



RESEARCH ARTICLE

COLLABORATIVE WORK FROM THE EDUCATIONAL GUIDANCE PERSPECTIVE, THE CASE OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN TENERIFE

^{*1}David Pérez-Jorge, ²Josué Gutiérrez-Barroso, ¹Irama Morales-León and ³María Sandra Marrero-Morales

¹Department of Didactics and Educational Research, Faculty of Education, Universidad de la Laguna (ULL), Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain

²Department of Sociology, School of Tourism Iriarte, Universidad de La Laguna (ULL), Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain

³Department of Modern Languages, Professor at Universidad de Las Palmas de Gran Canaria (ULPGC), Faculty of Health Sciences, Las Palmas, Spain

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ABSTRACT

This research describes the development and assessment of an instrument to evaluate the processes of collaborative work carried out in primary and secondary schools in Tenerife (Canary Islands). In this sense, an adaptation of the questionnaire developed by Ferrandis, Grau and Fortes (2010), *Questionnaire for evaluating Predisposition and Collaboration as regards Response to Diversity* (CEPCRD), was carried out. The adequateness of this instrument was analyzed by means of content validity, reliability and underlying structure. Three basic dimensions were identified. Results and differences in several dimensions as regards the participants' professional training and qualification were presented taking into account such dimensions.

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INTRODUCTION

In the present context of education cuts, anything considered by the public administration as an unnecessary expenditure is described as useless and redundant. Pedagogues, psycho-pedagogues, psychologists and speech therapists are precisely the agents which promote the educational process and prevent those students with special needs from being isolated. Nevertheless, they are the key target for criticism and cuts since there exists a simplistic reductionism which considers that teachers are strictly and exclusively responsible for education. Statistics reveal that those countries where collaborative work is promoted with the assistance of these professionals and where the teacher is never alone show clearly identifiable educational performance indicators and economic

growth rates (Torres, 2007). Most of the times, when the educational centre incorporates the figure of the school guidance counselor, he/she is given administrative tasks which have nothing to do with the educational field. The identity of the educational guidance counselor is created as an agent who helps teachers with monotonous and tiresome tasks. This would be the model of educational guidance counselor which is, at present, being introduced in the Spanish educational system. However, we must make efforts to increase awareness of educational agents about the relevance and important benefits that the collaborative paradigm would have in the teacher-school guidance counselor relationship (Maher and Zins, 1989). This is an approach which is not only applied to the teacher-school guidance counselor binomial, but also to the network which supports the educational process, including parents, students, guardians or tutors, departments, etc. However, a work which promotes a utopia and does not start from a serious analysis of reality is an anticipated failure. In

*Corresponding author: David Pérez-Jorge,
Department of Didactics and Educational Research, Faculty of Education, Universidad de la Laguna (ULL), Tenerife, Canary Islands, Spain.

our country, the teaching function is still an individualistic ivory tower where the teacher does not collaborate with other teachers and does not provide feedback in his/her community. The old-fashioned model in which the teacher had all the importance, has not been overcome by the new education paradigms which focus on the students' processes. However, in spite of the progress made, there are still many agents which have not been considered in pedagogy, one of them is the educational guidance counselor. The theoretical assumptions of this study consider that the centralist and non-collaborative alternatives are overcome in teaching and learning processes. The teacher has certain competences. However, he/she should not have the monopoly of education. Furthermore, this research will promote, in a cross-cutting manner, the notion that teaching is more effective in its aims and achievements, and more enjoyable for its agents, when it is developed in collaborative settings. Thus, the educational guidance counselor appears to be a fundamental pillar of support and effective counselling for the teacher. Pedagogy is a multi-paradigmatic discipline where there is not only a theory that prevails academically over all the others. Therefore, the definitions which are presented in this research will be, in many cases, approaches of divergent and heterogeneous perspectives. The theoretical problem "What is and what does a school guidance counselor do?" directly affects our practical application of the educational phenomena, since theory guides practice. In this sense, it is preferable to analyze, first of all, the key definitions and the theoretical conflicts in them.

What do we know about the types of problems which affect the pedagogical-psychological intervention in educational centres?, to what extent is psycho-pedagogical intervention fulfilling those objectives which were initially proposed? That is, is educational guidance a key factor in the attention to diversity of students in secondary schools? If we observe the real educational practice in schools, we can state that guidance is a key factor in the attention to diversity of students, especially in secondary schools. If this topic is not addressed, it would be difficult to be addressed by those teachers who are specialists in non-pedagogical academic subjects. Moreover, unfortunately, teachers most of the times choose the easiest way, what is homogeneous, denying that diversity is an enriching factor. Teacher-school guidance counselor relationship is not always ideal and many disagreements can arise. This situation implies a major difficulty for cooperation. On the other hand, one of the functions of the school guidance counselor is to know who are the teachers who do not want to collaborate and why. In such cases, it is better to stand them aside or entrust them some simple tasks which require few participants. It is also helpful to be supported by those teachers who have some experiences in collaborating with the school guidance counselor since they can tell their experiences and motivate other teachers to collaborate. Moreover, the educational team can learn from these teachers' experiences. Presently, teachers and school guidance counselors must efficiently collaborate making decisions to prevent and solve educational problems in school centres. There are many factors which affect the educational change, which is always the permanent and desirable objective in education. Educational innovation is of great importance to improve education. It is the result of the willingness of teachers (although they do not

have much time) to change the image of the school. The process needs a series of requirements that, due to their complexities, are becoming difficulties, such as the time of preparation, the necessary resources, paperwork and bureaucracy. The agent of change cannot adopt the traditional "expectation model" (hierarchical and marginal action on isolated elements). Therefore, given the possibility of a technical approach, a professional conception is proposed. In this approach, the agent is a specialist and an expert who is in a hierarchy, defines the problem, designs the plan and evaluates the results, classifies the users without questioning stability and tries to complement. On the other hand, this agent is geographically and professionally isolated and does not share the same worries, interests and conceptions.

Collaborative work still implies a work overload for teachers. We have to take into account that each professional focuses on his/her functions. However, individualized work is the fastest but it is not always the most effective work. In this sense, an improvement proposal both for the teacher and the school guidance counselor is a work which is made up of different parts and involves considerable effort. To promote commitment to rigorous educational liability systems is an option. Moreover, rigorous internal and external evaluation systems must be established in order to continue with the progress of school improvement efforts and intervene in situations of difficulty or failure. It would be of crucial importance to help school centres build their "future vision" and support the creation of a clear set of common expectations, rules, values and beliefs, to involve the school community in an improvement plan and to trust its capacity to develop it. Apart from demonstrating this external commitment to the improvement proposals with evident facts, it should also be ensured that in the organization of educational centres there are spaces and times to promote collegiate activities, analysis dynamics, common reflections and critical evaluations of teaching-learning processes and the collaborative work among professionals. It is important to promote cooperation among teachers and support them in collaborative work around common objectives. There is usually little time to plan, considerable time devoted to action and very little time devoted to reflection on action. Therefore, it is important to promote the democratization of the functioning of educational structures, to develop models of organization which increase the participation in decision-making and promote consensus. On the other hand, it would be necessary to redirect disagreements, trying to incorporate all those who disagree without disqualifying them. It is also necessary to promote institutional self-evaluation to make all those participants in improvement processes have an evident-based knowledge about the situation in their educational centres and information about the development of improvement proposals with the objective of redirecting them or, if it is necessary, of solving those problems that arise.

It is also relevant to mention the lack of feedback and the recognition that the discipline obtains as regards its work environment, where the incomprehension of its role has led to questions such as "Why are they here?", "What are they going to teach me at this point?", "do they try to interfere in my classes?".

One of the distinctive elements which can help is repetition. Education professionals are going to experience several times the same situation and, therefore, there will be repetition. As the result of that repetition, the professional will develop a series of expectations, images and techniques which will provide a basis for his/her decisions. This experience gives rise to his/her practical knowledge. This reflection process turns professionals into researchers in a practical context. To pose the problem from a different perspective means that the problem is a completely different one and the solution is not, that is, when we think about what to do, we must do it from a perspective in which the problem seems to be a different one and not the solution. Therefore, if these questions are adapted to the reflexive procedure and the functions of each member in the educational community are clarified, both in the educational centre involved and the rest of connectors which help promote its functioning, a dialogue, which implies an evolution in the collaborative work, will be established. This could lead to present both the positive side that each member of the educational center provides to intervene in a specific problem or in the daily work performance, and the negative side, causing a series of dialogues and discussions which will make the result much more effective both for students and professionals. The reinvention of the method is the most positive path to improvement and, therefore, to the improvement of education. Small steps lead to a global change and, although they are not specific aims, they are a good start to solve concrete problems such as the one we are dealing with in this paper, the need to work in the well-functioning of cooperation. "How to get cooperation?", and in the process of collaboration "What to do?" two questions which are much more important than those posed before and which will lead us to much more effective conclusions.

Objectives

At this point and after analyzing what researchers say about the collaborative processes in educational centres between teachers and educational guidance counselors, we have to think about those collaborative processes and coordination which, at present, are being carried out in educational centres. It is time to reflect on whether collaborative principles and culture are, at present, promoted in educational centres or, on the contrary, there exists a balkanized organization based on independent work which is totally disconnected from both professional groups. Therefore, we propose the following objectives:

1. To verify the quality of the instrument which has been designed:
 - To test its content validity.
 - To test its internal consistency, both globally and taking into account each content dimension.
 - To explore the underlying structure and its adequateness as regards those dimensions established in the theoretical models on which this research is based.
2. To analyze teachers' predisposition towards collaborative work in school centres and between teachers and the School Guidance Department.
3. To know the teachers' relation and expectations towards the School Guidance Department.

4. To know the ways in which student diversity is approached in educational centres and if that response is developed from a model of collaborative work between teachers and educational guidance counselors.

Method

The reality of the processes and functioning dynamics in educational centres is highly diverse. The characteristics of teachers, families or those of the particular teaching context can affect the perception that teachers have about its functioning. Taking into account this idea, a case study has been conducted in four educational centres in Tenerife. We have chosen this methodology since we consider that it is really useful in order to collect first-hand information about the daily reality of an educational guidance counselor. The fact of being participant-observer for a period of four months, for four hours a day, let us know his/her reality from a personal and professional perspective, participating in decision-making and counselling processes. The sample was finally made up of 13 educational guidance counselors and a total of 79 teachers: 34 primary school teachers and 45 secondary school teachers. The characteristics of the sample are shown in Table 1.

The instrument which has been proposed to evaluate teachers' predisposition and collaboration was an *ad hoc* test. It was an adaptation of the questionnaire developed by Ferrandis, Grau and Fortes (2010), *Questionnaire for evaluating Predisposition and Collaboration as regards Response to Diversity* (CEPCRD). This questionnaire was developed according to the current regulations in the Autonomous Community in the Canary Islands (Decree 104/2010, July 29, Decree 23/1995, February 24 and the Order of September 1, 2010), as regards the fields of collaborative work and the processes of psycho-pedagogical and educational guidance. In order to design and develop this questionnaire (CEPCRD), we followed the same procedure as the one previously established by Pérez-Jorge, Álvarez and López (2015). Thus, the first version of the questionnaire was tested for content validity according to McMillan and Schumacher (2005):

- a) *Pilot test*: a test conducted among three teachers from school centres different from those selected to carry out this study, but with the same characteristics of those teachers in the final sample. With this test we tried to define content and writing aspects of the different items, and comprehension and adequacy of answer options.
- b) *Content Analysis performed by evaluators*: it was performed with the collaboration of two guidance counselors from educational centres different from those which had been previously selected and with a university professor who was expert in the field of pedagogical-psychological counselling, with the aim of evaluating the relevance and adequateness of the dimensions studied.

Taking into account the results obtained in the validity tests, the final version of the questionnaire was carried out. It was finally made up of 23 items. The answers of the different items in the scale showed the level of agreement as regards the teachers' opinions about the way to address student diversity in collaboration with the School Guidance Department.

Table 1. Sample distribution

Age		Gender		Educational Training		Professional Category		
People under 40 years old	People over 40yearsold	Male	Female	Undergraduate level	University graduates	Primary Education teachers	Secondary Education teachers	Guidance counselors
32	60	42	50	41	51	34	45	13
34,8%	65,2%	45,7%	54,3%	44,6%	55,4%	36,9%	49,1%	14,0%

Source: Prepared by the authors

Table 2. Analysis of the reliability of the questionnaire

Subscales	α Cronbach
1. Predisposition to collaborative work	0,711
2. Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department	0,689
3. Response to diversity	0,771
Total	0,867

Teachers should answer in a scale in which each item was valued punctuating from 1 (the lowest level of agreement) to 4 (the highest level of agreement), as regards the model of collaborative work in their educational centre, the relations and expectations towards the School Guidance Department and the knowledge about the way to address student diversity. Furthermore, a semi-structured interview was carried out to the four guidance counselors from the participating centers, with the aim of contrasting their opinions with the answers given by teachers. In order to complement this study, daily working sessions of guidance counselors in their centres were registered in a field diary.

Taking into account the objectives proposed in this research, the following analysis procedures were carried out:

- 1) Cronbach's Alpha was used to evaluate the internal consistency of the test, both globally and taking into account each content dimension;
- 2) To analyze the underlying structure, a Principal Component Analysis was performed (PCA);
- 3) To know the answers given by the students a descriptive and exploratory analysis of the factors obtained from the PCA was carried out;
- 4) Moreover, relations among sample characteristics and the dimensions of the test were analyzed.

RESULTS

Analysis of Internal Consistency

Table 2 shows the results obtained after the reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) of the twenty three items divided into three subscales.

Analysis of test structure

Taking into account the results obtained in each of the items, an analysis of the main components was performed through the VARIMAX rotation procedure. The index KMO of sampling adequateness obtained an acceptable value of 0,867 and enabled us to proceed with factorization (Bartlett test of sphericity; $\chi^2= 326,2, 1325$ gl, $p < 0,000$). We decided to opt for 3 components which explained a 60.7 % of the variance.

After the analysis of the items collected by CEPCRD, the following three major factors were obtained:

1. *Predisposition to collaborative work*. This factor analyses the expectation and possibilities that teachers assign to collaborative work. This factor is made up of items 2,3,8,9,12,13,14,18,19,20,22 and 23.
2. *Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department*. This factor makes reference to those relations and expectations in schools as regards the School Guidance Department. This component is made up of items 5, 6,7, 10 and 16.
3. *Response to diversity*. This factor collects items related to the adequateness of the answers to diversity and if attention to diversity is given in each centre and if there is collaboration between the teacher and the school guidance counselor. This factor comprises items 1, 4, 11, 17 and 21.

Analysis of teachers' opinions about the way in which attention to diversity is addressed

As regards teachers' opinions, before carrying out the analysis, it is necessary to mention the description of the different factors. Factor 1 (*Predisposition to collaborative work*) shows a mean value of 3,25 and a T.D. of 0,32. Factor 2 (Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department) has a mean value of 3,54 and a T.D. of 0,64, whereas Factor 3 (*Response to diversity*) shows a mean value of 3,18 and a T.D. of 0,49. As regards gender (table 3), we can observe at a descriptive level that men give a higher punctuation than that given by women to the three factors. Moreover, in all factors which have been analyzed, typical deviations are higher in the group of women than in the group of men. This fact indicates that the female segment is much more heterogeneous in their opinions about the attention to diversity in educational centres. However, these differences are not shown at a statistical level since there are no significant differences between both groups in the three factors which have been analyzed.

Other socio demographic variable which could influence the answers given to the factors related to attention to diversity in the educational centre is age (Table 4). In this sense, in all the factors which have been analyzed people over 40 years old show a high level of agreement. Nevertheless, there are no

statistical significant differences between age and those factors analyzed in this study. Therefore, we cannot state that people under 40 years old score the items in the questionnaire in a different way from people over 40 years old.

Table 3. Factor scores according to teachers' gender

Factor	Gender	N	Mean Value	T.D.
<i>Predisposition to collaborative work</i>	Male	36	3,29	,276
	Female	43	3,23	,355
<i>Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department</i>	Male	34	3,55	,617
	Female	45	3,53	,659
<i>Response to diversity</i>	Male	38	3,20	,488
	Female	51	3,17	,496

*: Mean differences with a confidence level of 95%
^a: Different variances are taken into account

Table 4. Factor scores according to teachers' age

Factor	Age	N	Mean values	T.D.
<i>Predisposition to collaborative work^a</i>	People under 40 years old	26	3,24	,280
	People over 40 years old	53	3,26	,342
<i>Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department</i>	People under 40 years old	29	3,52	,662
	People over 40 years old	50	3,55	,629
<i>Response to diversity</i>	People under 40 years old	30	3,17	,546
	People over 40 years old	59	3,19	,464

*: Mean differences with a confidence level of 95%
^a: Different variances are taken into account

The educational stage of teachers has also been analyzed in order to give scores in each of the factors proposed in this research. As shown in Table 5, primary education teachers give a higher score in the three factors analyzed than that given by secondary school teachers. Moreover, secondary education teachers show a higher dispersion as regards data. This fact implies that the answers are more heterogeneous than those answers given by primary school teachers. Furthermore, at a statistical level, the differences as regards the dispersion of factors according to the teachers' educational stage are significant in factors such as *Predisposition to collaborative work* and *Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department*. However, we cannot state that there are significant differences in mean values between primary and secondary school teachers as regards the factors which have been analyzed.

Table 5. Factor scores according to teachers' educational stage^a

Factor	Stage	N	Mean value	T.D.
<i>Predisposition to collaborative work^a</i>	Primary Schoolteacher	34	3,34	,267
	Secondary Schoolteacher	32	3,22	,399
<i>Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department.^a</i>	Primary School teacher	38	3,85	,183
	Secondary Schoolteacher	28	3,71	,390
<i>Response to diversity</i>	Primary Schoolteacher	42	3,33	,450
	Secondary Schoolteacher	34	3,16	,508

*: Mean differences with a confidence level of 95%
^a: Different variances are taken into account

As regards the professional category (table6), primary school teachers give higher scores than the rest of categories in all

factors which have been analyzed. Furthermore, those with less average score in all the factors are school guidance counselors. In this sense, T1 stated that "*there is always a good intention to work in collaboration, but at the end we have no time to meet and we limit ourselves to merely evaluate and work from the close areas of the Guidance Department*", according to T4 "*it is just good intention which is not finally put into practice.*" Thus, at a descriptive level there appear differences between primary and secondary school teachers as regards school guidance counselors and the scores of the dimensions which have been analyzed. Thus, P3 stated that "*working with primary school teachers has always been easier than working with secondary school teachers*" or P2 who said that "*secondary school teachers see us as doctors who have to return the children with their problems solved*".

At a statistical level, such differences are significant in all the factors analyzed. Thus, we can state that there are different ways of acting among professional categories when scoring in the different factors included in this research.

Table 6. Factor scores according to teachers' professional category^a

Factor	ProfessionalCategory	N	Mean value	T.D.
<i>Predisposition to collaborative work^a</i>	Primaryschoolteacher	34	3,34*	,267
	Secondarieschoolteacher	32	3,22*	,399
	School Guidance Counselor	13	3,10*	,101
<i>Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department.^a</i>	Primaryschoolteacher	38	3,85*	,183
	Secondarieschoolteacher	28	3,71*	,390
	School Guidance Counselor	13	2,26*	,236
<i>Response to diversity^a</i>	Primaryschoolteacher	42	3,33*	,450
	Secondarieschoolteacher	34	3,16*	,508
	SchoolGuidanceCounselor	13	2,75*	,285

*: Mean differences with a confidence level of 95%
^a: Different variances are taken into account

However, this fact does not mean that there are significant differences among all professional categories in all the factors which have been analyzed. Thus, table 7 shows the professional categories in each factor. We can observe significant differences as regards their scores. In all factors, there are differences between primary school teachers' scores and school guidance counselors' scores, being statistically significant the fact that primary school teachers give higher scores than school guidance counselors.

Table 7. Teachers' professional categories which show statistically significant differences in factors according to Tamhane's T2

Factor	Categories which show differences
<i>Predisposition to collaborative work</i>	Primary school teacher-School guidance counselor
<i>Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department</i>	Primary school teacher-School guidance counselor Secondary school teacher-School guidance counselor
<i>Response to diversity</i>	Primary school teacher-School guidance counselor Secondary school teacher-School guidance counselor

On the other hand, in factors *Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department* and *Response to Diversity*, there are, apart from differences between primary school teachers and school guidance counselors, some statistical significant variations between secondary school teachers and school guidance counselors. Therefore, the important differences that we observe at a descriptive level between the scores given by secondary school teachers and school guidance counselors are supported and verified at a statistical level.

DISCUSSION

Individualized working practice, established in the working culture of educational centres, has prevented for many years both the development of programs of cooperation and team work and the interrelation of knowledge and the reflection in order to obtain a continuous improvement of educational practice (Santana, 2009). In this sense, results show differences as regards the dimensions studied: *b) Relation and expectation towards the School Guidance Department* and *c) Response to diversity*. In both cases the relation and expectations of school guidance counselors and the perception given about the response to diversity by schools have had the lowest score. Researches performed in recent years have proven that the more resources and professionals available for inclusive education, the better results obtained. However, the task of coordinating efficiently is a complex and difficult task when the objective is to create convergent and coherent action plans (Grañeras, Parras, 2009). At present, there is a bad coordination both in school centres (as regards collaboration and coordination among tutors, support specialists and educational and psycho-pedagogical guidance services), and among educational centers, health services and social welfare services or care services for children and adolescents in situations of risk, etc.

This research is evidence of this, since there are many contradictions in teachers' and school guidance counselors' statements which reveal the important problems of coordination which exist in educational centres. In spite of the fact that the interpersonal relationships between teachers and school guidance counselors are good and in spite of the predisposition to collaborative work, school guidance counselors and teachers are still very reluctant to collaborate and cooperate. Perhaps, this is due to their own professional culture (balkanization) which seems to imply the perception of giving up their own areas of competences. The results of this research show that teachers find school guidance counselors of assistance when they have problems or difficulties. Collaboration is usually punctual, without the existence of a collaborative culture among these professionals, especially in the case of secondary school teachers. School guidance counselors have a partial vision of the collaborative role which they have to play in educational centres. Their opinions reflect distrust and reveal a low disposition of secondary school teachers to cooperate. However, it does not happen in the case of primary school teachers. Educational guidance services have an important role to play in the organization and improvement of the educational response in schools. In this sense, we consider it essential that school guidance counselors change the perspective they have about the educational community,

transforming the concept *remedial* into a concept related to the professional who cooperates and promotes spaces of ecological and interdisciplinary analysis of teaching-learning processes. There exists an important lack of feedback and recognition of counselling teams in schools. This fact, deeply rooted in the school culture, has touched school centres conditioning the collaborative work and culture (Vélaz, 2008). Further reflection is needed on this reality, offering a reflexive alternative (Schön, 2015) which lets us clarify the role of each member in the educational community, both the functions of the educational centre and the agents who collaborate in its proper functioning. This would favor the opening of a dialogue which would imply a fundamental step towards the promotion of a collaborative culture in educational centres. The reinvention of the method and the ways of working based on collaboration would be the most positive path towards the improvement of school culture and, therefore, towards the improvement of education.

Conclusion

After studying CEPCRD metric properties, we can state that this instrument is both reliable and adequate. Therefore, it can be recommended as an instrument to analyze teachers' knowledge, professional competences and attitude towards educational inclusion of students with SEN. Moreover, we consider highly appropriate the validity of the test as regards its content (validated by experts) and its internal structure. In this aspect, the factors obtained have proven to be coherent with the theoretical dimensions proposed by Ferrandis, Grauand Fortes (2010). In general, we can state that there exists a good *predisposition to collaborative work in educational centres*. Although there are no differences related to gender, it can be observed that men obtain higher averages than those obtained by women. As regards age, it has been observed that there is a tendency of higher scores in those participants over 40 years old. Regarding the educational stage, primary school teachers showed better predisposition to collaborative work. As regards the expectations towards the School Guidance Department, there exists a positive view which is better in men than in women. In relation to age, the expectation is better in teachers over the age of 40, especially in primary school teachers. As regards the response to diversity from a collaborative work model among teachers and school guidance counselors, it has been proven that this was the dimension which obtained the lowest average score. This suggests a less favorable perception as regards the response to diversity given by educational centres. As we have observed, men obtain higher averages and the perception to the response to diversity is better in teachers over 40 years old, especially in primary school teachers. In general, school guidance counselors are professionals which show little predisposition to collaborative work. They also show a poor perception of the relationship between teachers and the school guidance department and perceive as inadequate the answer to student diversity. It is urgent and necessary to promote models of collaborative work developed from educational centres, with a change in role and expectations both in teachers and school guidance counselors with the aim of joining efforts and collaborating in searching for practical and useful solutions in order to respond effectively to the needs and difficulties which students have in educational centres.

Proposal for improvements

In this sense, an improvement proposal both for the teacher and the school guidance counselor is a work which is made up of different parts and which involves considerable effort. To promote commitment to rigorous educational liability systems is an option. Moreover, rigorous internal and external evaluation systems must be established in order to continue with the progress of school improvement efforts and intervene in situations of difficulty or failure. It would be of crucial importance to help school centres build their "future vision" and support the creation of a clear set of common expectations, rules, values and beliefs, to involve the school community in an improvement plan and to trust its capacity to develop it. Apart from demonstrating this external commitment to the improvement proposals with evident facts, it should also be ensured that in the organization of educational centres there are spaces and times to promote collegiate activities, analysis dynamics, common reflections and critical evaluations of teaching-learning processes and the collaborative work among professionals. It is important to promote cooperation among teachers and support them in collaborative work around common objectives. There is usually little time to plan, considerable time devoted to action and very little time devoted to reflection on action. Therefore, it is important to promote the democratization of the functioning of educational structures, to develop models of organization which increase the participation in decision-making and promote consensus. On the other hand, it would be necessary to redirect disagreements, trying to incorporate all those who disagree without disqualifying them. It is also necessary to promote institutional self-evaluation to make all those participants in improvement processes have an evident-based knowledge about the situation in their educational centres and participate in improvement proposals in such centres.

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