this research was to analyze the place and meaning that innovation and/or pedagogical alternatives have occupied in research training. For this reason, some previously selected graduate programs were considered.

Therefore, we took as a starting point some of our previous research (Pérez, Atilano, and Condés, 2017); Pérez, Hernández, Atilano, and Condés, 2021; Pérez, Hernández, and Atilano, 2023), which have allowed us to identify that in recent decades, specifically in postgraduate education programs, research training, knowledge production, and social commitment have been displaced by professionalizing, managerial, and business logics, driven by modernizing policies, framed in turn in the context of globalization and neoliberalism. Educational and curricular reforms have focused their discourse and proposals on promoting the quality of education, evaluation, and academic innovation. However, we have identified that institutions currently offering master's and doctoral degrees maintain these constituent elements of postgraduate education.

Another critical point in relation to educational reforms and curricular innovations, Frida Díaz Barriga (2013) recognizes that they have emerged with a vertical approach in their design and implementation, that is, "from top to bottom" and "from outside to inside," with an imposition by authorities or specialists on the actors.

Therefore, in this chapter, we focus on the innovations that emerge when implementing postgraduate education programs, those that articulate the proposals of the formal curriculum with the strategies, devices, or teaching methods implemented in light of training needs, contexts, and institutional conditions. On the other hand, we present pedagogical alternatives that guide research training through a critical approach.

Furthermore, we identify that there are currently alternative graduate programs that oppose hegemonic training proposals, which are close to mercantilist and business logic. This led our research to take a qualitative perspective with a comprehensive and proactive nature, since its object of study was innovations and alternatives in research training in graduate programs in education.

For this reason, we designed moments and tasks with defined purposes: first, we began by identifying the institutions that offer graduate education programs and that have incorporated training in, by, and for research as a substantive axis; from there, we moved on to the task of analyzing the characteristics of these programs in terms of researcher training and understanding the meaning they give to training in, by, and for research through the incorporation and promotion of innovative practices. All of this allowed us to integrate proposals derived from the experiences of other institutions that offer graduate programs.

An important point to highlight is the encounter with the subjects of curriculum development, which took place in person and was conducted through narratives as open dialogues, during which we recovered experiences around the practices they implement daily, which are innovative. In this way, we relied on narrative as a methodological possibility in which, as Bolívar et al. (1997) note, priority is given to the voice and experience of the social actor, alongside the social intentions and processes they encounter.

Likewise, the open dialogues we held with the research participants also helped us understand the institutional dynamics as processes and events that shape experiences and lead to the implementation of innovative practices or the configuration of alternatives.

The institutions we considered for the development of the research were: the Faculty of Behavioral Sciences (FaCiCo) of the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico (UAEMex); the University Center for Social Sciences and Humanities (CUCSH) of the University of Guadalajara (UDG); the National Pedagogical University (UPN) Unit 151 Toluca; the Department of Educational Research (DIE) of the Center for Research and Advanced Studies (CINVESTAV) of the National Autonomous University of Mexico ( ); the Faculty of Education (FaE) of the Federal University of Minas Gerais (UFMG) in Brazil; and the National Autonomous University of Mexico (the National Autonomous University of M exico, through the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, the Institute for Research and Studies on the University (IISUE), the Aragón Faculty of Higher Studies, and the Acatlán Faculty of Higher Studies; the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education (ITESM); the Institute for Thought and Culture in Latin America A.C. (IPECAL) and the Indigenous Peasant University Network (UCI-Red).

However, to clearly understand the theoretical position on training in, by, and for research in postgraduate education, it is necessary to adopt a theoretical approach that enables a precise understanding of the literature on the subject.

Training in, by, and for research in postgraduate education programs

The research we carried out at the CA was theoretically and conceptually grounded in benchmarks for training in research and innovation, incorporated into some postgraduate programs aimed at research training. These references have allowed us to focus on the processes these institutions implement daily; these spaces have shifted from professionalizing practices to researcher-training practices, where the notion of training and innovation guides them in training researchers and developing strategies to do so (Colina & Díaz Barriga, 2019).

To construct our notion of research training, we set out to explore what training is and what it implies as a process constructed by those who train in postgraduate institutions. We looked at the contributions of Ferry (1997) and Moreno (2006); from the former, we took up some concerns regarding who trains the other, how they are trained, and where they are trained. Accordingly, the author comments that no one trains themselves, recognizing that mediation is always necessary, whether human or institutional, to influence the training process. However, as he also states, training is a responsibility that requires self-work.

In this regard, Moreno (2006) also comments that training is present throughout life, pointing out that in some stages it is more conscious than in others, always with the character of shaping the self. We consider it a process of awareness, accompanied by knowledge, skills, and abilities that the subject develops to advance professionally and socially. It is, therefore, a reflective construction for oneself, for working on oneself, on situations, on events, on ideas (Ferry, 1997).

Consequently, training in, by, and for research is a characteristic of graduate programs in education that place research at the center of their curriculum. We agree with Schmelkers (2013) that training is a comprehensive process that prepares for research by appropriating theoretical and methodological elements, developing ways of thinking, constructing concepts, and analyzing theories.

However, in their training process, graduate institutions as mediators gradually train

individuals who, from the perspective of research training, is characterized by preparation for research practice, based on courses and seminars where the subject acquires theoretical and methodological elements, strategies, and techniques associated with the acquisition of research skills that allow the researcher in training to collect and systematically process the information they find in documentary and field sources (Schmelkers, 2013). Therefore, as part of this process, a tutor or thesis director acts as a mediator, providing direct support, whereas other members of the tutorial committees serve as mediators.

Research training allows the future researcher to appropriate theoretical, methodological, and philosophical elements that equip them to carry out this task. It is a comprehensive process in which, in addition to methodological instrumentation, the subject being trained also takes positions on the view of reality and the way knowledge is constructed. In this research orientation, the training devices offered by institutions are objectified. Based on the implementation of programs for each seminar included in the curriculum, the content and texts addressed enable the trainee to appropriate theoretical and methodological notions and epistemological positions.

This research training, therefore, is condensed into theoretical, methodological, and epistemological appropriations; positions regarding reality and the construction of knowledge that place researchers in training before a complex practice, where it is not only necessary to demonstrate and apply skills and abilities, but also to configure an ethical-political position regarding reality and those who make it possible. It becomes a practice to which those who graduate from postgraduate programs with this orientation will have to devote themselves, either to improve and transform their professional practices or as a task that will turn them into research professionals.

DEVELOPMENT

Postgraduate studies in education. Presence and orientations for research training

With the rise of neoliberal public and educational policies, a market logic has been established that guides school processes at all levels of education in our country. This has led to educational reforms aimed at achieving efficiency and effectiveness through the development of skills that students must acquire in order to become part of a social and economic order modeled on the guiding policies of international organizations such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization, to name a few.

In this economic model, educational quality and evaluation are the parameters by which the Mexican educational system operates toward competitiveness and productivity. Therefore, using objective, standardized measurement instruments, school processes are evaluated across different educational levels. Consequently, this phenomenon affects the training of professionals and professionalization processes, particularly in graduate programs.

It should be noted, however, that postgraduate programs in education have expanded and diversified in recent decades due to training and professionalization needs, as well as in response to the demands and requirements of a capitalist and mercantilist order, the latter being the factor with the most significant impact on the presence of postgraduate programs.

Given the growing presence of these programs, there are those geared toward research, professional training, or hybrid programs that may be publicly or privately funded, with classroom, distance, or virtual modalities; whose requirements for obtaining a degree include

various mechanisms, among which theses, grade point averages, and research projects stand out. This has largely responded to the social order established by neoliberalism and the market, leading to the implementation of educational policies aimed at quality, efficiency, and effectiveness in scientific and technological development.

The impact that these policies have had on education as an ethical-political and transformative process has been reduced to the commercialization of education and, therefore, to an instrumental nature of education, which Díaz Barriga (2005) announces as an abandonment of the intellectual life of postgraduate studies.

In this sense, postgraduate education is affected by the expansion and growth in the supply and demand for programs that show little or no interest in research training, greatly favoring instrumental processes oriented towards productivity, thereby consolidating the commodification of education.

Due to the displacement of education as a critical, ethical, and transformative event, many postgraduate programs have been dominated by the notion that education is reduced to the accumulation of theoretical and scientific knowledge, sustained by business and market language, prioritizing technical and instrumental training that reduces the view of the complexity of reality and the subjective configuration of those being educated.

In this context, training is professional in nature, grounded in technical rationality and imbued with business language, with research dissociated from training processes. Thus, to obtain an academic degree, there are different modalities: academic excellence achieved through a grade point average required by the institution; through essays or research projects; and, in some cases, through instrumentalist research lacking theoretical and methodological rigor and poorly articulated with educational contexts and reality.

The commercialization of education has had a significant impact on the presence and growth of postgraduate programs, such that there is a strong presence of those that are characterized by being private, in which business and market dynamics prevail and place training from a technical-instrumental perspective, which is far removed from those critical training processes that are theoretically and epistemically sustained and allow for the problematization of social and educational reality.

Therefore, commodification encourages competition through individualism (Castro & López, 2020), promoting reproduction and homogenization, which, in the words of Sánchez and Rodríguez (2011), favor privatization and turn education and its postgraduate programs into a commodity.

Therefore, if we think about true innovation, we must take into account those programs considered alternative because, as Pérez-Arenas (2023) argues, they are based on critical questioning of the historically established order and the dominant social project, to transform it and establish a new social structure that substantially modifies social relations, which requires new ways of thinking that break with or challenge conventional patterns of thought.

Innovations in the implementation of postgraduate programs in education

In terms of innovations, they have been relevant in the implementation of the programs, that is, in the practical field of training and knowledge production in postgraduate studies. However, in relation to the notion of innovation, we conduct a critical and reflective analysis

of the idea that, in education, this term is associated with changes that affect an aspect or system of school education. Such changes are usually planned vertically and attempt to modify conceptions, perspectives, and attitudes in order to alter practices, methods, and interventions that lead to changes characterized by the improvement in knowledge, product, or process in education or training (Medina, 1999; Díaz Barriga, 2005; Carbonell, 2010).

Although innovation involves change, we agree with Díaz Barriga (2013) that it also represents a creative process in which risks and errors are assumed. The path and results are not recognized *a priori*. Therefore, it does not lead to the desired success. Innovation is primarily shaped by vertical perspectives whose planning considers certain fundamentals that specify its intentions, and its development can be oriented toward those fundamentals and purposes.

Based on these notions, we position ourselves on the idea that innovation arises from within the daily practices of educational actors, grounded in their own needs and orientations in school and training processes, practices that are not documented. Hence, in our research, we focus primarily on identifying postgraduate institutions in education that incorporate training in, by, and for research as a core element in their students' training and that have incorporated innovations into their programs. This has led us to understand, from authors such as Viñao (2006), Medina (1997), and Carbonell (2010), the changes and innovative proposals that emerge from the daily dynamics of training at different levels, such as the scientific-conceptual, institutional management, school culture, and social levels.

Tutorial Committees. Support in training and knowledge production

Graduate students in their training and production processes are accompanied by a tutoring committee, an academic team that guides the development of training programs and student research projects. These committees are integrated into the course of different semesters and are defined according to the institution's academic organization. For example, at FaCiCo at UAEMex, academics are grouped by lines of research and academic bodies, from which the committees are formed.

In the postgraduate program at FaE at UFMG, Brazil, the tutorial committees are composed as follows: *In the case of a master's degree, there are three professors, one of whom must be external to the program; in the case of a doctorate, there are five professors, two of whom are external to the program, one is external to the university, and the other three, including the thesis director, may be from the program. (Denis, J. E., personal communication, November 2007)*

At the CUCSH of the UDG, at the UPN, Unit 151 Toluca, at the DIE, at the UNAM, as well as at the IPECAL, the tutorial committees are composed of the tutor and two co-tutors or readers, who collegially analyze the doctoral student's progress.

Complementary academic activities

In several postgraduate programs, such as the CUCSH at the UDG, activities are implemented to complement the curriculum. According to Moreno and Torres (2019), complementary academic activities are incorporated, including participation in academic events organized by the institution, such as colloquiums, workshops, or meetings; attendance at national and international conferences; as well as the presentation of papers and publication of articles related, in each case, to the student's ongoing research.

In the case of UPN, Unit 151 Toluca, the head of the postgraduate program commented as follows: "The colloquiums are internal at the end of the first and second years of each program (...), in which (the master's students) present their protocol and partial results" (Alcántara, M. E., personal communication, November 2021).

About the DIE, public and private presentations of research progress and the postgraduate colloquium are designed throughout the program. In these spaces, students present the status of their thesis work in the initial, intermediate, and final phases and receive specific feedback from a professor and a student reader. They also have the option of participating as speakers in academic events other than those planned by the Department.

At UNAM, during the doctorate, students must participate in a national or international academic event, meet with the tutorial committee twice per semester, and attend the colloquia organized once per semester.

Academic relationships

Inter-institutional academic relations or links between researchers strengthen postgraduate training by establishing agreements for exchanges and/or stays that provide feedback on the development of students' research projects. At FaCiCo, academics belong to academic bodies, which draw up agreements for stays, invitations to incorporate researchers from other institutions into tutorial committees, and invitations to participate in colloquia and other activities. The coordinator of the postgraduate program commented on this as follows: "At the end of each semester, our students are evaluated by a committee of tutors, for which we invite members of networks from other institutions to our colloquiums to provide feedback" (Farfán, M.C., personal communication, November 2021).

In the DIE, students interact not only with their tutorial committee members but also with a student reader, who provides feedback on their research progress. A similar situation occurs in the dynamics of the graduate program at FaE, UFMG, Brazil, where a doctoral student assumes the role of critical reader, analyzing, debating, and constructing the academic production of master's students. According to an academic at the university, "this strengthens the process of socialization, production, and training of master's and doctoral students" (Denis, J. E., personal communication, November 2007).

Academic mobility

A significant aspect of research training is students' academic mobility to other institutions and programs related to their subject or research lines. In the case of the CUCSH at the UDG, mobility actions include a) collaboration and agreement activities, b) postdoctoral stays, c) collaboration in networks with nodes in the public sector, d) faculty mobility, e) reception of student mobility, and f) visiting professors.

In the DIE, the doctoral program includes one or more academic stays at higher education institutions in Mexico or abroad, with a variable duration that may exceed one year.

In the UNAM's postgraduate program in Education, academic interactions are also a fundamental part of the training process, as can be seen in the following account: *(The student) can take a seminar at another institution with which there is an agreement. (UNAM) has many agreements with universities in other countries, including Europe. Several students have traveled as part of academic mobility, going to Australia, Sweden, and Spain, among others. (Casillas, C., personal communication, July 2022)*

Academic mobility is also evident in ITESM's graduate programs, with an emphasis on international stays.

Teaching strategies

At IPECAL, one teaching strategy is the use of "Reflection Circles" as training tools. The teachers coordinate these. There are no lectures; debates and presentations are given in relation to each member's particular learning experiences as a potential element in the construction of knowledge. A graduate of the IPECAL doctoral program noted: "Reflection circles are a methodology where individuals share their life stories that resonate with others because we share the same culture and belief system" (Benítez, E., personal communication, December 2021).

As part of IPECAL's educational program, annual face-to-face meetings are held in Mexico or at another location in Latin America, called "Latin American Octobers." At these meetings, students present the topics they have worked on during their training. At DIE, as part of its teaching strategies, public and private research progress meetings are held. These are intended to showcase progress, discuss content, provide feedback, and propose ways to continue developing the research. At ITESM, in addition to providing feedback, research progress presentations are intended to prepare students for their final dissertation for the degree exam.

At UNAM, we identify flexibility as a strategy and strength of the postgraduate program, understood as the possibility for students, with the approval of the committee, to choose one or more seminars from those offered in the master's and doctoral programs or in other programs, whether affiliated with the university or not, to subscribe to a methodology, and to choose the activities they consider most beneficial to their academic training and the development of their research project.

Academic production (Completion of the thesis)

This is reflected in a fundamental space, which is the completion of theses, and has to do with the follow-up work of the tutorial committees, which was observed in all the postgraduate programs analyzed. In the case of the UPN, Unit 151 Toluca, with the intention of generating production through research, students must present their research progress in the form of a paper at national and international conferences. This process is carried out on the initiative of the master's student or at the suggestion of the thesis director. This makes it clear that at this institution, the degree is obtained by publishing an article in an indexed journal or a book chapter resulting from the research.

In the case of IPECAL, once the program has been completed and the tutor and co-tutors have approved the thesis, the student is eligible to obtain the degree. To do so, the defense is not conducted in a school setting where the student presents their work to a group of examiners, but rather within the framework of the "Latin American Octobers" before the IPECAL academic community.

Pedagogical alternatives in postgraduate education

In this section, we identify graduate programs that implement pedagogical alternatives in their training processes. Specifically, there are four master's and doctoral programs in education designed to train educational researchers. Three of them are located in public institutions (the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), the Department of Educational Research (DIE) of the Center for Research and Advanced Studies (CINVESTAV), and the Indigenous Peasant

University Network (UCI-Red)), and one is private (the Institute for Thought and Culture in Latin America (IPECAL)).

To understand the pedagogical alternatives of postgraduate programs, it is necessary to address three aspects: the critical positioning of postgraduate programs in relation to reality, the critical sense in the training of educational researchers, and the constitution of academic communities as a teaching method in postgraduate programs.

Critical stance on social reality

The aforementioned postgraduate programs previously addressed arise in response to the hegemonic order established in the national education system and in professional training, particularly in postgraduate programs in education, as well as in social, cultural, and political practices.

The master's programs in science with a specialization in educational research and the doctorate with the same name from the DIE and the doctorate program in pedagogy from the UNAM emerged and were modified in response to the social problems expressed in the movements of 1968, which, according to González (2028), synthesized the contradiction of the development model and the illegitimate proliferation of institutions of political control. This movement highlighted the need to reorganize and innovate the growing educational system and to reform its dominant practices and content.

The DIE was founded in 1971 to promote educational research to address educational issues and needs. It was the institution responsible for producing free textbooks to renew the educational discourse. Subsequently, in 1975, the master's program was created, and in 1993, the doctoral program. These projects took into account the plurality and social and economic diversity in the country, meaning that the DIE would be attuned to the needs of Mexican society and seek to build ties with public institutions, mainly the SEP, teachers, and education.

This openness within the system was used to propose alternative concepts and develop a critical vision, as well as to influence the training of researchers with this social and critical awareness.

The UNAM Doctorate in Education, initially taught by the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, was created in 1956 and has been renewed three times: in 1972, 1992, and 2011. From its inception, the postgraduate program has pursued a strategy of training professionals and conducting humanistic and scientific research to serve Mexican society, unlike other programs that have a mercantilist connotation, focusing on training for know-how.

The doctorate in pedagogy has focused on the study of the epistemic ontological conformation of the educational field, the design of proposals for educational policy, innovation, or intervention that allow for the solution of educational problems, as well as the critique of educational policies, systems, and practices, in addition to the search for pedagogical alternatives to conventional approaches. All to train students in original and cutting-edge educational research, based on ethical and political positions of human solidarity, tolerance, and plurality, as well as a commitment to educational justice and the promotion of the universal right to education.

The Master's program in Narrative Practices in Education and Community Work (MPNETC), as well as the Doctorate in Pedagogy of the Subject, offered by UCI-Red, emerged as a critical response to the hegemonic projects that, in recent decades, have underpinned managerial-

style curriculum reforms. In these models, the political, ethical, and pedagogical have been marginalized, excluded, or displaced.

UCI-Red has developed a training model designed to accompany and strengthen the organization of communities and collectives in rural and indigenous regions. This model is based on knowledge management and on the thinking and experiences accumulated by civil society organizations. It seeks to recover the essence of pedagogy, counteracting the emptying of meaning caused by policies focused exclusively on educational quality.

One of the distinctive features of this university is its contribution to specialized training and knowledge management, as well as its coordination of efforts among civil organizations and associations, educational institutions, and research centers across the public, private, and social sectors. Its purpose is to strengthen the technical, political, and social capacities of individuals and groups through the exchange of experiences and knowledge, both from experts and from the social groups themselves, based on trust and solidarity, under a common agreement: the promotion of a more humane world.

The Doctorate in Culture and Knowledge in Latin America is one of the postgraduate programs offered by IPECAL as part of its educational and training program. This program is research-oriented, aiming to identify social problems based on their historical and social causes and to promote the development of ethical and politically meaningful alternatives for the future.

This training proposal differs from other school-based programs in that it is part of an institutional project that questions the hegemonic order established in the social, cultural, political, and educational practices of Latin America and the world.

This program has a counter-hegemonic epistemic and pedagogical orientation in response to the oppressive practices that have historically been imposed on the lives of Latin American peoples. It opposes a model that privileges the established order, technical-instrumental rationality, productivity, and, ultimately, the ignorance of the majority. Its approach seeks to train critical, restless individuals who question the systems of domination in Latin America, one of the regions with the world's most significant social and economic inequalities.

Postgraduate education. Critical thinking in the alternative

The postgraduate programs analyzed, which offer pedagogical alternatives, are geared toward training researchers with a critical mindset, capable of recognizing the hegemonic order in educational institutions and the social, cultural, and political practices that favor projects centered on commercial and economic interests. These programs seek to provide training with clear social value.

The DIE postgraduate program aims to train educational researchers with an interdisciplinary, critical, and socially conscious vision, committed to the country's education and to teachers in the Mexican educational system.

The curriculum clearly defines the training of these researchers, aiming to enable postgraduate students to contribute to the generation of educational knowledge from a critical perspective, as well as to the construction of alternatives for educational policies or solutions to the problems of the sector (DIE/CINVESTAV, 2021).

The Doctorate in Pedagogy at UNAM guides the training of critical researchers toward the construction of knowledge and the improvement of education, conceived as a public good. This program is distinguished by its pluralistic and intercultural vocation, as well as its social commitment and openness to all sectors of the population.

A distinctive feature of the research training in this program is the breadth and diversity of its lines of study, with an emphasis on those that are committed to social justice. This is reflected in the analysis of vulnerable groups—such as young people, indigenous communities, the LGBTTTIQ+ population, and migrants—and in the approach to emerging issues, including the environment, violence, and human rights. It includes lines of research focused on the critical analysis of educational policies, curriculum, university teaching, competencies, and teaching-learning processes. These studies are developed from disciplinary, multi-referential, and/or complexity approaches (Ardoino, 1991).

The UCI-Red postgraduate program is based on a proposal that questions the principles of modernity, particularly the notion of progress and the intervention of institutions in social and civil organizations. Its approach promotes the circulation of knowledge through networks of learning communities, aiming to strengthen individuals' capacities and redefine their social, technical, and pedagogical practices. In particular, it seeks to recover rural life as an alternative e y project for the formation of concrete subjects (UCI-Red, 2022).UCI-Red's programs aim to preserve the essence of pedagogy, grounded in a pedagogy of the subject and the pedagogical relationship. Priority is given to the relationship with the other—the learner—in a context where the figure of the teacher is diluted and transformed into a companion in the learning process, leaving aside the traditional role of transmitter of knowledge. Rather than adopting an alternative stance, these programs encourage critical questioning of the reality that is lived and felt.

Based on the above, Berlanga (2022) points out that these programs emerge as a proposal for curricular justice that does not simply seek to open up opportunities for "everyone," but rather to confront the commercial logic that has overdetermined (Althusser, 1967) postgraduate programs.

The training system is modular and focuses on developing narratives that encourage critical thinking. It promotes community and horizontal work, as well as the recognition of one's own experiences, to reconstruct subjectivities and social identities in the search for better worlds and futures. Through readings, participants redefine their practices and experiences, while research work is shared with the group in a process called *caracolear*. Subsequently, based on the analysis of the narratives and experiences shared in the workshops, the tutor and the specific content to be worked on are defined.The postgraduate program at IPECAL is research-oriented, aiming to identify social problems rooted in their historical causes and to promote the construction of ethical and politically meaningful alternatives for the future. The training offered in this program is designed to rethink and construct reality from other perspectives, decolonizing thought. In this way, students recognize problems at different levels of reality from a critical perspective and develop the analytical skills necessary for ethical and political decision-making, as well as for generating social interventions.

Research training is conceived as a strategic, hybrid activity centered on the trainee. The program adopts the methodological proposal of Hugo Zemelman and Estela Quintar, based on the *present potential* or *epistemology of historical consciousness* and *non-parametric didactics*. This approach seeks to help students recognize their past and present, using experience as an

anchor point for thinking about themselves from the perspective of consciousness, understood as knowledge.

The constitution of academic communities as a pedagogical alternative

A distinctive feature of these programs is the construction of community, that is, they have moved from school-based, individualized, and structured systems based on credit completion to models that encourage the integration of tutorial committees, reflection circles, narrative encounters, and colloquiums, thus promoting the formation of academic communities.

The curriculum proposals for the DIE and UNAM postgraduate programs are developed under a tutorial system. Tutoring is not conceived solely as a space for theoretical and methodological guidance in the development of projects, but also as support throughout the academic, administrative, and personal process. Tutorial committees foster the formation of a scientific and humanistic spirit by promoting critical thinking, both in relation to specific educational concepts and practices and to the inter- and intra-institutional dynamics that underpin the program. These curriculum proposals promote interdisciplinary and specialized training in a field of education, with a methodological approach to research development and in-depth analysis of educational phenomena.

In these graduate institutions, the tutorial system, public peer presentations, and colloquiums are key strengths of their programs. Not only do they allow those who complete their studies to obtain a degree, but they also demonstrate training in, by, and for research. This arises more from personal conviction and commitment to their own educational process within the framework of collective support than from a control mechanism aimed exclusively at ensuring high terminal efficiency.

Regarding the DIE, it is worth highlighting academic stays at other higher education institutions, either in the country or abroad, within research groups or at peer institutions. Likewise, as part of their training, students must publish an article or book chapter in peer-reviewed journals, as a result of their research. These publications may be authored individually or co-authored with their thesis advisor.

In relation to the UCI-Red, the postgraduate program arose from an encounter with a collective of narrative practices linked to family therapy. This approach allows its members not only to construct a pedagogical proposal, but also to design a master's degree oriented towards people involved in community work, with experience in rural and indigenous contexts or in educational projects within marginal urban communities.

Therefore, innovation in graduate studies is aimed at those who seek to reflect on and rethink their educational practice or community work. Its educational approach is based on experience as its central axis, so that the educational process culminates in the reinterpretation of that experience, enabling the subject to be relocated in new everyday practices.

It is important to note that the IPECAL graduate program is distinguished by its alternative pedagogical approach, which transcends the traditional classroom teaching by an expert. Instead, *Reflection Circles* are implemented as teaching tools in the training process. These circles, coordinated by IPECAL faculty, encourage dialogue and the circulation of sociohistorical and cultural meanings and significance within the group. Through this exercise, the belief systems that have shaped the individual are challenged, allowing for the reconfiguration and

reconstruction of decision-making positions.

The training is interdisciplinary and focuses on specific social problems and phenomena in Latin America. In addition to the curriculum, organized into online modules, the program includes annual face-to-face meetings in Mexico or other Latin American locations in October, known as *Latin American Reflection Circles*. These spaces bring together IPECAL professors, students from across the region, and guest academics from various institutions. During these meetings, *Reflection Circles* are held, in which students present and analyze the topics they have worked on throughout their training. Workshops and conferences are also organized, taught by both institute faculty and guest lecturers.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of our research show that despite the social order characterized by capitalism and the market, where training responds to managerial and business logic, higher education institutions that offer research-oriented training programs implement training processes in, by, and for research aimed at constructing theoretical and methodological tools for the exercise of research as a critical and reflective task where, in addition to understanding and influencing reality, the subject is transformed.

Therefore, we can affirm that the innovative nature of these institutions lies in their approach to training and research beyond the instrumental, leading them to implement pedagogical strategies that train researchers with critical, ethical, and political awareness, capable of designing and implementing projects with social and educational impact.

Previous studies we have conducted on postgraduate studies have shown that curricular innovations are designed and implemented vertically. However, in implementing these proposals, institutions modify, adjust, and develop practices, materials, and devices to support training in research, academic production, and social commitment. These dynamics become embedded in the institutional *ethos* as innovations developed from the bottom up and within the intimacy of the programs.

Therefore, a strength for the development of postgraduate programs in education, in the construction of innovations, in research training, and in terminal efficiency, are academics who are characterized by having a profile in line with the program; experience in educational research and teaching; academic production, have the desirable profile for the Program for Professional Teacher Development (PRODEP), belong to Academic Bodies and the National System of Researchers and/or academic networks. It should be noted that at UNAM, the academic core is enriched by foreign professors and researchers from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, China, Spain, Finland, France, Guatemala, and Romania.

Postgraduate programs with pedagogical alternatives are developed from a critical perspective toward the hegemonic structures of the education and training system and toward established social, cultural, and political practices. Their objective is to train researchers committed to analyzing social problems, engaging with communities and social movements, and attending to the needs of disadvantaged sectors. In this sense, the educational proposals of these programs seek to develop researchers with a strong ethical and political sense.

We affirm that these postgraduate programs are based on a proposal that questions the principles of modernity, particularly the notion of progress and the intervention of institutions in social and civil organizations. In general, they address social needs and explore how to

address them through community experiences. An example of this is the case of UCI-Red, which rescues rural life as an alternative project for the training of specific subjects. In the training of researchers, these programs recognize the complexity of education and rely on interdisciplinarity and multi-referentiality. From these positions, they construct a critical perspective to address current educational issues, not only through analysis but also through the reconfiguration of education and pedagogy beyond conventional systems, practices, and spaces.

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