



Book reviews

Moreno, A. (2020).

Personalizar, un modelo para una educación de calidad en el siglo xxi. Informe Delphi de Expertos [Personalise, a model for quality education in the 21st century. Delphi Expert Report] (Cristina Medrano Pascual).

Fuentes, J. L. (Ed.) (2019).

Ética para la excelencia educativa
[Ethics for educational excellence] (Ana García-Bravo).

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Personalizar, un modelo para una educación de calidad en el siglo XXI. Informe Delphi de Expertos [Personalise, a model for quality education in the 21st century. Delphi Expert Report].
Barcelona: Impuls Educació. 77 pp.

Personalisation is an educational concept that focusses on achieving high levels of quality in education. The research under review delves into the essential and clarifying elements of personalisation in order to reach consensus about its definition. The text has four distinct sections under the titles of: “Introduction”, “Delphi panel of experts”, “Final agreement”, and “Conclusions”, which in turn are broken down into several sub-sections. Together with the prologue and the annexes, the specified blocks manage to structure the information and successfully guide the reading of this report.

The work begins with an initial review of the origin of personalised education, which, although it is a central focus of 21st century

education, was already a trend in the educational systems of the previous century, where figures like Dewey, Decroly, Montessori, Freire, Freinet, Faure, and García Hoz placed the student at the centre of the process. Thus, these and other authors agree that the educational context should enable all of them to develop their own talents or abilities as an unavoidable goal of quality education. It is understood, therefore, that any pedagogical proposal that presents this principle constitutes a type of education that is revealed as a profound human need within the framework of today's society. But just as each student is different and has personal needs that personalised education should provide, the idea itself creates conflict when it comes to defining it. The perspective from which each academician defines the same concept has multiple interpretations, which led the present study to generate a way for experts to communicate with the aim of building a common consensus framework.

For this purpose, several dimensions were developed, first of all, to establish

a conceptualisation of personalisation in education and to deepen its meaning within the educational context, to justify the importance of investing in it, to make a detailed list of principles or criteria as a guide and evaluation to ensure its effectiveness, to propose strategies for its implementation and, finally, to assess its future possibilities. The text sets out in detail how the necessary tasks to meet these objectives were carried out, making it easier to understand the laborious process by which a group of experts or scientific committees reach an agreement. Before delving into this matter, it explains what a Delphi panel is and which different types can be selected according to the orientation of the study, highlighting this methodology as the only valid option for a group of professionals and academicians who meet its needs. Once the decision to make such a panel has been clarified, a thorough explanation of each of the parts of the study and how each of them was developed is provided.

Thus, in a first phase, the problem was limited to establishing the above objectives. In the second phase, the group of respondents was created, with their profile and number being determined according to selection criteria. In the third phase, the initial questionnaire from which the research objectives were to be achieved was prepared, and finally, in phase four, the results were analysed and a final report was prepared. Each of these phases is perfectly described, allowing the path to consensus to be thrashed out to favour the reader's understanding. Six blocks or stages were set up with six ob-

jectives and various items to study and, after a long and costly analysis of the responses given by the participating experts, a final agreement was reached that allows the research to be completed in the conclusion section, a section that is designed to be one of the most prominent of the entire report.

If the primary objective was to build a common consensus framework on what was meant by personalisation of education, the text may consider this challenge as having been overcome. Within the consensus, the conclusions themselves highlight ideas that allow us to understand a little more deeply what we mean when we talk about personalised education. Personalisation means an approach to the uniqueness of each person, allowing the students to be the centre of the process and to be responsible for the promotion of their skills or their trajectory and recognition of identity. In addition, personalised learning is closely related to experience, which has its own value, which makes it especially meaningful. The model of personalised education, as noted in the book, is aimed at *educating singular, autonomous, open, responsible, solidary, and resilient people, capable of exceeding themselves and persevering by themselves*, emphasising the need to *educate in and for freedom*. This personalisation does not ignore the rest of society, but aims to train citizens capable of thinking critically and making the most of their ability to be solidary and committed to the world, because integrity will only be achieved through personal and social improvement. In implementing this model, a solid foundation that is supported by the

school as a promoter of the principles established therein should be implemented so that all staff members are part of the process, as well as key elements such as educational organisation; the curriculum, to provide education about the elements that are needed in personalisation; the choice of methodologies and strategies to support it; evaluation as an integrated part of learning and its emphasis on progress and effort rather than on the outcome and, of course, highlighting the teachers' work of connecting what happens in school and out of school, personal guidance and individualised mentoring, as well as active collaboration between school and family.

Personalised education, still under review in terms of its conceptualisation, is a major challenge for the future. This model is a window that will allow education to spread its wings toward personalisation to educate resilient and global-minded people, with a great sense of respect and care for others to preserve cultures, values and, ultimately, the planet. The text states that some divergences continue to emerge, such as what professional or academic experts contemplate, but they are all aware of the importance of contemplating the person as a whole, with all that this implies. There is still a lot of work ahead of us, but if one thing is clear, it is that this research considers the need to continue to pursue this long-awaited consensus as a challenge, with the aim of making personalised education a reality and, ultimately, becoming a consolidated and effective model of what quality education should be.

Cristina Medrano Pascual ■

Fuentes, J. L. (Ed.) (2019).

Ética para la excelencia educativa [Ethics for educational excellence].

Madrid: Síntesis. 198 pp.

The book *Ética para la excelencia educativa*, recently published by Juan Luis Fuentes, María Dolores Conesa Lareo, Juan García-Gutiérrez, Ernesto López-Gómez, and Marta Ruiz-Corbella, considers the idea of education as an art in which all of its dimensions must be taken into consideration to achieve a continuous, free, and morally good process along with other questions of current interest.

From an ethical perspective, this work considers: the application of philosophical notions to education; some of the most controversial topics, such as the use of new technologies; and classic questions regarding what education is, what it is for, and what the role of the educator is at present. In addition, it is worth noting that it pays attention to the great influence educators have on the lives of others, since their work requires a high degree of responsibility and commitment, something that at the same time makes it a pleasant, satisfying, and gratifying way of life.

The book is divided into ten chapters, starting with an analysis that considers questions such as the educational task and notions of goodness. In order to reach a complete understanding of the other chapters, it is necessary to distinguish between two types of good: absolute and relative. By so doing, we can understand the importance of directing education towards an absolute good (morally good actions)

to achieve comprehensive human development. The last part of this chapter argues for the value of teaching competences and knowledge at the same level as teaching ethics in order to arrive at complete moral and pragmatic liberty.

The second chapter considers education as an art comprising a lifelong commitment and complete dedication, as well as the educators' role which requires them to be not only simple transmitters of knowledge, but also valuable reference points for learning, that is to say, they provide encouragement that motivates every student towards the desire to learn. To do this requires the complete acquisition of certain attributes: honesty, authority (linked to goodwill), respect for difference, the ability to listen, and observation.

The third chapter considers three topics related to the status of educational work. The first matter distinguishes between education as a profession in which trained professionals perform an educational action, and education as a vocation understood as a service and a way of life that includes a great moral commitment. The second topic approaches education as a supportive profession that enables all learners to discover the best of themselves, so creating free and responsible citizens. And the third and final topic describes the professional identity of educators and their social and professional image as well as the factors shaping this.

Chapters four and five comprise a significant analysis of contemporary society and the different settings connected to

education, including the virtual setting, which completely changes notions of space and time. These chapters focus on educational institutions and their necessary social responsibility, taking into account all of the elements this includes. Deontological codes are also analysed from their emergence to the present day, underlining how important it is to update them and extend them to all educators (people involved in education) and towards an autonomy of judgement (in accordance with the variety of situations). The reflections on the universalisation and globalisation that technology brings are also of interest, as they focus on its objectives in education to achieve human plenitude, making good use of these media. Finally, there is a reflection on what is valued by society as it centres more on the outcome than on processes, on increasing skills more than the effort to acquire them, attributing people a perfect character that is clearly unobtainable.

The next chapter continues with the reflection on technology, this time considering the acquisition of new skills. As such, it defines digital competence as a basic skill in which it is necessary to identify a level of use and a level of meaning (pp. 102-103) that at the same time interact with the concepts of internal good and external good. The role the educator must adopt in cyberspace is also analysed, remembering the principle of continuity in this context and its relationship with the idea of post-truth.

Chapter seven focusses on the quality of teachers and presents various reasons

for which an educator must be regarded as a moral model (p. 122). These relate to their character traits and also accept education as a supportive profession in which an emotional connection with the student is created and they give great importance to *leading by example*. In addition, at the end of the chapter, various obstacles to considering the educator as a moral model and possible solutions for overcoming them are offered.

The implementation and characteristics of ethical learning are covered in chapter eight, where the need to develop this learning in an integrated way is noted. According to the authors, ethics can be found in every subject, and achieving a multidimensional education requires different dimensions, such as the cognitive, the behavioural, and the affective, to be combined. Finally, the possibilities of cultural learning in the promotion of ethical learning are considered.

The teaching of ethical behaviour is covered in chapter nine, which starts by defining education as a concept that influences and affects all spheres (personal, public, and professional) to achieve each individual's full development. The moral dimension is emphasised as a process of building and teaching human beings' technological skills and attitudes in relation to the current setting, in which we find a clear development of technologies. Constant analysis as well as making decisions and acting according to the situation one is in are needed to be able to achieve successful moral education, and this includes the constant interactions between the digital

and physical worlds, linked to the needs of a multicultural and intercultural society. Therefore, education is vital in this scenario, as it acts as a guide and provides the knowledge and skills that enable human beings to be morally free. The authors also present strategies for and obstacles to putting moral education into practice, as well as the principal theories on which they are based (p. 158). The last section makes special reference to a recent moral learning model — service-learning — which is implemented in a wide variety of contexts, subjects, and activities. As it is set forth, all service-learning starts with a societal need, which is relieved by putting into practice the content students learn. This involves a concept of complete educational renovation where the knowledge acquired is applied to a real situation of need while at the same time achieving ethical and civic learning.

The last chapter considers the concept of ethical learning in greater depth, this time focussing on evaluation, which must be approached as a dynamic process aimed at complete educational development. The importance of using a wide range of strategies in which feedback is a key aspect stands out as this provides a starting point for future learning, making this activity part of a circular process that makes learning continuously throughout life possible.

In essence, this book on educational ethics is required reading for any educator or anyone connected — or interested in being connected — with education. Its focus is simultaneously theoretical and

didactic, as shown by the final comments in each chapter, which are often linked to teaching practice, and the original activities proposed in all of them. The wide variety of topics it considers are proof of the significance of ethics in education, which too often tend to be forgotten or underestimated, foregoing one of the essential elements of the task of educating:

its ethical dimension. Furthermore, this book is not just for newcomers or for experts, but rather for both since depending on the stage in life they have reached, each educator will be able to draw different conclusions, analyses, and reflections linked to their educational practice.

Ana García-Bravo ■