



Vol.8 No.1 (2025)

Journal of Applied Learning & Teaching

ISSN : 2591-801X

Content Available at : <http://journals.sfu.ca/jalt/index.php/jalt/index>

Perception of future teachers on the influence of poverty

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Keywords

Academic performance;
attitude;
equity;
social justice;
training.

Abstract

Education has been considered an elevator that allows people to progress socially. Unfortunately, this is not always the case, so it is essential that teachers understand the influence that poverty has on the development of students who live in this condition. This is why the aim of this study is to analyse future teachers' perceptions of the relationship between poverty and education. To this end, qualitative phenomenological research was conducted using the collective case study method. A sample of 127 students from the Master in Teacher Training at Spanish universities was exposed to life experiences and readings from the Report of the Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights, which was presented at the United Nations Human Rights Council for Spain in 2020. Individual written reflections and group discussions were conducted. The results showed that this type of experience helps to eliminate teachers' prejudices and stereotypes about students and their families who unfortunately live in socioeconomically disadvantaged conditions, as well as promoting a consciousness of equity and educational social justice.

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Article Info

Received 23 August 2024

Received in revised form 25 October 2024

Accepted 20 December 2024

Available online 16 January 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.37074/jalt.2025.8.1.8>

Introduction

In Spain, the group most likely to experience poverty consists of minors, with an estimated child poverty rate of 28.9%. This percentage has been on the rise since 2018. Among these, 8.9% live in situations of severe material deprivation, according to the AROPE (At Risk of Poverty and/or Exclusion) rate (National Statistics Institute, 2021).

Poverty should be regarded as a structural phenomenon that constitutes a violation of human rights (Human Rights Commission, 1948). Consequently, education professionals must do everything within their power to ensure that their students who are in such circumstances can overcome them in the future, partly due to the formative role that teachers play. Educators should put their professional knowledge at the service of society and contribute to creating a better reality for their students (Jensen, 2013).

Traditionally, educational development has been considered one of the most important pathways through which individuals can escape poverty and achieve social mobility (Huang et al., 2009). Schools have served as the primary setting where children and adolescents acquire knowledge, skills, and values essential for ethical and effective participation in society and the future labour market (Bol et al., 2019; Schrag, 2016). For this reason, a substantial body of research has demonstrated that education is directly related to employment, professional development, and quality of life (Barlas et al., 2024; Jury et al., 2017). As students progress and attain higher educational levels, they are more likely to secure better jobs and earn higher salaries (Reichenberg, 2019). At the same time, they are less likely to become involved in criminal activities or drug use (Robison et al., 2017), or to rely on social services or state aid to lead a dignified life (Parr & Bonitz, 2015). Furthermore, the educational development of minors from low socioeconomic backgrounds has significant implications beyond the individual student, as it considerably reduces the societal costs associated with poverty (Hannum et al., 2017).

While academic progress is a means of escaping poverty, there is a strong relationship between poverty and academic performance. Studies consistently show a gap in educational outcomes between students from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and those who do not live in such conditions (Browman et al., 2017). These disparities have been observed from early childhood education (Thomas et al., 2020), through primary (Alves et al., 2017) and secondary education (Liu et al., 2022), to tertiary education (Sadowski et al., 2018).

There are three theoretical perspectives that explain teachers' attitudes towards students living in poverty: deficit, determination, and structural ideologies (Gorski, 2016). The deficit theory (Lewis, 1966) attributes educational inequalities to the deficiencies, of any kind, of students and their parents. For instance, from this perspective, teachers might blame students' families for their low level of engagement with the school, the little importance they attach to their children's education, students' absenteeism, or the lack of appropriate skills among minors to succeed in school. Teachers who operate under the deficit theory

may believe that their educational role is to ensure that their students succeed by leaving behind their neighbourhoods, families, and poverty-stricken contexts, which can create significant tensions in their relationships with the students' parents (Linberg et al., 2019).

Another approach, the determination theory (Duckworth et al., 2007), suggests that certain personality traits enable some individuals to overcome social and economic difficulties through effort and hard work (Daher et al., 2023). Teachers who align with this theoretical model tend to focus more on developing, promoting, and enhancing students' personal traits, without taking into account the influence that their socioeconomic contexts may have on them (Walker et al., 2019).

On the other hand, the structural theory views the influence of socioeconomic status on academic achievement as a result of inequity and the social and economic inequalities produced by structural poverty (Rank et al., 2003). This model emphasises that schools located in impoverished neighbourhoods often have lower budgets, less experienced and less pedagogically trained teachers, fewer technological resources, a lack of books, and other educational resources (Reddick et al., 2011). Teachers who adhere to this theoretical model recognise the importance of working with students' families but may feel frustrated or give up when they perceive that parental involvement is limited by personal circumstances or socioeconomic difficulties (Gordon & Cui, 2014).

In the educational field, there is a growing awareness of the importance of improving the training of teachers working with disadvantaged groups, whether due to socioeconomic factors or other reasons (Keeney et al., 2019). Unfortunately, these aspects are still far from being considered a significant part of teacher training programmes, whether in undergraduate and postgraduate degrees or in the professional development plans offered by public administrations or other governmental institutions (Steinberg & Krumer-Nevo, 2020).

One of the main objectives that teacher training should address is the development of equity awareness (Gorski, 2017). This involves understanding poverty, recognizing people living in poverty as experts in their own experiences, and the willingness of teachers to use their knowledge and skills to promote equity and social justice in educational settings (Kretchmar & Zeichner, 2016). From this perspective of equity awareness, teachers should first analyse whether the school policies and practices in their schools are unjust towards students from low-income families (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). Secondly, they should question whether they, as teachers, hold prejudices and erroneous stereotypes about people living in poverty that might bias their educational work (Martínez et al., 2017). Finally, they should promote teaching strategies that prevent the devaluation of these students' learning, encouraging, wherever possible, the participation of their families (Benner et al., 2016). This entire process requires knowledge and understanding of the life experiences of low-income families, as well as their personal and social circumstances, which influence their children's education. A lack of such knowledge will make

it very difficult for teachers to develop the emotional and cognitive processes necessary to foster equity awareness (Gorski, 2017).

In addition to its theoretical conception, equity awareness includes a detailed pedagogical framework that has been implemented in various teacher education courses around the world (Cleovoulou et al., 2022; Dyches & Boyd, 2017). The uniqueness of this pedagogical framework lies in its emphasis on a combination of cognitive, emotional, and ethical aspects; that is, in the integration of theoretical and empirical knowledge about poverty and its implications, along with the refinement of reflective knowledge, incorporating a shift in personal attitudes and values towards the consequences of academic development in poverty-stricken contexts (Haberman, 2010). Furthermore, this pedagogical approach aligns with studies that emphasise the importance of humanizing education, where the well-being of students must be considered if they are to optimise their learning processes and achieve strong academic outcomes (Tong & Ismail, 2024).

The aim of the study was to examine the emotional and cognitive responses of future secondary school teachers to the influence of poverty on the personal, social, and educational development of individuals.

Method

This study employed a qualitative methodology from a phenomenological perspective, using the collective case study method and the focus group technique (Stake, 1998).

Participants

The sample consisted of 127 students (54 women) enrolled in the Master's Programme for Teacher Training in Secondary Education, Baccalaureate, Vocational Training, and Language Teaching at three different Spanish universities during the 2022/2023 academic year. The age range was 23 to 54 years ($M = 35.43$; $SD = 8.11$). The sampling method used was non-probabilistic convenience sampling with voluntary inclusion (Cohen et al., 2011).

Procedure

Following approval from the academic coordinators of the Master's Programme at the three participating universities, the main research objective was presented to the students, informing them that their participation was voluntary and would take place outside of regular class hours. Six focus groups were formed from the students who volunteered, each consisting of between 15 and 23 participants.

Each group participated in a total of six two-hour sessions, held weekly. The sessions took place in the afternoon, in a classroom at each of the universities. All six focus groups began and ended their activities simultaneously, with each session facilitated by a person with a degree in psychology. The first five sessions followed the same structure. In the first

part, participants were asked to read selected passages from the Report of the Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, which was presented to the United Nations Human Rights Council for Spain in 2020. After this, they engaged in individual reflection, followed by a group discussion and debate.

During the second hour, persons living in poverty, without formal education, were invited to attend the session. These individuals were part of projects against poverty and social exclusion run by local associations in the municipalities where the universities were located. No personal data that could identify these individuals was collected; the management of this procedure was handled by the associations, which proposed participants from among their beneficiaries based on the research team's request for voluntary participation in this study. These individuals shared their life experiences for ten minutes and then answered questions from the research group participants for twenty minutes.

Finally, during the last thirty minutes, participants were invited to write personal reflections in a notebook, describing their thoughts and feelings experienced during the session, what was new to them, and how the knowledge gained could contribute to their future work as teachers. These reflections which formed the basis for group discussions, were documented, and analysed using content analysis to uncover assumptions, meanings, and patterns, and to identify the main themes related to participants' emotional and cognitive responses. In the sixth and final session, participants shared their experiences and engaged in a debate based on everything they had written in the previous five sessions, discussing their views on the influence of poverty on individuals' educational development.

The study was approved by the University's Research Ethics Committee (CIPI/22.244).

Data analysis

The reflections recorded by the students in their workbooks were analysed using content analysis (Strauss, 1987). The first part of the analysis involved distinguishing between emotional and cognitive responses. For example, sadness and anger were categorised as emotional responses, while the desire for knowledge and the awareness of a lack of understanding were analysed as cognitive responses. The second part of the analysis focused on identifying specific themes within each category. Four themes were identified within the emotional response category, and three within the cognitive response category. The third stage involved refining the themes. The categories and themes were further refined through discussions among the team of psychologists who facilitated the focus groups.

Results

The following section presents the results, categorised into emotional and cognitive responses.

Emotional responses

The most frequent emotional responses were rejection, compassion, sadness, and anger.

Rejection

A significant group of participants expressed rejection towards people living in poverty or towards their life stories. Their judgment was based on the belief that these individuals' poverty and lack of education were due to personal decisions and chosen behaviours, characterising them as passive and apathetic. Additionally, participants mentioned that they believed these individuals did not make enough effort to study and therefore were getting what they deserved. They also associated these individuals with the idea that if they were currently living in poverty, it was partly because they had not done what was necessary to overcome difficulties and escape poverty. This rejection stemmed from the participants' difficulties in understanding the complexity of living in poverty, the obstacles it creates, and the barriers it perpetuates, as well as the actions people living in poverty might take to combat it.

Discussing this feeling of rejection in class was important, as it highlighted the lack of understanding among future teachers about how poverty contexts influence students. For example, the majority reacted with astonishment when a participant in one of the groups mentioned that nearly half of students from poor families repeat a grade at some point during their schooling, compared to 9% of students from wealthy families (Save the Children, 2019). The thematic analysis identified many emotional expressions of rejection towards uneducated poor people, blaming them for not trying hard enough to escape poverty. Classroom discussions also addressed how such rejection by teachers could negatively impact students' academic development or the relationship with their families.

Among the more critical participants, their comments about the social progress they had made in their lives were attributed to personal characteristics like responsibility, effort, and commitment, arguing that in our societies, anyone could escape poverty if they worked hard enough during their academic years.

I recognise that life is very complex, and if one is born into a poor family, they may face barriers and obstacles that others may not have. But anyone who tries hard enough can overcome them. Students don't study or don't try to do things right because of their personal choices. These students tend to be more laid-back, more interested in having fun than doing what they should, so they simply prioritised what they preferred at the time, and now they have to face the consequences of those decisions. In life, if you want something, you must fight for it and not resign yourself, as some of these people do. (Participant 46)

Compassion

Other participants, after reading the report and hearing the life experiences of the guests, expressed feelings of compassion, showing an interest in learning more about these individuals' suffering. They understood the vulnerability that students growing up in poverty might experience, and how it could particularly affect girls compared to boys, given that their families might ask them to help with household chores. Some participants also showed compassion and empathy towards particularly vulnerable families, such as single-parent families or those caring for elderly or dependent relatives, which exacerbated the difficulty of escaping poverty. These aspects were highlighted in the discussion groups, and participants suggested that as future teachers, they should pay special attention to the personal and educational care of these students and their families, striving to maintain a close relationship with them.

What's most important for me has been understanding how difficult it can be to study or make academic progress in a family that may not have the basic means for it, in marginalised environments, with parents who, despite wanting the best for their children, are excluded or marginalised by society, not provided with decent jobs that would allow them to offer their children a good education. I remember in my youth, a classmate had a tough time when her father died, and her mother, who didn't work, had to try to support the family. My classmate had to leave school as soon as she could to start working and contribute money at home, even though I remember she wasn't a bad student. These things shouldn't happen in our country. I imagine myself in the situation this woman told us about today, and I wouldn't know what to do—I'd be as bad off, or worse, than she was. (Participant 15)

Sadness

Participants' notes revealed emotional expressions of sadness about how poverty hinders personal development, a sentiment that was even more evident in the discussions, where some participants cried after hearing the life stories of the guests. These intense emotional reactions led to proposals on how to help students face the reality of poverty. There were also written reflections on how to emotionally distance oneself from such situations to avoid continuously feeling sorrow for the personal circumstances of their students. In a way, though the future teachers are aware of the sadness and emotional pain caused by thinking about their future students possibly suffering such situations, they sought ways to distance themselves from this suffering to feel better.

Hearing the guests' stories makes me feel very sad about the damage poverty causes in many lives. I feel overwhelmed by emotions, and I see that some of my classmates have even cried in class. In some way, we must emotionally detach from these situations to be able to face them more effectively. However, it's hard not to feel pain thinking about the future students who might go through similar situations.

This experience is emotionally intense, but it's also a valuable opportunity to learn and grow as future professionals. (Participant 54)

Discussing the sadness arising from these experiences allowed participants to reflect on how society denies the educational difficulties faced by students living in poverty. Dealing with emotional pain enabled them to examine common perceptions of people living in poverty.

Anger

Other emotional responses reflected an awareness of the social injustice experienced by students raised in poverty. The future teachers' notes included expressions of anger towards the social system, the state, and the social structures that perpetuate inequality.

I'm very angry, and I think it's a terrible injustice that someone, just because they're born into a low social class family, has so many factors against them to escape this cycle of poverty. That shouldn't be the case, and we need to do something to improve the education of our students. (Participant 8)

Some participants also expressed anger at themselves, as after reading passages from the report, they felt they had been unaware of a reality that educational research has highlighted for decades. Group discussions reflected on whether this anger could be channelled into an active movement for social justice, with proposals for strategies or initiatives they could develop as teachers.

As a future teacher, I've realised the social inequality that students raised in poverty experience. I think this situation is very unjust. It shouldn't be that someone has so much against them just because of where they were born. Also, after reading the report, I feel angry at myself for not being aware of this reality, which has been right in front of me for so long, and I've never done anything to help. There must be something, even if it's just a little, that I can do to help these students. (Participant 23)

Cognitive responses

Participants' cognitive responses were categorised into false proximity, awareness, and changes in practice.

False proximity

Most participants believed they were familiar with poverty, thinking they knew everyday examples of poverty or often saw people living in this situation on the streets. However, reading passages from the report helped them understand how people actually experience poverty, especially the efforts they make to escape it and provide their children with a decent education. Along with the life experiences, many participants noted in their journals that although poverty is an apparently familiar phenomenon, knowledge often comes from a biased and superficial understanding provided

by the media and popular culture. This realisation led them to admit that they knew less than they had thought before participating in the project and there is a need to critically reflect on the socially transmitted notions of poverty and its influence on educational development.

I thought I knew what poverty was, why it occurred, and its consequences for those who live in it. If we think about it, it's rare that we don't see a beggar on the street or hear some news related to poverty. But in reality, this experience is making me realise that we think we know, but we barely understand anything. Everything we're doing here is making me reflect on the misconceptions we have, preconceived ideas that, if we don't become aware of them, could lead us to prejudge the families of our students. Now that I know I understand much less about this topic than I thought, I want to keep learning and cross-checking information so I can be a competent teacher in the future. (Participant 60)

Awareness

Some participants indicated that they were acquiring new knowledge about a reality they had previously been unaware of. They reflected on the importance of poverty and how it could affect their future students. The awareness they were developing made them express the significance of considering families from impoverished environments and trying, as much as possible, to compensate for the educational deficits their students might face. For example, one participant narrated the following:

I had no idea that poverty so heavily determined students' academic performance. I always thought this had been eradicated in our society, but nothing could be further from the truth. These families and their children need all the support they can get, not just from the educational sphere but from all areas of society. It's unacceptable that because of their parents' unfortunate circumstances, their children might experience the same. All students deserve equal opportunities. (Participant 84)

In the discussions within several focus groups, some master's students emphasised the injustice of the situation they were becoming aware of, highlighting that education does not socially equalise people and that, to some extent, it contributes to the perpetuation of intergenerational cycles of poverty. Other participants, who did not identify with this cognitive response, argued that as future teachers, they should not feel responsible for the poor decisions that these individuals had made in their lives. They believed that it was the parents who should take action to reverse these situations, as future educators could do little to change them. These opposing views led to heated debates in some groups, as the positions were fundamentally antagonistic. However, it is worth noting that for most participants who had not initially expressed this cognitive response in their reflective journals, engaging in discussions and listening to their peers eventually offered them a new perspective on the realities faced by families living in poverty and their children's education. They began to shed the belief that

these parents were negligent or lacked care for their families' development. After these debates, they acknowledged having developed the ability to recognise the complexities of life in poverty.

The awareness of the importance of obtaining accurate information about the circumstances of those living in poverty and how these might affect students led participants to adopt new interpretations of the behaviours of people living in poverty, becoming more flexible in understanding their decisions and actions rather than judging them as some had done previously.

Changes in practice

Some participants reported in their testimonies that the new knowledge and perceptions regarding the influence of poverty on educational development were changing the way they approached their placements in schools. They felt that understanding the realities of families living in poverty had contributed to their treating students identified as living in such circumstances with greater sensitivity and empathy. They also sought to coordinate more closely with their academic tutors on how to provide specific support to these students.

According to the participants' testimonies, they believed they had made better use of the mentoring sessions they held with these students and their families. They communicated more effectively, striving to listen to the parents and involving them in greater cooperation with the school, so that they could work together towards achieving the best academic outcomes for the children. Some participants also noted that involving families seemed to result in changes in students' behaviour at school, leading to increased motivation or better conduct, which in turn improved their academic performance.

At first, hearing these stories felt distant and impersonal to me, but when I started my placements and met the students, reality hit me hard. I began to understand the difficult circumstances many of these families lived in and how this impacted the children in their daily lives in the classroom. I started to act differently, trying to be more approachable. What surprised me most was how the relationship I established with the families completely changed the way I interacted with the students. I was struck by how the cooperation between the family and the school translated into better academic outcomes for the students. I clearly remember a meeting with the mother of one of my students. I had invited her for a talk, and at the end of the meeting, she hugged me. I felt deeply connected with her and realised how important it is to involve these families, especially in the educational process of their children. (Participant 77)

When asked in the discussion groups to explain these testimonies, the participants agreed that they had observed, together with their tutors, that some students had academic problems and their families were involved. Instead of

adopting a more punitive or restrictive approach towards them, adopting a more cooperative approach and inviting them to share their personal situations often revealed that it was difficult for their children to maintain a good study routine at home. This led them to jointly seek strategies for the students to access other study environments within the school or at municipal libraries—resources that the family had not considered previously.

Discussion

One of the greatest challenges in teacher training is to prepare educators with the appropriate awareness of equity so that they can effectively support students from impoverished backgrounds in educational settings, developing the necessary strategies to address issues of social justice and improve these students' education (Keeney et al., 2019). Therefore, the primary aim of this research project was to examine the emotional and cognitive responses of future secondary school teachers to the influence of poverty on personal, social, and educational development.

Previous research has shown that, in general, teacher education programmes do not sufficiently develop an understanding of the effects of poverty on education (Steinberg & Krumer-Nevo, 2020). Experts in equity awareness and social justice in education have highlighted the potential of training processes such as the one proposed in this research to change teachers' attitudes and behaviours towards poverty and contribute to the educational development of all students (Cleovoulou et al., 2022; Cochran-Smith et al., 2016).

Particularly important components of teacher education that have been highlighted in this study are emotional responses to poverty, value-based attitudes, and the acquisition of critical capacity (Dyches & Boyd, 2017), which are necessary for future teachers to challenge conventional cultural perceptions of poverty. It was found that most participants initially struggled to understand the multiple ways in which poverty creates barriers to students' educational development. Therefore, it is especially important to identify those teachers who exhibit cognitive rejection towards people living in poverty, so they can shift towards supportive thoughts and behaviours (Gorski, 2016).

Providing teachers with knowledge about social justice is a way to improve their attitudes and skills when working with students from socioeconomically disadvantaged families (Schrag, 2016; Walker et al., 2019).

The process of acquiring such knowledge can be facilitated by studying life experiences and objective reports on the subject, as this involves participants examining their own experiences and personal attitudes, as well as their cognitive and emotional responses. In contemporary societies, if this is not specifically addressed with teachers, it is difficult to achieve, as the prevailing ideology and discourse regarding poverty often glorifies personal responsibility and free choice, while denying the multiple ways in which poverty contexts create situations that profoundly influence the educational development of children and adolescents, as

well as the life decisions they can make (Daher et al., 2023; Gorski, 2016).

It was found that many participants identified with or expressed views aligned with deficit theory (Lewis, 1966), holding deeply ingrained stereotypes about people living in poverty. This aligns with other studies conducted with future teachers in the United Kingdom (White & Murray, 2016) and the United States (Gorski, 2012). This ideology leads to ineffective pedagogical practices and school-family relationships (Linberg et al., 2019). As the group sessions progressed, some participants even attempted to distance themselves from the topic of poverty, claiming that they knew everything about it. These individuals rarely participated in discussions about how poverty could negatively affect their future students, remaining on the sidelines and silent. A small number of them, towards the end of the project, particularly after hearing different life experiences, changed their perspectives and began to exhibit responses of empathy, compassion, and a sense of social responsibility.

During the focus groups, intense debates occasionally arose about how school practices should be implemented with students living in poverty, as well as related topics such as the lack of family involvement in school activities, teachers' expectations of academic performance, and students' own perceptions of their academic abilities. The exchange of diverse viewpoints on social class and unequal access to resources and educational experiences outside of school engaged participants in critical reflections on their own positions within the social system, their ideologies about poverty, and how these ideologies shaped their understanding. These debates and exchanges of opinions about educational strategies that promote social justice for students should play a fundamental role in all teacher training programmes (Kretchmar & Zeichner, 2016).

This experience shows that reflective reading of well-selected, objective information can change teachers' erroneous stereotypes about people living in poverty. Stories that present facts and situations, when narrated effectively, allow readers to shift their value judgments and begin to develop cognitive and emotional responses that first foster an awareness of equity and, second, prepare them to actively contribute to the educational development of these students in collaboration with their families. Reversing deeply ingrained social attitudes requires changes in how teachers perceive and interact with their students, parents, and the communities associated with the schools where they work. Valuing everyone and striving to build positive relationships with them, while leveraging knowledge of the realities from which they come, are fundamental principles for developing initiatives that can promote students' success in school (Hannum et al., 2017; Sadowski et al., 2018).

A turning point in this study was the exposure of future teachers to the life stories of people living in poverty, which led to positive changes in their awareness, understanding, and practice regarding the phenomenon of poverty and its influence on students' education. Through an effective pedagogical approach involving reading, listening to life experiences, writing personal reflections, and participating in group discussions, teacher education can be enhanced

to better understand socioeconomic disadvantages and promote pedagogical strategies that benefit students.

Listening to life stories was a key component of the training. It allowed participants to confront their own attitudes and perceptions about poverty, and to become aware of their own deficit ideologies and how they had misinterpreted the attitudes of parents and students—something which they recognised would have hindered their future professional careers as teachers. Teachers' expectations are considered a very important factor for the proper functioning of a school and the educational success of the students within it (MacPhail et al., 2019). Teacher education that is conscious of poverty has the potential to develop teachers' skills and willingness to act with equity awareness and to promote social justice both within and beyond educational institutions.

Conclusion

The findings of this study offer valuable insights into the perceptions of future teachers regarding the impact of poverty on students' academic, social, and personal development. One of the key implications of this research is the confirmation of the need for teacher training programmes to incorporate a deeper focus on equity awareness, particularly when it comes to understanding and addressing the challenges faced by students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The pedagogical approach applied in this study, combining theoretical knowledge with real-life experiences, demonstrated its potential to dismantle existing stereotypes and foster empathy among future educators.

Moreover, this research underscores the importance of developing emotional and cognitive skills in teachers to improve their effectiveness in working with socioeconomically disadvantaged students. The inclusion of reflective practices, such as the ones employed in this study, can lead to significant changes in teachers' attitudes and approaches to social justice in education, ultimately contributing to more inclusive and supportive classroom environments.

From a practical perspective, the educational institutions should reconsider the role of experiential learning in teacher training curricula, as it can better prepare educators to manage the complexities of teaching in socioeconomically diverse classrooms. Additionally, these findings highlight the importance of engaging with communities and families living in poverty to create more collaborative and informed educational interventions.

Future research should explore the long-term impact of similar pedagogical interventions on the professional practices of teachers once they enter the workforce. It would also be beneficial to examine how these approaches can be integrated into different cultural and educational contexts to assess their wider applicability. In this regard, further studies could delve into how systemic changes in teacher training can contribute to closing the achievement gap between students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds.

Endnote

In this article, the term “poverty” is primarily understood in economic terms, based on the criteria established by the AROPE (At Risk of Poverty and/or Exclusion) rate used by the European Union. This measure includes individuals who live with income below the poverty threshold, those in severe material deprivation, or those living in households with very low work intensity. While poverty can be understood in various ways, this study focuses on the socioeconomic conditions of students whose families fall within these AROPE-defined parameters, acknowledging the broader social, cultural, and geographical factors that may also shape their experiences.

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