

## INITIAL TEACHER EDUCATION IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY ON LAW 20.903, MINISTERIAL GUIDELINES, AND CURRICULAR CHALLENGES

### FORMAÇÃO INICIAL DE DOCENTES EM EDUCAÇÃO FÍSICA: ESTUDO DE CASO SOBRE A IMPLEMENTAÇÃO DA LEI 20.903 E DESAFIOS CURRICULARES

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#### RESUMO

**Introdução:** Este estudo investiga o impacto da Lei 20.903 e dos novos padrões nacionais na formação inicial de professores (FIP) em programas de educação física no Chile. O objetivo é analisar, a partir das perspectivas de formadores de professores, a influência dessas regulamentações no design curricular, na formação prática e na integração de padrões pedagógicos e disciplinares, bem como seus efeitos nos processos de garantia da qualidade. **Método:** Foi empregada uma abordagem qualitativa, utilizando grupos focais com formadores de professores em uma universidade da Região Metropolitana do Chile. **Resultados:** Os achados indicam que as regulamentações promoveram maior coerência no design curricular, mas também geraram tensões entre a padronização e a adaptação contextual. Tais tensões afetam a implementação de práticas pedagógicas e a qualidade dos programas de formação. **Discussão:** Destaca-se o desafio de equilibrar os padrões nacionais com as demandas locais, revelando dificuldades enfrentadas por formadores na adaptação às novas exigências. **Conclusão:** A pesquisa contribui para compreender os impactos das regulamentações nos programas de FIP, oferecendo insights para melhorar a qualidade da formação docente.

**Palavras-chave:** Formação inicial docente. Pedagogia da educação física. Padrões. Design curricular. Garantia de qualidade.

#### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** This study investigates the impact of Law 20.903 and the new national standards on initial teacher education (ITE) for physical education programs in Chile. The research aims to analyze, from the perspectives of teacher educators, the influence of these regulations on curriculum design, practical training, and the integration of pedagogical and disciplinary standards. It focuses on how these regulations affect the quality assurance processes within physical education pedagogy programs. **Method:** A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing focus groups with teacher educators at a university in the Metropolitan Region of Chile. This method allowed for an in-depth exploration of the teachers' perceptions regarding the new regulations. **Discussion:** The study discusses the balance between the standardization imposed by the regulations and the need for contextualization in the design and delivery of teacher education programs. It highlights teacher educators' challenges and tensions as they attempt to meet national standards while considering local educational contexts. **Results:** The findings show that while the regulations have contributed to greater coherence in curriculum design, they have also generated tensions between standardization and the need for contextual adaptation. These tensions impact the implementation of pedagogical practices and the overall quality of teacher education programs.

**Keywords:** Initial teacher education, physical education pedagogy, standards, curriculum design, quality assurance.

#### Introduction

The quality of Initial Teacher Education (ITE) has emerged as a central theme in global educational agendas, given its direct impact on improving educational systems and fostering equitable, inclusive, and sustainable societies<sup>1,2</sup>. The preparation of future teachers not only influences student learning and development but also strengthens social cohesion and enhances countries' capacity to address contemporary challenges such as educational inequality, cultural integration, and economic sustainability<sup>3,4</sup>.

In the Latin American context, the quality of ITE faces historical and structural challenges stemming from the heterogeneity of educational systems, insufficient consistent regulatory policies, and limited professional development opportunities for teachers<sup>1,5</sup>. The region is characterized by high teacher attrition rates, limited attraction of talent to the teaching profession, and a disconnect between educational policies and the local realities of teacher

training institutions<sup>6</sup>. This highlights the importance of establishing quality assurance systems that not only strengthen training processes but also consider the socio-cultural and territorial diversity of educational contexts.

In Chile, ITE has undergone profound transformations since the late 1990s<sup>7</sup>, in response to challenges related to the quality and effectiveness of training programs. Initially, educational policies focused on institutional strengthening by improving the internal capacities of universities and training programs. However, this approach evolved into an accountability model, characterized by the implementation of regulatory frameworks emphasizing the standardization of training processes<sup>8</sup>. This shift reflects the State's attempt to address the historical deficiencies of deregulation and fragmentation in Chilean higher education<sup>9</sup>. Moreover, this process aligns with a broader regional trend where educational policies are influenced by international organizations, promoting models that prioritize accountability and standardized systems<sup>2</sup>.

The enactment of Law 20.129 in 2006 marked a key milestone by establishing the National Quality Assurance System (SINACES). This law introduced mandatory accreditation for teaching programs and other strategic areas to ensure minimum quality standards in teacher training institutions<sup>10</sup>. Subsequently, Law 20.903, enacted in 2016, mandated the development of Pedagogical and Disciplinary Standards for ITE, defined as guidelines that explicitly define the set of skills, knowledge, and dispositions required of an education professional upon completing their initial training<sup>11</sup>. These standards serve a dual purpose: acting as both formative and evaluative benchmarks, guiding students, graduates, and higher education institutions.

Notably, educational reforms in Chile are not isolated from a broader regional landscape, where tensions between globalized policies and local realities are evident. Studies on teacher training in the Southern Cone emphasize the influence of international organizations in defining standards and educational models, often clashing with the local needs of training institutions<sup>12</sup>. This scenario is also observed in physical education pedagogy, where disciplinary and territorial diversity pose specific challenges for implementing national standards<sup>13</sup>.

Furthermore, changes in accreditation regulations for undergraduate programs have intensified with the 2023 implementation of the new Quality Criteria and Standards developed by the National Accreditation Commission (CNA). This regulatory framework aims to consolidate an integrated model that aligns study plans, graduate profiles, and pedagogical practices with national expectations<sup>14</sup>. Among the key dimensions of the accreditation system, Criterion No. 2 stands out, evaluating the coherence between pedagogical and disciplinary standards and curricula, fostering teacher training that meets the needs of the Chilean educational system. However, as noted by<sup>2</sup>, while this evaluation model seeks professionalization, it can also exert pressures that affect institutional autonomy and educational inclusion.

In this regard, accreditation has become a tool for systematizing and standardizing training processes, establishing uniform criteria to evaluate the coherence between graduate profiles, curricula, and learning outcomes. However, this quest for uniformity has also generated tensions, as accreditation processes face the specificities and local needs of educational institutions<sup>9,15</sup>. Additionally, recent studies have highlighted significant misalignments between established standards and their effective integration into training programs, revealing a disconnect between regulations and institutional practices<sup>16,17</sup>.

From a critical perspective, the implementation of Law 20.903 has produced both progress and challenges. On one hand, it has established a regulatory framework that promotes standardization and improvement of training processes; on the other, it has raised tensions related to curricular homogenization and the autonomy of educational institutions in managing their training programs<sup>13</sup>. These tensions are particularly relevant in fields like physical

education pedagogy, where the discipline's specific demands and context require an adaptive approach that combines national standards with appropriate contextualization<sup>5,2</sup>.

In this context, this article aims to analyze, from the perspectives of teacher educators, the impact of new regulations on initial teacher education and the quality assurance of physical education pedagogy programs, focusing on a case study at a university in the Metropolitan Region of Chile. The research explores the perceptions of administrators and academics regarding the integration of pedagogical and disciplinary standards into curricular design, as well as the dynamics of implementing quality assurance processes within the institutional context. Using a qualitative approach, this study seeks to contribute to the debate on teacher education policies, highlighting the challenges and opportunities these regulations present for developing programs of excellence, with special attention to the tensions between standardization and contextualization in ITE.

## Methods

The research approach employed in this study was qualitative<sup>18</sup> and constituted an instrumental case study<sup>19</sup>. This approach allowed for the characterization of the initial impacts and outcomes of Law No. 20.903 and the CNA standards on the physical education pedagogy program at a private university in the Metropolitan Region of Chile.

### *Sample*

Four teacher educators from the Physical Education program of a university in the Metropolitan Region of Chile participated in this qualitative study. The participants were selected through purposive sampling<sup>20</sup>, ensuring their active involvement in institutional or undergraduate accreditation processes, either past or ongoing, and familiarity with integrating pedagogical and disciplinary standards into the program's curriculum. Inclusion criteria included:

- Representation in decision-making roles within the Physical Education program.
- Direct experience in designing or managing academic programs aligned with the pedagogical and disciplinary standards established by Law N° 20.903.
- Participation in activities related to quality assurance and national accreditation requirements.

### *Instrument*

To conduct the focus group, a thematic guide was used to orient the questions during the discussion. Below is the guide utilized:

#### Focus Group Guide

##### 1. Impact of Law 20.903 on ITE

- How do you think Law 20.903 has impacted initial teacher education (ITE) in your programs?
- How do you perceive the relationship between this law and the assurance of quality in initial teacher education?

##### 2. New Initial Teacher Education Standards

- Since 2021, new standards have been developed for physical education teacher training programs. What has been discussed in your program regarding the implications of these new standards?
- How do you perceive these new standards? Do they represent a concern, an opportunity, or an obstacle for improving programs?

- In your opinion, how will these standards impact study programs? What factors do you think will influence this impact, both in training and evaluation?
3. Monitoring and Implementation of the Standards
- ¿Are there formal spaces in your program to monitor the integration of the new standards into the curricula?
  - Who participates in these spaces for analysis and evaluation?
  - What resources (human, financial, institutional) are available to carry out these improvement processes?
4. Challenges in Practical Training
- What are the main challenges anticipated by program management for implementing these standards in students' practical training?
  - How do you think the new pedagogical standards will be integrated into professional practice spaces, understood as practice centers? What difficulties might arise during this integration process?
5. Additional Topics
- Is there any topic or aspect we haven't mentioned that you consider important to discuss regarding the new standards and Law 20.903?

### *Procedures*

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the university administration. The objectives of the research, the methodology, and the data collection process were explained in detail to participants, who provided informed consent prior to their participation. Data collection was carried out through focus groups<sup>21</sup>, which were conducted in a structured format to ensure consistency and comparability across participants. The fieldwork was conducted between September and October 2024.

Focus groups were held on-site and facilitated by trained researchers with prior experience in qualitative methods. Participants were assured of absolute confidentiality in the handling and reporting of their contributions. They were informed that there were no correct or incorrect answers and encouraged to respond with honesty and sincerity. The study adhered to the ethical guidelines outlined in the “Declaration of Singapore on Research Integrity”<sup>22</sup> and received institutional ethical approval.

### *Data Analysis*

Data obtained from the focus groups were analyzed using content analysis techniques<sup>23</sup> to identify thematic patterns and categories. The software ATLAS.ti was employed to organize, code, and interpret the qualitative data systematically. Three primary categories of analysis were defined:

**Curricular Alignment:** Examining the coherence between the program curriculum and the pedagogical and disciplinary standards outlined in Law N° 20.903. **Management of National Regulations:** Understanding the strategies implemented by managers to integrate national policies into the academic structure. **Monitoring Standards Compliance:** Evaluating the mechanisms used to ensure adherence to quality assurance standards.

The analysis focused on identifying recurring themes and variations in responses across participants, with an emphasis on the impact of national policies on the academic program's structure and outcomes.

## Results

This section corresponds to the qualitative phase of data collection using the focus group technique. Chart 1 is presented below, which compiles a series of relevant codes for the management of initial teacher training and academic accreditation. Each code is accompanied by an explanatory commentary detailing its meaning and relevance in the educational context. This table aims to facilitate the understanding of the key components that influence curriculum alignment, the implementation of standards in practical training, the management of national regulations and the monitoring of compliance with such standards. The information presented is essential to strengthen the quality and coherence of teacher training programs, ensuring that they adjust to the educational system's demands and respond to future professionals' needs.

**Chart 1.** Codebook

Code	Comment
Curriculum Alignment	It refers to the process of ensuring that curricula, content and teaching methodologies are consistent with the standards established by educational bodies and accrediters. Curricular alignment seeks to ensure that students acquire the skills and knowledge necessary for their professional training.
Standards in Practical Training	It refers to the criteria and expectations that must be met during the practical training of future teachers. These standards define the skills, attitudes, and knowledge that students must develop in real teaching contexts, ensuring that their professional practice is aligned with the demands of the education system.
Management of IDF National Regulations	It involves the set of actions and strategies that are implemented to comply with the regulations established by the State in relation to initial teacher training. This management includes integrating national standards into curricula and ensuring that educational institutions align with these requirements.
Integrated Program Management and Academic Accreditation	It refers to the coordination and collaboration between different vice-rectories and units of the university to ensure that the training programmes meet the quality criteria established by the accrediting agencies. This approach ensures that fluid communication is maintained and informed decisions are made in curriculum development.
Monitoring Compliance with Standards	It consists of the process of continuous monitoring and evaluation to verify that

	training programs and teaching practice are complying with the established standards. This monitoring allows identifying areas for improvement and ensuring that future teachers are adequately prepared to face the challenges of teaching.
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**Source:** The author.

Below are representative citations of the codes obtained from the focus group. To ensure the anonymity of key informants and distinguish their opinions, they have been assigned a specific coding using the acronym **ACS** followed by an identifier number. In this way, the participants are coded as **ACS01**, **ACS02**, **ACS03**, and **ACS04**.

### *Curriculum Alignment*

Curricular alignment in initial teacher training is a process that seeks to ensure that the graduation profile and professional competencies of future physical education teachers are in line with national standards. The testimonies of the participants highlight the importance of adjusting the contents and competencies of the educational programs to government regulations, which implies a standardization in the graduation profiles of the different institutions:

"We have to align as the teacher said to the government regulations, therefore, here we can have a specific graduate profile of our career, but at the national level all the graduate profiles of the pedagogy careers in physical education are very similar because we are under the auspices of specific standards of the State." (ACS01).

This commentary underscored the need for consistency at the national level in graduation profiles, guided by state standards. In this context, programs should be based on the 8 specific standards, which include both pedagogical and disciplinary aspects, which are integrated into the competencies and learning outcomes of each program:

"When we work on the different competencies to work on the disciplinary part, we base ourselves on the standards, on these 8 standards as well as on the disciplinary part, because there is a pedagogical standard and a disciplinary standard in these 8 new standards so that they are involved in the competencies themselves, as well as the learning outcomes and obviously in the evaluation criteria, which consequently give rise to the development of programs with the contents, among others. things." (ACS04)

The standards not only dictated competencies and learning outcomes, but also guide the construction of a structural framework that defines the graduation profile and objectives of each academic program. This structural process is fundamental, and interviewees describe the implementation of curricular matrices and structures that not only align content, but establish career and faculty seals to highlight distinctive characteristics within the framework of the standards:

"We made a structure, a matrix where we also established seals, we analyzed the graduation profile, and we established career seals and faculty seals where accents related to standards are seen." (ACS01).

This systematic approach is reflected in the organization of the contents, which are directly related to the learning outcomes, the evaluation criteria and the indicators necessary to evaluate the fulfillment of the competencies. The evaluation criteria are crucial, as they

determine whether the competencies established in the standards are achieved in each of the programs:

"The content is grounded in the learning outcomes and evaluation criteria, with a direct connection to the evaluative components that stem from these criteria. This structure allowed for the development of various indicators that the instruments applied in each program must adhere to, ensuring that the competencies are either met or not explicitly declared as such. Essentially, this represents a hierarchy that ranges from the most comprehensive to the most specific." (ACS03).

In summary, the process of curriculum alignment in FID programs in physical education is governed by a carefully designed structure that ensures the integration of standards from a macro level (government regulations and standards) to a micro level (evaluation criteria and specific performance). This system allows teacher training institutions to adjust their programs to meet national requirements, ensuring that graduates have the necessary skills and knowledge to perform in the educational field with a solid and uniform graduation profile at the national level.

### *Monitoring and Compliance with Standards*

Monitoring and compliance with standards in initial teacher education (FID) is an essential process to ensure that future physical education teachers develop the necessary competencies in accordance with national guidelines. To this end, institutions implement specific monitoring tools, such as structured matrices, which make it possible to visualize and evaluate how pedagogical and disciplinary standards are integrated in each stage of training.

A key aspect of this monitoring is the use of a matrix that aligns the standards with the student's professional development, allowing continuous monitoring of content and competencies. According to one of the interviewees:

"We established a matrix where it is aligned how each of these standards, both disciplinary and pedagogical, contribute to the training of the professional, then we see how much we address each of these standards." (ACS02).

This statement underscores the function of the matrix as a tool for monitoring and adjustment, assessing the degree of coverage of each standard in the curriculum. Through this system, teachers and administrators can observe in a concrete way how the standards are addressed in the different stages of the career, from the initial to the advanced cycle.

In addition, the monitoring process is supported by a set of four specific matrices, each with a particular role in the evaluation and alignment of standards:

1. Matrix 1: Assesses competencies according to training cycles (initial, intermediate and advanced), allowing the progressive development of skills and knowledge in students to be identified.
2. Matrix 2: Relates the subjects to competencies, learning outcomes, evaluation criteria, methodologies, indicators, and coverage of both disciplinary and pedagogical standards. This matrix is essential to ensure that each subject is directly linked to national standards and that students receive a comprehensive and coherent education.
3. Matrix 3: Defines which competencies are worked on in each of the subjects, providing a clear map of the distribution of skills throughout the program. This structure helps to avoid duplication of content and ensures that all areas of the standards are covered.
4. Matrix 4: It is in charge of administrative and logistical aspects, such as equivalences and prerequisites for the homologation of plans, facilitating the mobility of students and the fulfilment of academic requirements in different training paths.

"We work with 4 matrices, one that in a certain way sees matrix 1 that sees the competition according to initial, intermediate, advanced cycle. Matrix 2 where the subjects are listed with the competencies, results, learning, evaluation criteria, methodology, indicators and coverage of both disciplinary and pedagogical standards. And there is matrix 3 that has to do with a structure that marks which competencies are worked on in each of the subjects. Well, and matrix 4 that already has to do with equivalences, prerequisites for the homologation of one plan to another." (ACS04).

These matrices not only serve as monitoring instruments, but also as strategic guides for curriculum development, ensuring that every aspect of training responds to national standards. In this way, the monitoring system not only focuses on complying with the established standards, but also on providing coherent and adaptive training that prepares students in a comprehensive way for the exercise of teaching.

In conclusion, the use of these matrices in monitoring and compliance with standards represents a systematic and organized effort to ensure that FID programs not only meet national expectations, but also continuously adapt and improve their methods and contents, providing students with a quality education aligned with the standards of the profession.

### *Standards in Practical Training*

Incorporating standards into practical training is a crucial component of ensuring that future physical education teachers develop the competencies needed in real teaching contexts. Professional practice, in this sense, is evaluated through specific instruments that align competencies with the standards required by the teacher training program:

"At the university, we conduct specific evaluations, one of which is the cycle evaluation. This evaluation was linked to certain competencies established by the standards of the program. For instance, a particular competency may be associated with one or two specific standards. Consequently, whether in the practice center or another designated area, we assess progress using indicators and specific criteria. This allows us to determine the level at which each competency is being achieved." (ACS01)

This assessment system allows for detailed monitoring of students' progress in each of the competencies, using specific indicators and criteria that align with the standards. This methodology ensures that future teachers have an adequate professional profile, with skills and knowledge adjusted to the demands of the career:

"In this line of practice such as the curriculum, we have to try to deliver the greatest number of tools to our students based on what the competencies are to be able to create a... that is, that our students end up with an ideal profile and are competent for this teaching career." (ACS02).

However, a major challenge identified in the practical training process is the lack of harmony between the practice centers and the university's standards. In some cases, tutors and institutions where students do their internships lack resources or adopt approaches different from those promoted by training programs. This can make it difficult to achieve standards and affect the consistency of practical training:

"Practice centers are not always in tune with standards. Sometimes the tutors tell us that they do not have the resources or that the focus of their establishment is different from the one promoted by the university." (ACS04).

In addition, the variability in the understanding and interpretation of the standards among practice tutors also generates inconsistencies in the evaluations, which can negatively impact the preparation of students. The lack of clarity in the feedback received affects the development of competencies and makes it difficult to consolidate a uniform professional profile:



"Not all practice tutors understand the standards in the same way, and that leads to inconsistent assessments. This affects the preparation of students, since they do not always receive clear feedback." (ACS01).

In conclusion, although the integration of standards into practical training seeks to provide a solid foundation of competencies aligned with the desired professional profile, there are significant challenges. Lack of resources, diversity of approaches in practice centers, and inconsistent interpretation of standards by tutors pose obstacles to the effective implementation of these standards in practical contexts. To improve this situation, it would be necessary to establish stronger communication and training with tutors and practice centers, ensuring a shared understanding of the standards and their application in the evaluation and training of future teachers.

### *Integrated Program Management and Academic Accreditation*

Integrated program management and academic accreditation are essential processes that require the collaboration of various vice-chancellors and units within the university. In this context, the Office of the Vice-Rector for Quality Assurance and the Office of the Vice-Rector for Academics play fundamental roles, promoting dialogue and cooperation between them to guarantee educational quality:

"There is the Vice-Rector for Quality Assurance, there is the Academic Vice-Rector's Office that is beginning to talk, there is the Vice-Rector for a certain form of accreditation. They are vice-rectories who talk." (ACS03)

This collaborative approach includes the Curriculum Innovation and Assessment Unit, which advises on the creation and adjustment of curricula, ensuring that they align with established standards. The unit works at different stages of the process, from the structure of the curriculum matrices to the implementation of the final program:

"We work on the career; all the programs and all these matrices are worked on in the careers in a corporate way. We have instances of corporate meetings where there are representatives of the 3 venues from the management team, faculty and students." (ACS01)

The work team is organized in a coordinated manner, with specific assignments based on the specialties of the professors. For example, there are experts in areas such as science, didactics and practical training, which ensures that professionals with the necessary experience address each aspect of the program:

"It is a team that works in a coordinated way where there are assignments according to specialty. There are teachers who work in science, there are teachers who worked in didactics, there are teachers who work in practical training." (ACS01)

In addition, an education department is integrated to supervise the basic training subjects. In the event that suitable professionals are not available, external specialists are hired to contribute their knowledge and ensure that the programs are kept up to date and relevant:

"If there are no suitable professionals to work on a study program, an external specialist is hired to provide us with their knowledge and be able to translate it into the program." (ACS04).

For the development of a new graduate profile, meetings were held with different interest groups, including professors, students, graduates, and specialists. This collaborative process ensures that the graduate profile is aligned with market needs and academic expectations:

"There were meetings with professors, students, graduates, graduates and specialists to declare this new graduate profile." (ACS03).

Finally, the external advisory team for curricular innovation and evaluation reviews and approves the new profile before its implementation, ensuring that it is in accordance with the quality standards established by the Vice-Rector for Quality Assurance:

"This external advisory team gives the go-ahead and reports directly to the Vice-Rector for Quality Assurance." (ACS01).

In conclusion, integrated program management and academic accreditation is a complex process that requires collaboration and effective communication between various vice-chancellors and units. Through a coordinated and participatory approach, high-quality programmes can be established that respond to the demands of the educational and professional environment.

### *Management of IDF National Regulations*

The management of national regulations in initial teacher training is a fundamental aspect that directly impacts the quality of physical education programs. A key variable in this process is the National Accreditation Commission (CNA), which plays a crucial role in evaluating study programs according to established criteria. In this context, it is important to note that the CNA explicitly incorporates the result of the national diagnostic assessment, and the contents addressed therein:

"There is another intervening variable in this process that is super powerful and important for us as a career and as a university, which is the National Accreditation Commission. The CNA, within its evaluation criteria, explicitly considers the result of the national diagnostic evaluation." (ACS02).

To comply with the requirements of the CNA, it is necessary that the curricula are aligned with the disciplinary standards set by the State, specifically by the CPEIP (Center for Improvement, Experimentation and Pedagogical Research). This implies that all subjects, including the line of practice, must meet these standards:

"Now we have to aim in the line of practice and in all the subjects of the curricula to respond to the disciplinary standards set by the State." (ACS01).

It is relevant to note that the current standards are not completely new, but represent an adjustment to previous standards, integrating with the framework of good teaching. This evolution ensures that fundamental concepts, such as human motor skills, continue to be a priority in the training of future teachers:

"These standards have certain differences from the previous ones; These are not new standards, but an adjustment that has been intersecting with the framework of good teaching. Therefore, we continue to talk about human motor skills and the involvement it has." (ACS03).

To establish a graduation profile in accordance with these new standards, focus groups and surveys were carried out, which made it possible to collect valuable information on the expectations and needs of the different actors involved in physical education. This served as the basis for defining the structure and key elements of the graduate profile:

"Through focus groups and surveys, we collected information on what all these actors thought a physical education teacher should be. There we had our structure, our skeleton to establish our graduation profile." (ACS01).

Concepts and keywords defined in the eight disciplinary standards were incorporated, ensuring that the graduation profile is not only aligned with the expectations of the CNA, but also responds to the demands of teaching practice:

"We added concepts and keywords that were defined in the 8 disciplinary standards. We established frameworks to reset the graduation profile that are directly related to competencies." (ACS03).

## **Discussion**

The results of this study suggest that Law 20.903 has generated substantial changes in initial teacher training in physical education pedagogy, by establishing a regulatory framework

that improves curricular coherence and ensures minimum quality standards. However, as a result, a homogenization of curricula and a disconnection with local needs have been identified. These findings are consistent with the observations of Barra-Ranni et al.<sup>15</sup>, who highlight that, although Law 20.903 has improved the curriculum and standardized quality, it has increased bureaucracy and pressured institutions to comply with standards that do not always coincide with specific contexts. In addition, studies such as those by Galazzi et al.<sup>2</sup> point out that standardization, while seeking to professionalize teaching, can also limit the ability of institutions to innovate and respond to their local realities.

The implementation of Law 20.903 has catalyzed a substantial standardization in the curricula of initial teacher training in physical education pedagogy, as evidenced in this study. The results show that, although this standardization has strengthened curricular coherence and ensured minimum quality standards, it has also induced a homogenization that can be counterproductive. This homogenizing effect tends to detach programs from specific local needs and characteristics, limiting the ability to adapt and respond to particular educational contexts. This phenomenon has also been discussed by Caniuqueo-Vargas et al.<sup>24</sup> and Gillanders et al.<sup>5</sup>, who argue that, although the uniformity of disciplinary and pedagogical standards has promoted greater coherence in curricular meshes and graduation profiles, it has also restricted innovation and personalization of educational programs.

This study has also identified tensions between the standardization promoted by Law 20.903 and the need for adaptability in pedagogy programs in physical education. Poblete-Valderrama et al.<sup>13</sup> observe a similar problem, pointing out that training institutions tend to prioritize biological and competitive paradigms, neglecting pedagogical approaches that respond to sociocultural characteristics. Likewise, Galazzi et al.<sup>2</sup> suggest that globalized education policies often fail to consider the diversity of educational contexts in Latin America, generating significant tensions for institutions trying to adapt standards to their specific needs. Significant challenges are evident in the implementation of teacher training standards in the contexts of professional practice. As in the study by Sánchez et al.<sup>25</sup>, it is observed that the lack of resources in the practice centers directly affects the ability of students to develop the expected competencies. The scarcity of materials and the inadequacy of spaces are clear barriers to effective learning, which coincides with the concerns of pedagogy students regarding the difficulties in implementing didactic strategies and organizing an adequate learning environment<sup>25</sup>. In this sense, physical infrastructure seems to be an essential element to achieve quality professional practice, as proposed in the theory of teaching practice as a learning space.

A limitation of this study is its focus on a region and a specific legal framework, which may restrict the generalization of the findings to other contexts. In addition, the study is based on reported perceptions and experiences, which could introduce subjective biases. Future studies could expand the sample and employ quantitative methods to complement and validate qualitative findings. It would also be relevant to explore the philosophical perspective on educational autonomy and the tensions between global standards and local contexts, as Galazzi et al.<sup>2</sup> suggested.

Future research should explore how these policies affect various institutions, especially those in rural contexts or with less access to resources. In addition, it is necessary to evaluate the impact of the standards of initial teacher training in physical education and Law 20,903 from the perspective of graduates and school systems, expanding the analysis to the practical consequences and the impact on educational equity.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight the dual effects of Law 20.903 on the initial teacher training (ITT) of physical education pedagogy programs. While the law has improved curricular

coherence and established minimum quality standards, it has also led to significant challenges, such as the homogenization of curricula and a disconnect with local educational needs. These outcomes underscore the tension between standardization and adaptability in educational policy implementation.

The study reaffirmed the importance of fostering a balance between ensuring quality and maintaining flexibility to address the sociocultural and contextual diversity of educational settings. This balance is critical for enabling initial teacher training programs to meet the unique demands of local communities while adhering to national standards.

Moving forward, there is a need for continuous evaluation of the impact of such policies, considering perspectives from multiple stakeholders, including graduates, educators, and school systems. By doing so, educational policies can evolve to support innovation, contextual relevance, and adaptability, ensuring that teacher training programs contribute effectively to the broader goals of education.

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**Editor:** Carlos Herold Junior

Received on Jan 2, 2025.

Reviewed on Aug 1, 2025.

Accepted on Aug 20, 2025.

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