MENDIVE
REVISTA DE EDUCACIÓN

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Empowerment teaching or empowered teacher?

¿Empoderamiento docente o docente empoderado?

Capacitação do professor ou professor capacitado?

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The representation of teacher empowerment or empowered teacher finds its antecedent in the conception of community psychology, a new discipline, whose position defends the indissoluble link between theory and praxis, an element that is vital to carry out any study about the relationship between the social systems and the individual's modes of action, as a result of the natural interaction that occurs between them.

From this perspective, the concept of empowerment is identified with the process that provides the necessary tools to achieve desired results efficiently and effectively. For its part, Silva and Loreto (2004) reaffirm that, the concept in question involves a value orientation supported by the articulation between cognitive, affective and behavioral, which reinforces the view in respect

of Rappaport (1981), Zimmerman & Rappaport (1988) and Zimmerman (2000). Its adequate recognition and appreciation points, according to Montero (2003) towards the development and consequent transformation of communities

The notion of empowerment has been enriched by various authors (Foster- Fishman, Salem, Chibnall, Leglet & Yapchai, 1998; Montero, 1998, 2003; Rappaport, 1981, 1984; Serrano-García, 1984; Trickett, 1994; Zimmerman, 1995, 20 00; Zimmerman & Rappaport, 1988), who have highlighted the approach to its social involvement. To Silva and Loreto (2004), empowerment includes four fundamental components:"... as a value, as a process, set in a context and experienced in different social aggregate levels" (p. 29). In this direction, they argue that, as a value orientation, empowerment implies a type of community intervention and social change, whose bases are formed by the strengths, competencies and social support systems that trigger community changes; while, as a process, it is identified with mechanisms that derive gains in the control that people, organizations and communities carry out over their own lives and that involve, not only the path of achievement, but the result itself.

For its part, the relevance of the contextual component in which social actors interact is undeniable, as an enhancer of the exchange of experiences and architecture of diverse visions, which are built from collaborative action and which, in the opinion of the author of this article, resulting in new ways to build self-image and value to others. Also, the idea of the experiment context is argued by Silva and Loreto (2004), who understand by level of social added to " ... an analysis unit that has its goals, resources, processes, interactions

and context in which it is immersed. They can be individuals, an organization, a geographic community" (p.33).

The vision of empowerment, specifically in the educational field, has its genesis, although not with the direct use of this concept, in the emancipator conception of Paulo Freire. Consequently, the transposition of the concept and meanings involved in the educational context is based, among others, by Torres (2009), who emphasizes key elements in an education for empowerment and its challenges in the educational event, whose understanding leads not only to reflect on the practice itself, but to its transformation.

In keeping with his conception of empowerment in the context of education, Torres highlights the need for a liberating educational practice, as opposed to "Banking Education", called by Freire, in which the teacher is presented as the depository of a wealth of information, which transmits - from positions of power - to a student, "obliged" to assume it and repeat it, without any relevant omissions or additions. The conception of Torres (2009) relates that the situation would act to the detriment of the human, critical and reflective condition of the students because education in schools marks the meaning of power, where the individual learns about authority and hierarchy, more than by speeches, by the daily construction of habits included in school devices (orderly bodies and classrooms, the teacher controlling everything, tasks organized at fixed times, etc. etc.) (p . 95).

In the challenging scenario that the world is currently the cited author considers as urgent the realization of a pedagogical action, depending on renewing the curriculum practices in accordance with the social needs. This demands that the school

curricula trigger a classroom synonymous with a laboratory, simulator problems that the student will find in the context object of action as well as the search for collective solutions, derived from the experiences and collaborative reflections.

This emancipator vision of the educational fact is inscribed in an education for empowerment (...) Thus, it is committed to a liberating, rebellious and proactive pedagogy that transcends the personal through the promotion of critical and social awareness, which allows the individual to develop skills and knowledge, elements with which he liberates, problematize, questions and proposes actions of change that result in their individual and collective transformation (Torres, 2009, p. 97).

This is complemented by the action of a professional teacher in an education for the empowerment, about which Torres assures that:

The education should be based on processes that allow not only the role in the construction of knowledge and the development of criticism, but in the social intervention, hence it is necessary to promote in the classroom the development of communication skills, of reflexively structured autonomous thoughts with a disposition to criticism and dialogue (p. 98).

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Consistent with the above, it is considered that the practicing teacher is empowered to the extent that he achieves a conscious participation in the activities that involve him and that lead to the development of knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and emotions, related to the teaching, research, community liaison and popular science, which means an influence double entry: himself to others and others to himself.

Gomez *et al.* (2014) recognizes three dimensions of empowerment action - applicable to the educational context - which he considers mutually generative:

> **Personal:** Empowerment is about developing a sense of myself, the believing and individual capacity and undo the effects of internalized oppression. It involves the recognition of an empowered and self-constructive tension.

> **Close relationships:** refers to the development in the subject of the ability to negotiate, agency and influence in the nature or meaning given to their interpersonal relationships and the interaction decisions that are made within them.

> **Collective:** Present when acting on the ability of individuals to work together to achieve a broader impact of which have reached each separately (Gomez et *al.*, 2014 p 153).

However, the positions that support empowerment in the educational context do not remain in the analysis of the general, because if empowering is "becoming powerful", the classroom space is the main stage to achieve the path to the desired and necessary growth, not only of the teacher, but of the student who transforms. The classroom constitutes, without a doubt, the privileged place for innovation, based on truly efficient educational practices, as a result of permanent training, which guarantees the necessary balance between science and school.

And it's right in the courtly context in which they are generated and enhance environments, in turn empowering, from which students are, progressively, owners of a voice powerful to faith valid opinions, result of a critical and flexible thinking, inherited of their ability to decide on their learning and ways of modifying it, as clear evidence of the skills acquired during their training, under the guidance of the teacher.

But to achieve empowerment equivalent to what the current school claims transcend, even the same class, as required within the limits of educational models, particular educational contexts and of theories and methodical fashion; And it is what it implies to be in tune with a digital age that takes us in a second to past or future centuries and puts us in front of the challenge of understanding each phenomenon linked to man, facing its own context; therefore, a ductile thought is needed, away from dogmas and schematics, which disarticulates the teacher from mere repetition or from the unhelpful position of accepting only what he would like to hear or what is curricular regulated.

From this point of view, teacher empowerment is achieved in a multivariate manner and, in this, his "itself investigative" stands out, which allows him to establish guidelines from the intricacies of his own science

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and, based on the disclosure of his results and positions, to be part of the universal scientific community, to which he contributes with unique views that enrich the generality of a specific or several topics.

The path of science, therefore, should be regarded as the ally principal of the school to achieve teachers empowered, so that from my point of view, leads to the empowerment teacher, because it puts the discovered change, not of one concept, but of the human and/or professional being, who represents the teacher as a result of the personal growth achieved, from their training and cognitive, affective and attitudinal development from the interaction with others; This places it in better conditions to lead the academic, research and projective processes required by the educational context of which it is a part.

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