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Theoretical and practical knowledge in social pedagogy: levels and agents of the pedagogical knowledge production



During the last decades in the history of social pedagogy, a current has emerged that seeks to understand the complexity of socio-educational phenomena instead of the analytical perspective of the last two centuries. In this article, Xavier Úcar analyzes the relationship between theory and practice of social pedagogical knowledge and proposes levels of creation and application of this knowledge.

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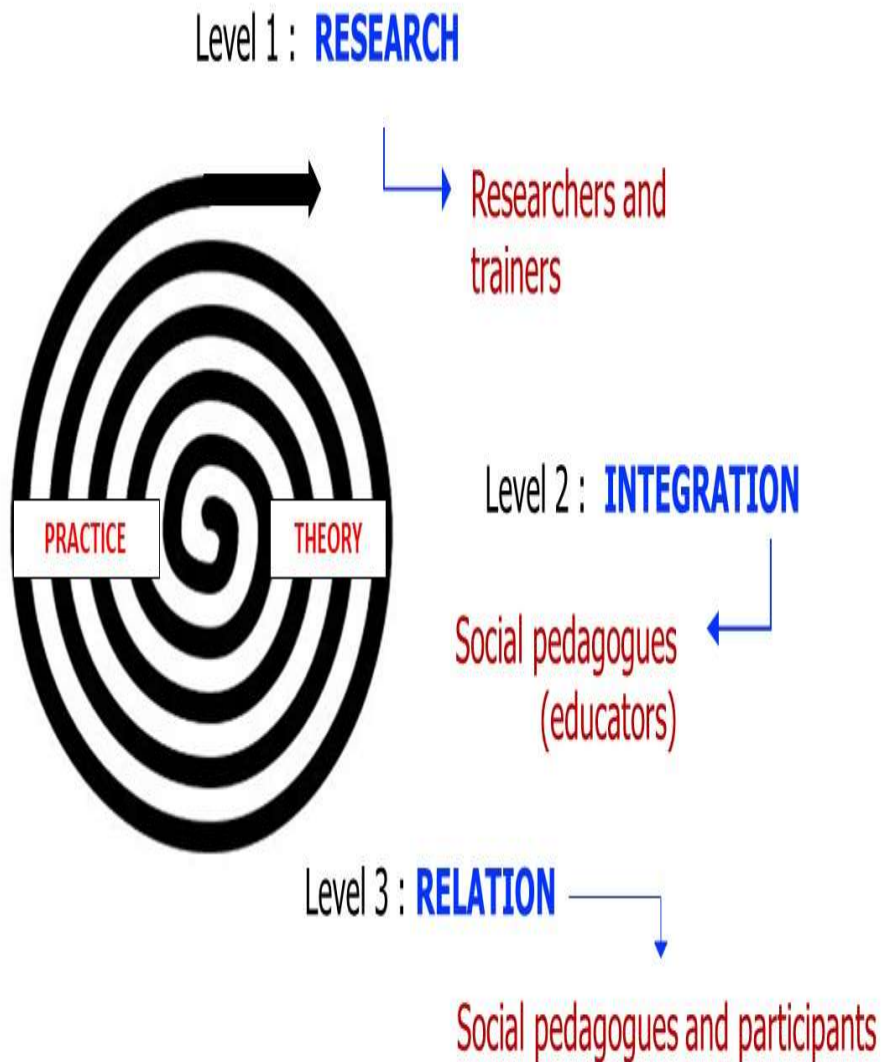
The theory-practice distinction has been a constant in the history of social pedagogy. A polarization exacerbated by the analytical perspective that has dominated Western socio-cultural reality in the last two centuries. In recent decades, however, a new perspective is emerging which, beyond the differentiations, polarizations and antinomies generated in Modernity, seeks to access the complexity of socio-educational phenomena. This text answers two questions: What are the characteristics of the knowledge applied and produced within the framework of (social) pedagogy? And how are theory and practice articulated in the production and application of (social) pedagogical knowledge? In order to answer these questions, first of all, the different types of knowledge existing in the framework of social sciences and their defining characteristics are presented. Then it is analyzed how theory and practice are related in the application and creation of (social) pedagogical knowledge. Finally, three levels of application and creation of (social) pedagogical knowledge are proposed. I have named them: (1) **Research**; (2) **Integration**; and (3) **Relationship**.

Level I knowledge is elaborated by educational science researchers and disseminated through the interpretation of it by trainers. It is a diverse knowledge that is very fragmented. It is produced by, among others, biology of education, economics of education, psychology of education, philosophy of education and so on.

Level II knowledge is knowledge developed by educational practitioners from the integration of acquired level I knowledge and knowledge developed through their inherent life experiences. It is, therefore, an integrated knowledge derived from putting into practice the knowledge that educators possess.

And level III, finally, is new knowledge that emerges from the socio-educational relationships developed by educational practitioners and participants.

LEVELS OF PEDAGOGICAL KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION



In the last section of the text, we elaborate on how, when and where such pedagogical (social) knowledge is elaborated and applied at each of these three levels. Level I knowledge is formalized and accessible, among others, through books, journals and research reports. Level II and Level III knowledge, on the other hand, depends for its formalization on the willingness of educational practitioners and their interest in collecting and publishing, in the form of journal articles or conference presentations, the new knowledge that emerges in their day-to-day practice.

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References

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