



The Professional Development of Future Educators from a Gender Perspective in Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

In Spain, there is no real curricular integration of gender equality in Higher Education even though teaching proposals that pay attention to social and gender inequalities have increased. This mixed research sought to contribute to the professional development of students from a gender perspective through practices carried out in the History of Education subject of the Pedagogy degree at the University of Seville in the 2021/2022 internships, consisting of 46 of 50 students who decided to voluntarily participate in the study. To achieve this objective, a pre-test was conducted using an ad hoc questionnaire on students' gender knowledge. After the final subject project using the service-learning methodology, a post-test was conducted using the same questionnaire and individual interviews to deepen the knowledge acquired. The results show significant changes before and after the final project in knowledge related to gender inequality (gender gap, glass ceiling, sticky floor, co-responsibility, horizontal and vertical segregation, imposter syndrome, wage gap, and mental burden) and in the situation of women in the educational, social and labour spheres from a historical perspective. It concludes with the importance of training professionals in general, especially those in the field of education, with a gender perspective in Higher Education, due to the impact they will have on future generations to foster social change and promote gender equality. Furthermore, this research fills a gap in the published scientific literature.

KEYWORDS

Gender; equality; initial training; service-learning

INTRODUCTION

Gender inequality in European societies is still a clear reality today, although there have been many improvements in the last decade. This is demonstrated by the European equality index, which stands at 68.6 points for European Union as a whole. Spain, for its part, is 6 points above the European average on this index. Overall, Spain has improved in terms of gender equality in work, knowledge, power, and health over the last ten years, falling below the European average in money (78.4% vs. 82.4%) and use of time (64.0 vs. 64.9) (Ministry of Equality, 2023). However, what does gender equality mean? According to Trisnawati and Widiarsyah (2022), gender equality refers to the absence of different roles and positions between men and women; that is, equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities, regardless of whether one is a man or a woman. This is important in the three areas on which we focus this research: women's participation in the educational sphere (values, references, spaces, contents, extracurricular activities, resources, etc.), social (political participation, rights, cultural initiatives, family roles, etc.), and labour (types of work, trade unions, public or private employment, remuneration, work-life balance, etc.). In addition, this approach is carried out from a historical perspective to identify the evolution of the role of women in these areas in each of the periods studied in the History of Education course of the Degree in Pedagogy.

Over the last 20 years, gender equality has been on the agenda of national higher education policies and institutions have implemented different strategies to raise awareness of discrimination against women and their access to academia (Grenz et al., 2008). As Bynum (2020) puts it, parents and educators alike expect all young people to have equal opportunities, regardless of gender. In many areas, such as education, women have matched and even surpassed men in enrolment. However, according to the same author, in other areas, such as leadership, political, economic, and intellectual authority, men continue to have far more power than their female counterparts. Throughout history, there have been changes in women's access to the labour market. However, as Fernández and Lousada (2022) point out, gender bias is currently manifested through other phenomena in which inequality between women and men can be seen. According to these authors, some of these phenomena are: a) horizontal and vertical segregation: discrimination in jobs atypical of women's skills; b) the gender and wage gap: female workers are paid less than their male colleagues for work of equal value; c) the sticky floor: women do not make it out of the lower job categories; d) the glass ceiling: women do not make it in management positions; and e) the impostor syndrome: successful women do not take ownership of their achievements because they feel they do not deserve them.

To avoid these gender biases, the rights of work-life balance and the promotion of co-responsibility must be demanded (García-Testal, 2024). According to García-Testal (2024), work-life balance refers to women and men being able to attend to their personal and family needs without negatively affecting their professional development. Co-responsibility implies an equal distribution of family and domestic responsibilities among all members of the household,

regardless of their gender. According to Okonkwo (2013) and Daşlı (2019), women have more positive attitudes and egalitarian gender roles than men.

There is no doubt that gender equality is considered an important development indicator for any country, and therefore, the gender perspective must be incorporated into the curricula of all disciplines at different educational levels (Malik et al., 2018; Resa & Rabazas, 2020). Only in this way is it possible to realise the rights of all people to education for the full development of their personality, as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Bynum, 2020). Specifically, university teaching and research are key instruments for empowerment and social change by promoting gender equality, diversity, and inclusion among university students and the rest of the society (Rosa & Clavero, 2021). However, despite progress, the university continues to be a space for the reproduction of stereotypes and inequalities (Resa & Rabazas, 2020). Moreover, the transformation towards egalitarian education may be held back by resistance to educational innovation in terms of gender (González-Pérez, 2018) and by the lack of training of university professors, who do not identify this issue as relevant (Resa, 2021).

According to Carrillo (2017), to overcome these resistances, it is necessary to create a space for reflection among university faculty to analyse the impact of gender on curricula and to delimit changes in ideological frameworks, in the curriculum and the articulation of theory and practice. Wroblewski (2020) also stressed that gender equality in higher education has three objectives: to eliminate all forms of discrimination in access and career progression, to strengthen the gender dimension in research and teaching content, and to change the gender-biased university culture. In Spain, the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation (ANECA) of the Ministry of Universities regulates that university curricula must include teaching related to gender equality (Royal Decree 822/2021). However, the wording is ambiguous, and the agency itself does not support individual initiatives for the creation or modification of curricula carried out with the interest and effort of the teaching staff (Resa, 2023). Examples of such efforts can be found in various recently published teaching proposals that focus on social and gender inequalities (González-Alonso et al., 2022; Starostina, 2022). However, these individual efforts with isolated interventions or awareness-raising on these issues are not considered sufficient (Heras-Sevilla et al., 2021) if there is no real integration of gender perspective in the curricula (Malik et al., 2018).

In this sense, the initial training of education professionals, especially future teachers, is essential, as these professionals will oversee educating younger generations. Furthermore, as Resa (2021) points out, incorporating the gender perspective in the initial training of education professionals is necessary to build a democratic and egalitarian school and to comply with the current legislation on the Spanish education system. Therefore, trainee teachers should have tools to enable them to cope with the changes required by society by taking an active role in promoting education from a gender perspective (Sanabrias-Moreno et al., 2023). However, Heras-Sevilla et al. (2021) mentioned that there is little or no curricular integration of gender

equality content or pedagogical training on this subject in the initial training of these professionals.

Along these lines, according to Miralles-Carmona et al. (2020), the fact that education professionals are unaware of gender inequalities may have serious implications for future professional practice. These implications can be, as these authors highlight, not thinking critically, not developing the competence to educate in equality, and not identifying discriminatory actions. In research by Larruzea-Urkixo et al. (2021), it is also evident that future education professionals showed a lack of awareness of gender issues and shared representations of gender discrimination. Therefore, the challenge for higher education is to incorporate a gender perspective into the knowledge, practice, and interaction of students in the curricula of education professionals (González-Pérez, 2018). This must be done by eliminating the hermeticism of teaching plans so that global and focused gender issues can be incorporated from the perspective of the past and present (Carrillo, 2017).

Based on this panorama, this research focuses on professional development from the gender perspective of students with a bachelor's degree in pedagogy. Specifically, the study is carried out about the History of Education, where educational, social and labour changes in different historical periods are worked on, emphasising the role played by women. To carry out this research and the professional development of students, a final project was developed based on the active methodology of Service Learning (SL). This methodology is presented as "an educational proposal that combines learning and community service processes in a single well-articulated project in which participants learn while working on real needs of the environment with the aim of improving it" (Puig et al., 2007, p. 20).

Furthermore, the relationship between Service Learning and feminism is clear, as pointed out by Vergés et al. (2021), who emphasise this relationship insofar as they seek to explore liberatory theories and research and teaching methodologies based on equality. Furthermore, they share methodological objectives and principles: 1) they seek learning from experience, valuing reflection as an element that favours learning (Biglia & Vergés Bosch, 2016; Dugger, 2008; Eudey, 2012), 2) emphasise collectivity over individualism while connecting theory and practice (Bach & Weinzimmer, 2011), 3) favour student empowerment, collaborative work and the creation of social responsibility (Novek, 2010), 4) connect student knowledge with the community (Dugger, 2008) and 5) promote action for social justice and challenging power relations as a form of activism (Bubriski & Semaan, 2009; Hauver & Iverson, 2018; Martin & Beese, 2016; Seethaler, 2014).

It is important to mention that this work does not seek to corroborate the functioning or effectiveness of the methodology applied. On the contrary, it aims to show the results of the practices from a gender perspective carried out in the subject of the History of Education, which, once completed, were presented by the students at a conference as part of the SL. Likewise, this research fills a gap identified in the published scientific literature, which, although extensive, does not focus on students' prior knowledge of gender equality concepts and how

they have acquired and better understood these concepts owing to the development of the subject. That said, the research questions framed in this study are as follows: a) What prior knowledge do learners have related to gender inequality and the role of women in educational, social, and occupational settings throughout history? and b) Can knowledge related to gender inequality and the role of women in the educational, social, and occupational spheres be developed through the SL methodology?

Finally, this research is part of the project “Learning from life. Design of didactic and audiovisual materials based on life stories” supported by the Development Cooperation Office of the University of Seville, under Grant Number AYP/03/2022. The main objective was to prevent hate speech using life stories, highlighting the presentation of inspiring trajectories that serve as a model for students. In this experience, we wanted students to be able to detect and make visible the different situations that women and girls have gone through in the social, labour, and educational spheres, thus contributing to the development of their research skills and favouring comprehensive training and the acquisition of knowledge as a means of preventing and defending gender-based hate speech.

METHODOLOGY

The main objective is to contribute to the professional development of students from a gender perspective through the internships carried out in the History of Education subject of the Pedagogy degree at the University of Seville in the 2021/2022 academic year. This objective is broken down into three specific goals: 1) to detect students' prior knowledge of concepts related to gender inequality and the role of women in the educational, social and labour spheres throughout history; 2) to carry out a final project in the History of Education subject based on the Service Learning (SL) methodology to develop students' prior knowledge related to the subject; and 3) to demonstrate the learning acquired by students, from their perspective, through the final project. The mixed methodology design is fixed and emergent; that is, before starting the research, the use of quantitative and qualitative methodologies is planned in three phases (Creswell & Plano, 2017), which are explained in detail in the procedure section.

Sample

The study population consisted of 50 students enrolled in the History of Education course in the first year of the Degree in Pedagogy at the Faculty of Education Sciences of the University of Seville (Spain) in the academic year 2021/2022. The sampling technique was simple random sampling due to accessibility and the students' own interest in participating in the research. This sample was representative of 46 students out of 50 decided to participate. Participation was voluntary, without any benefit or detriment to the students' final grades.

As shown in Table 1, 89.1% of the total number of participating students were female and 10.9% were male. Their ages ranged from 18 to 25 years ($M = 19.91$; $SD = 1.895$). 56.5% of the total number of students entered university through the Baccalaureate and the university entrance exam, while 41.3% of the student's entered university through a vocational

education/training cycle. This means that this second group of students had previous training in the field of education and that they already had prior contact with the labour market through external placements. Finally, only 28.3% of all participating students were working and studying simultaneously. Specifically, 46.15% of the latter worked in fields directly related to education.

Table 1.

Characteristics of the sample

Socio-demographic variable	Description
Sex	• Female: 89.1% • Male: 10.9%
Age	• 18 years: 34.8% • 19 years: 10.9% • 20 years: 17.4% • 21 years: 19.6% • 22 years: 8.7% • 23 years: 4.3% • 25 years: 4.3%
Previous university entrance studies	• Baccalaureate: 56.5% • Vocational education/training: 41.3% • Others: 2.2%
Labour situation	• Working and studying: 28.3% • Only studying: 71.7%
Education-related employment	• Yes: 46.15% • No: 53.85%

Data collection techniques and instruments

Questionnaire

To check the achievement of the first and third objectives, we developed an ad hoc questionnaire, that is, a questionnaire created for the purpose of this article that has not been standardised. Experts assessed the content validity of the questionnaire. The final version that was administered to the participants in the pre-test had a Cronbach's alpha of .955. In the post-test, the reliability increased to .959. This instrument was provided online to students at two specific moments: before and after their participation in the SL-based internship. The questionnaire consists of three dimensions with Likert-type questions. The first dimension included demographic variables, such as gender, age, mode of access to university, and employment status. The second refers to key variables related to gender inequality. These variables were: gender gap, glass roof, sticky soil, reconciliation, co-responsibility, horizontal and vertical segregation, impostor syndrome, wage gap and mental burden. The third dimension concerned specific knowledge of the subject, History of Education, on the role of women in the

educational, social, and occupational spheres in different historical periods. The educational sphere refers to: educational ideals in historical epochs and its descriptions, values education in historical periods, educational spaces, curricular content, extracurricular activities, historically relevant pedagogical figures, educational resources, teaching and learning methodologies, and the figure of the teacher and/or instructor. The social sphere refers to political participation or access to political power in historical epochs; the legal rights of historical epochs; initiatives for participation in culture in historical periods; the type of participation in celebrations, sports, and festivals in historical periods; the associations of historical epochs; artistic representations in historical epochs; and family roles in historical epochs. Finally, the work sphere referred to occupation or type of employment in historical periods, public and private employment in the historical epochs, labour groupings (trade unions) in historical eras, wages or labour remuneration in historical times, reciliation measures in historical periods, and leave from work (sickness, marriage, etc.) in historical periods. The ratings range from 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.

Semi-structured interviews

To complement the information collected, we conducted semi-structured interviews with participating students after the development and transfer of the SL-based final project. The script of this interview was designed to deepen the student's knowledge of the differences between men and women in the different historical periods for each of the areas analysed (educational, social and labour). Table 2 (see appendix) contains questions from the interview script.

Procedure

On the first day of class, the students were asked about the possibility of enquiring about their prior knowledge related to gender inequalities and the role of women in different historical stages in the educational, social, and occupational spheres. Subsequently, an online survey was conducted in February 2021 in the subject of this research, so that the questionnaire was given to all students at the same time. In the second phase, after learning the results, a final project based on SL was proposed to work on this knowledge. The students, divided into groups of four to five people, had to search for information on the profiles of women, men, boys, and girls in the educational, social, and labour fields. Each group was assigned a historical period according to the subject's syllabus: Greece, Rome, Middle Ages, Renaissance, Baroque, and Enlightenment. Once the research work had been carried out, each group designed a poster, which they then presented at the 1st Conference Women Who Inspire: Visibility of Women and Girls in the Educational, Social and Labour Spheres. This conference was held at the Faculty of Education Sciences of the University of Seville from 24 May to 25 May 2022. This event was aimed at the entire university community, especially at students of education degree courses. The impact of the work carried out by the students on this day focused on the role of women throughout history in the aforementioned areas, with the aim of minimising the gender inequalities existing today. Third, sector social action organisations also participated in the

conference, giving lectures and practical workshops to the university community. In the last phase of the research, the students completed the questionnaire after completing the final project. They were interviewed in June of the same year to determine their in-depth knowledge. The interviews were carried out individually with each student who participated in the research, and saturation of the information in the different categories of analysis was reached (Izcará, 2014). The interviews were recorded with the consent of the participants to facilitate the subsequent transcription and analysis of the data.

Data analysis

Descriptive analysis and inferential statistics were used to analyse the quantitative data. The statistical techniques used were percentages and the non-parametric Wilcoxon test for the statistical contrast of the samples before and after the final project and the Mann–Whitney U test for the statistical contrast of the responses of men and women. Nonparametric tests were selected because the data did not follow a normal distribution. A confidence level of 95% ($p = 0.05$) was established for both tests. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 26 software. Qualitative data were organized on the basis of thematic analysis (Hernández et al., 2014). First, themes were identified and analysed based on the patterns that were repeated in the dataset; subsequently, the information was coded following Gibbs (2012). The Aquad 7 statistical software was used for statistical analysis. The categories obtained from this analysis are listed in Table 3 (see appendix).

RESULTS

The results are presented below, organised as follows: (1) level of knowledge of terms related to gender discrimination, and (2) level of knowledge of the situation of women and girls in the educational, social, and employment spheres throughout history.

Level of knowledge of terms related to gender discrimination

As shown in Table 4 (see appendix), the results of the questionnaire show that students were not sufficiently aware of terms related to gender discrimination before the application of the SL methodology (with averages below 3.5, except for the term work-life balance, which has an average of 3.59). However, after the application of the methodology, this average increased, with the lowest average being 2.57 points. Based on this, it can be concluded with a 95% confidence interval that there are significant differences between the acquisition of concepts before and after the application of the methodology according to the Wilcoxon test, except for the idea of "conciliation" ($p = .746$; $Z = -.325$). On the other hand, it cannot be affirmed that there are significant differences between the responses of men and women in the degree of knowledge of these terms after the application of the methodology (with p-values well above .05 in the Mann-Whitney U test).

A degree of knowledge of the situation of women and girls in the educational, social, and labour spheres throughout history

From the results shown in Table 5 (see appendix), it can be concluded, with a confidence interval of 95%, that there were significant differences between the acquisition of knowledge related to the educational domain before and after the application of the SL methodology according to the Wilcoxon test. This is also reflected in the differences in the means, less than 2.6 before and more than 3.95. However, there were no significant differences between the responses of men and women (with p-values well above .05 in the Mann-Whitney U-test).

Once the experience is completed, the students recognize that the educational ideal in different historical periods is different depending on gender: "...it was more normal for women to stay at home while men were in schools or working" (E12) and social class of belonging "some of the girls did not even have basic education" (E2); "women who belonged to high society were educated by people who specialized in it..." (E28). The pupils show a positive progression towards equality over the years: "...in the historical beginnings, women could not attend classes. Then they went on to have a gender-diversified education until today..." (E47); "...as time went by, they gained access to universities and to study" (E24). However, respondents state that gender gaps still exist: "...women still have more difficulties in completing their studies..." (E10).

The type of education received is also different and is determined by the social construction of men and women in historical epochs. Children receive an education that endows them with strength and determination. This enables them to exercise active citizenship, work outside the home, be the family representative, make decisions, and manage the household economy, among other reasons "...strong, brave, head of the family, to work outside the home in order to bring money home for the family, that is to say, to support the family and also to rule over it..." (E18).

The training that the girl receives is linked to sensitivity, care, submission, and the cultivation of beauty. "On the other hand, women are expected to bring children into the world, raise them, take care of the home, serve their husbands, be beautiful, emotional, sensitive, etc." (E37). In turn, the image projected of women reflects inferiority with respect to men: "...women as inferior beings who have to be guided and protected, and whose meaning of existence is reduced to reproduction and service and care for men..." (E21).

Because of the above, curricular contents, spaces, and educational resources also differ according to gender and social class. Pupils state that boys were educated outside the home, in academic or social institutions and with male instructors "... they were not educated at home, they went to schools, temples, even to the street where they learned from other male teachers..." (E2). Depending on the historical context and their status in society, they were trained to be warriors (to fight battles and defend their cities) "...children in military service for example..." (E4); to be enlightened or politicians "there were some men who were trained to make decisions in the polis..." (E14); and/or to learn a specific trade (artisans, farmers,

stockbreeders, etc.) "...the education of children was oriented to be adults, to carry out a specific job..." (E50).

However, women were primarily educated at home by their mothers or female family members: "...women were bound to a more domestic education" (E38); "...they were taught by mothers or grandmothers..." (E19). However, families of a higher social class sent their daughters to religious institutions to be trained by priestesses, abbesses, and nuns. "Women often did not have the right to education and if they did, they belonged to the nobility or the privileged sector" (E46); "...women could not unless they were from a family with money to send girls to convents and parishes" (E1). In both cases, women's education was focused on housework (cooking, washing, sewing, etc.) "...they were taught housework, sewing, etc." (E41) and on taking care of the family (children and husbands), "...girls basically learned to be good mothers and wives..." (E38).

In the second domain analysed, the results show that there are differences in the acquisition of social domain knowledge before and after the application of the SL methodology (with p-values well below .05 in the Wilcoxon test). As shown in Table 6 (see appendix), the mean values after the application of this method were above 3.6 points. In addition, with 95% confidence, it cannot be concluded that there were significant differences between the responses of men and women in the acquisition of social domain knowledge according to the Mann-Whitney U-test. However, there was an exception in this domain in the acquisition of knowledge of the legal rights of historical epochs, where there were significant differences ($p = .019$; $U = 25.000$).

In this social sphere, students highlight differences in political and social participation and rights between men and women. Men had a very representative role: "...they had absolute power on a social level and participated in the city's chores..." (E19). Women had an undervalued role in their participation: "...they had neither voice nor the right to vote..." (E5). The students state that men are made visible in the public sphere to the detriment of women, who are relegated to the private sphere: "...in the case of men, their active participation as citizens in all public social spheres has been favoured, while women's active participation as citizens is reduced to the private sphere..." (E23).

The social and political representation of men as opposed to women continues to persist over time, although it has evolved since the beginning of history "...as history progresses, women begin to have social participation..." (E30); "...women previously could not have access to politics, and today, we find many women (although fewer than they should) in political positions..." (E49).

In the same vein, participation in culture, sports, festivals and celebrations "...men had more rights and could attend more things than women..." (E25). Although in the higher social classes, women participated in some celebrations and cultural events, only women could attend; that is, there were activities created for them. "...women could hardly participate in sports, only those who belonged to the higher social classes and if at all" (E13); "...women could

relate to the rest of the women and could participate in theatres and performances" (E11). With time, women's participation in culture has been positively reinforced: "...today we can participate in everything. I go to the cinema, to the theatre, to a concert and not only where women go, and I even belong to a theatre company..." (E44).

Table 7 (see appendix) presents the results for the third and last domains analysed (work). The students' scores before applying the SL methodology did not exceed the mean of 2.22 in their answers, while after the application, the lowest mean was 3.71 points. Based on this, with 95% confidence, it can be concluded that there are significant differences in the acquisition of knowledge of the work environment before and after the application of the SL methodology, according to the Wilcoxon test. On the other hand, as in the rest of the areas studied, it cannot be concluded that there are significant differences between the responses of men and women according to the Mann-Whitney U test (with p-values well above .05).

After analysing the pupils' responses, it can be seen that the only socially recognised and valued job was the male one, as it was carried out outside the home: "...men were in charge of working to bring money home, while women only took care of the children and kept the houses clean" (E3); "...women's jobs have been more focused on care, while men's jobs have been more intellectual or hard" (E29). Women's usual occupations were assumed to be tasks but did not work as such since they were carried out within the home. In this sense, the work profile of housewife and carer stands out: "...the woman played a role of home care, attention to men and aesthetic care..." (E7); "...dedicated especially to education for the home and the family" (E35).

As time went by, occupations outside the home were also favoured for women: "...women dedicated themselves to the care of their children while men dedicated themselves to bringing home the salary...as time went by, it was changing, that is to say, it was evolving" (E17).

In this way, women began to access different employment sectors such as the primary sector, "...women in the Middle Ages were peasants..." (E7) or the tertiary sector, "...women began to work in their own trades and textiles..." (E22); "...they could be teachers..." (E34). However, accessing these occupations meant more effort for women than for men; "men had the privilege of having more diverse jobs" (E28), and "women had to work harder to get the same job as men" (E46).

This difference in effort is related to the existence or non-existence of labour groups or guilds. In the case of men, these associations existed to watch over their labour rights: "...their working conditions were respected because men belonged to craftsmen's guilds..." (E4). However, women, whether they worked inside or outside the home, did not belong to any labour association, which made it difficult to guarantee their labour rights. "Women related mainly to their families as they did not belong to trade associations. This made their circle of social relations smaller..." (E9). Over the years, the possibility of belonging to labour congregations has evolved: "...they were not allowed to work or stay in guilds, thanks to the

evolution and change of mentality we have managed to create a more egalitarian society..." (E43).

With regard to wages, the students state that throughout history, there has been and still is economic inequality between men and women, even when doing the same job: "...if women worked in the fields or in a factory, they did not earn money or earned much less than a man in the same job..." (E8).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Universities' social commitment to gender equality has increased in teaching proposals that pay special attention to social and gender inequalities (González-Alonso et al., 2022; Starostina, 2022). However, these have been isolated practices and are not integrated into curricula (Heras-Sevilla et al., 2021). This work adds to the experience of the subject of the History of Education to address the gender perspective in the initial training of education professionals responsible for training and educating societies today and tomorrow (Resa, 2021). This subject also provides us with the opportunity to incorporate global and focused gender issues from the perspective of the past and the present, as mentioned by Carrillo (2017).

From this approach, the main objective of this research was to contribute to the professional development of students from a gender perspective through the practice carried out through the SL methodology in the subject of History of Education in the degree of Pedagogy at the University of Seville in the academic year 2021/2022. To this end, the student's prior knowledge of concepts related to gender inequality and the role of women in the educational, social and labour spheres throughout history was detected; a final project was carried out in the History of Education subject based on the SL methodology to develop the students' prior knowledge related to the subject. The learning acquired by the students from their perspective through the final project was evidenced. Consequently, all the objectives proposed in this study were achieved.

Second, this study shows that there are significant differences in knowledge related to gender inequality (gender gap, glass ceiling, sticky floor, co-responsibility, horizontal and vertical segregation, imposter syndrome, wage gap, and mental workload) before and after the final projects. Therefore, this is in the wake of other researchers, such as Vergés et al. (2021) and Chiva-Bartoll et al. (2021), who addressed the relevant contribution of final projects, specifically based on SL, in the training of future education professionals regarding the awareness and visibility of gender patterns and biases. On the other hand, it is worth noting that the only concept that does not present significant differences is that of "work-life balance." This is because it was initially a more familiar term for students (Starostina, 2022).

On the other hand, there were significant differences in the students' knowledge of the situation of women in the educational spheres (educational ideal, education in values, academic spaces and curricular content), social sphere (political and social participation and rights and participation in culture, sports, festivals and celebrations) and labour sphere (occupation or type

of employment, work groups and salary) throughout history before and after the final project. As Larruzea-Urkixo et al. (2021) pointed out in their research, the starting level of future professionals is low from a gender perspective. For this reason, it is important to develop critical awareness (Hauver and Iverson, 2018; Hinojosa-Alcalde, 2021) that favours a change in attitude in future teachers (Maravé-Vivas et al., 2019) through their training and commitment (Clark-Taylor, 2017) and in favour of social justice (Ruiz, 2020). This manuscript shows how the development of final projects based on active methodologies such as SL contributes to individual reflection and, therefore, to a significant change in students' knowledge from a gender perspective (Biglia & Vergés, 2016).

Third, this study emphasises the need to understand the terminology related to some of the barriers that women face today. This allows students to become aware of these barriers and raise their awareness of gender inequalities. It also contributes to making gender inequalities in educational, social, and employment spheres visible from a historical perspective. It also demonstrates the importance of training professionals in general, especially those in the field of education, in the university context from a gender perspective, to bring about social change and promote gender equality in future generations (Rosa & Clavero, 2021). The comprehensive training received and acquisition of knowledge will constitute a means of prevention and defence against existing hate speech and exclusionary and segregating practices from a gender perspective. Furthermore, this research fills a gap identified in the published scientific literature that, although extensive, there is a lack of research focusing on students' prior knowledge of gender equality concepts and how they have acquired and better understood these concepts through the development of final projects integrated into the training they receive.

One limitation of this work can be found in the sample size of this study. Specifically, it is aimed at students with a bachelor's degree in education, and it would have been interesting to include other future education professionals with university degrees, such as Early Childhood Education and Primary Education. Finally, although the aim of this research is not to measure the impact or effect of SfP-based final projects, it is interesting to address this in future studies. A control group and an experimental group could be used to determine whether there were significant differences between the final project carried out in this study and other more traditional ones, and not only between the initial and final states after the selected final project. It would also be of interest to extend the study from this gender perspective to other degrees linked to the field of education (such as the Degree in Early Childhood Education and the Degree in Primary Education) and to compare the results obtained between the different profiles of future education professionals and even in other academic years (1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th university degree).

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APPENDIX

Table 2.

Questions from the interview script

Educational field	• To the best of your knowledge or experience, how has women's access to and experience of education evolved throughout history? • How would you describe the “educational ideals” that have influenced women's education at different times? • What changes have you observed in the “educational spaces” where women have received their education? • How have the “curricular contents” taught to women changed compared to men over time? • What “relevant pedagogical figures” have driven or influenced women's education? • How has the availability of “educational resources” for women evolved? • How has “values education” influenced the perception of women's role in society? • What do you consider having been the most significant progress in women's education and what challenges remain?
Social domain	• How has the role of women in society evolved in terms of participation, rights and roles? • How has women's “political and social participation and rights” changed over time? • How has women's “participation in culture, sports, festivals and celebrations” evolved? • How has the “role of women in the family” and the expectations associated with that role changed? • What do you consider having been the most important change in the social role of women and what aspects still need further attention?
Workplace	• How has the role of women in the workplace evolved in terms of access, opportunities and conditions? • What changes have you observed in the “types of employment or occupations” held by women over time?

- How has women's participation in “labour groupings such as trade unions” evolved?
- How has the situation of women changed in relation to “pay” and equal pay compared to men?
- What progress has been made in “reconciliation measures” that allow women to balance their work and family life?
- How have “work-related leave” for women, such as sickness or marriage leave, evolved?
- What do you consider having been the greatest achievement for women in the workplace and what challenges remain today?

Table 3.

Definition and fragments of the units of comparison and categories of analysis

Comparison units	Categories of analysis	Definition	Fragments
Education	Educational ideal	Aims and objectives pursued in different historical epochs in order to educate individuals	"...it was more normal for women to stay at home while men were in schools or working" (E12).
	Education in values	Type of education in relation to the social construction of men and women in different historical epochs	"...strong, courageous, head of the family, who works outside the home in order to bring money home for the family, i.e. to support the family and also to rule over it..." (E18).
	Educational spaces	Places where boys and girls received education	"... they were not educated at home, they went to schools, temples, even to the street where they learned from other male teachers..." (E2).
	Curricular content	Educational knowledge imparted to men, women, boys and girls in different historical eras	"...women were attached to a more domestic education" (E38).

Social sphere	Participation and political and social rights	Involvement exercise of rights in political and social life of men and women	and "...in the case of men, their active participation as citizens in all public social spheres has been favoured, while women's active participation as citizens is limited to the private sphere..." (E23).
	Participation in culture, sports, festivals and celebrations	Men's and women's involvement in culture, sports, festivals and celebrations	"...women were able to interact with other women and participate in theatres and performances" (E11).
Employment	Occupation or type of employment	Labour activity exercised by men and women in different historical epochs	"...women in the Middle Ages were peasants..." (E7)
	Labour groupings	People come together to defend their labour rights in different historical epochs.	"...their working conditions were respected because the men belonged to craftsmen's guilds..." (E4)
	Salary	Economic differences between men and women perceived for a job activity	"...if women worked either in the fields or in a factory, they did not earn money or earned much less than a man in the same job..." (E8)

Table 5.

Mean, standard deviation, Wilcoxon, and Mann-Whitney U tests were used for variables related to the educational domain.

Items in the field of education	Formerly M/DT	Then M/DT	Z/p	Then U/p
Educational ideal in historical epochs and its descriptions	2.09 .962	4.29 .673	-5.351 .000	58.000 .396
Values education in historical periods	2.30 1.030	4.21 .717	-5.369 .000	62.500 .530

Educational spaces	2.26 .929	4.36 .692	-5.561 .000	72.000 .885
Curricular content	1.63 .903	4.17 .696	-5.628 .000	51.500 .250
Extracurricular activities	1.74 .828	3.95 .795	-5.560 .000	61.000 .482
Historically relevant pedagogical figures	1.96 0.942	4.00 .826	-5.467 .000	64.000 .580
Educational resources	2.13 .957	4.12 .670	-5.361 .000	36.000 .057
Teaching and learning methodologies	2.24 .923	4.21 .606	-5.265 .000	75.000 .961
The figure of the teacher and/or instructor	2.57 .981	4.38 .661	-5.436 .000	63.000 .537

Table 6.

Mean, standard deviation, Wilcoxon, and Mann-Whitney U tests were used for variables related to the social domain.

Items in the social field	Formerly M/DT	Then M/DT	Z/p	Then U/p
Political participation or access to political power in historical epochs	2.00 .943	3.83 .853	-5.362 .000	41.000 .112
The legal rights of historical epochs	1.67 .701	3.69 .924	-5.361 .000	25.000 .019
Initiatives for participation in culture in historical periods	1.65 .766	3.95 .825	-5.488 .000	57.000 .387
The type of participation in celebrations, sports and festivals in historical periods	2.09 .865	4.19 .707	-5.571 .000	70.500 .797
The associations of the historical epochs	1.37 .532	3.71 .805	-5.636 .000	67.000 .676

Artistic representations in historical epochs	2.20 1.147	4.07 .745	-5.385 .000	71.500 .836
Family roles in historical epochs	2.80 .833	4.50 .634	-5.404 .000	59.500 .420

Table 7.

Mean, standard deviation, Wilcoxon, and Mann-Whitney U for variables related to the work environment.

Work environment items	Formerly M/DT	Then M/DT	Z/p	Then U/p
Occupation or type of employment in historical periods	2.22 .814	4.10 .790	-5.551 .000	72.000 .855
Public and private employment in the historical epochs	1.89 .875	3.95 .731	-5.443 .000	57.000 .368
Labour groupings (trade unions) in historical eras	1.78 .841	3.86 .843	-5.360 .000	54.000 .316
Wages or labour remuneration in historical times	1.83 .973	3.81 .833	-5.329 .000	49.500 .227
Reconciliation measures in historical periods	1.46 .622	3.71 .864	-5.638 .000	65.000 .617
Leave from work (sickness, marriage, etc.) in historical periods	1.74 .929	3.93 .867	-5.557 .000	64.000 .586