

Non-Violent Perspectives in Teacher Training Programs: Challenging Inequality Through Empathy and Compassion

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Abstract : In light of existing social and structural violence in Chilean higher education which has resulted in instances of inequality, exclusion and discrimination, this research study attempted to provide trainee teachers in Chile with non-violent tools to deal with the tensions arising from these issues. Through a participatory action research design framed within a series of non-violent, non-Western perspectives, this study provided co-participants with opportunities to discuss current problems affecting HE in Chile stemming from the aforementioned violence, to think about strategies to address these and the challenges they might encounter. The study, which involved two different groups of trainee teachers from Chilean universities, consisted of two iterations of the action research cycle (planning - acting - observing - reflecting) carried out over two 3-months periods. Findings reveal instances of forced cultural assimilation, bullying, and direct and structural violence as key issues to address, and a strong individualistic mindset trumping collective well-being as the main challenge to bring non-violent strategies into their classrooms.

Keywords : non-violence education, contemplative pedagogy, participatory action research, dialogical education

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