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Research article

Socio-educational action in Colombia: historical, academic and professional means to social work and social pedagogy

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Abstract

Social work and social pedagogy in Colombia are disciplines and professional fields of special relevance for social and educational action. This article analyses what has been the evolution of these fields of knowledge and practice in the Colombian context, from historical, disciplinary, professional and academic standpoints. For this, a documentary analysis has been carried out methodologically in the two areas of knowledge, with a historical and theoretical review of the disciplines in the country, as well as of the relevant national undergraduate and graduate programmes. This article concludes by

establishing that social work has a longer historical trajectory in the country to provide social responses to complex problems and violence, with vocational professionalisation, scientific intervention and wide academic recognition in careers present in the country's universities. In contrast, social pedagogy has had some attempts at being instituted into careers in the country and presents a great diversification of professions from popular or community education, and has struggled to become professionalised due to the prominence given to social work by public policy and education. Nonetheless, our analysis demonstrates that with the historical influence of critical pedagogies and recent global contributions, there is currently a significant upward trajectory of social pedagogy in Colombia, with two Master's degrees existing since 2019 (which train educators and social workers in socio-educational action).

Keywords social pedagogy; social education; social work; socio-educational action; social assistance; convergences; divergences; Colombian context

Introduction

Conceptualising social work and social pedagogy in Colombia is a necessary task for the nation and the Latin American region in the global context. Conceptual specificities and generalities produce both divergences and convergences. It is necessary to study them from an historical perspective to find connections and address the complexity of social and educational intervention.

Undoubtedly, complexity is part of the epistemology and practice of these disciplines and professions in the field of social and educational sciences (Melendro, 2011). In the Colombian context, it is of particular interest because of the multiple factors, the variety of difficulties (socio-political violence, inequity, inequality, forced displacement) and the possibilities (multi-ethnicity, cultural and natural diversity, community resilience), which are present in the various regions of the country.

This article presents an analysis of social work and social pedagogy in Colombia from two main perspectives: scientific-academic and practical-professional.

Social work in Colombia

From the epistemological approach taken by Restrepo (2002), social work can be understood as a field of social intervention that appeals to the different scientific disciplines for its theorisation and practices of the various techniques that directly address social problems, according to the characteristics of the situation and context. Situated knowledge is linked to the complex history of social work in Colombia.

Historical notes

After a number of historical upheavals, in 1920 a great industrialisation process took place in Colombia, initiated by the nation's coffee income and the financial compensation received from the USA for their use of the territory of Panama (at that time governed by Colombia). This situation generated a consolidation of the union movement and the peasantry (Guevara and Beltrán, 2018), which highlighted the struggle for the improvement of living conditions for workers and the general population.

In the early twentieth century social work in Colombia was assumed to be an obligation of the state. This was mainly due to the serious socio-economic crisis of the 1930s, which instigated democratisation reforms, social welfare improvements and modernisation of the country, all developed from the political and social context of the government of Alfonso López Pumarejo. In this context, the first school of social service, led by the Spanish María Carulla de Vergara, was established, resulting from the need to develop a specific training programme to deliver social assistance (Cifuentes and Gartner, 2006).

On 2 October 1936, María Carulla de Vergara founded the first programme affiliated to the Colegio Mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario in Bogotá (Bueno, 2017). This and other earlier programmes featured a strong component relating to the social sciences (sociology or law), but had little pedagogical

content. In its origins, Colombian social work has been strongly influenced by the case study approach from Spain, the USA and Chile. Undoubtedly, social service schools (Escuelas de Servicio Social) produced the scientific traits and the cohesion of Colombian social workers. In 1946, a school was created with a more academic approach to social service training: the Colegio Mayor de Cultura Femenina in Cundinamarca, Colombia. Later, in 1965, this programme began to develop in the Faculty of Human Sciences of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia (Leal, 2015). This was the first university in Colombia to offer an undergraduate programme of social work.

In 1951, social service schools organised the Asociación de Escuelas de Servicio Social. Based on the contributions of this national association and the Puerto Rican Cecilia Bunker, who proposed a new curriculum for social work in 1960 (Malagón and Leal, 2006), a formative renewal was developed in the Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca, with greater scientific and professional capacity (Bueno, 2017). According to Malagón and Leal (2006), social work in Colombia had different stages and advances, but without a doubt, its scientific and its scientific character was fundamental to its consolidation.

When the liberal candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán came to the presidency in 1948 (Ramírez and Castañeda, 2011), there was a period of violence in the country and the so-called national front was consolidated (via several guerrilla groups: Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia – FARC-EP; Ejército del Pueblo; Ejército de Liberación Nacional – ELN) for the defence of territories and peoples (especially peasants) attacked by paramilitary movements. Additionally, the Movimiento Obrero Independiente y Revolucionario (MOIR) began to have great importance in the social fabric.

Since the 1950s, the participation of social workers has been a feature of psychosocial interventions as a result of armed conflict. This encompasses not only public institutions providing for the care of victims, but also interventions by private entities and organisations (Bello, 2005; Neusa and Romero, 2017).

An instructional renewal was developed in the Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca, with greater scientific and professional potential. The 1960s was the heyday of the work of Colombian priest Camilo Torres Restrepo, who is associated with the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, because he was the promoter of the first Faculty of Sociology in Latin America. In addition, the theoretical and practical contributions of Orlando Fals Borda were recognised because he worked on models and processes of action research worldwide, with great influence in the social and educational sciences. Both Restrepo and Borda belonged to guerrilla liberation movements fighting inequalities, corruption and structural violence perpetrated by the state with irregular elections and devastating effects on the quality of life of peasant groups and the poorest people in Colombia (Sánchez, 2006).

The legal support established by the social state of law of the Colombian Constitution of 1991, and the economic opening in that decade, consolidated new interpretations and practices of social work in the country, representing a reconceptualisation of the profession.

As occurs with critical and popular pedagogies between 2004 and 2016, Colombian social work generated a series of movements with great influence from the Brazilian and Marxist critical current (Sierra-Tapiro, 2018). At this stage, critical social work was born (mainly driven by meetings and congresses of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia in Bogotá and the Universidad Industrial de Santander in Bucaramanga), based on the youth movements of the 1990s.

This current has been promoted by the Universidad del Valle in Cali, the Universidad de Caldas in Manizales, the Universidad Republicana in Bogotá, the Universidad de Antioquia in Medellín and the Universidad de Quindío in Armenia. It is important to note that these regions took a leading role in mobilisations of civil and student society, as well as the academic and professional world. The problems linked to child poverty, drug trafficking, violence, displacement due to armed conflict and the injustices suffered by peasants (mainly coffee growers), made the region of the coffee axis and Antioquia especially vulnerable and highly complex territories for the attention and search for solutions to social problems.

Disciplinary and professional perspective

Community intervention of a more structural type has been developed by cultural organisations from social work with groups and communities. The understanding of community meanings, capacity management and popular mobilisation make up some of the functions of community social work (Rodríguez and Bermúdez, 2013).

Hospital health care has the greatest projection and the most employment opportunities for Colombian social workers (Correa et al., 2018). This area focuses mainly on social and family factors that

affect the spread of diseases. Generally speaking, social workers who work in this area play a welfare role.

However, in 1969, the Universidad Externado de Colombia created a speciality of social work, focused on organisational issues (Pérez and Díaz, 2014). In addition, a broad curriculum component related to the organisational field (management and social planning, administration and labour law) is currently included in various careers in the country.

The main purpose of social work from the organisational perspective is to focus its intervention on the situations that occur in the sphere of production, recognising the social, economic, professional and personal aspects, in order to aim for increased productivity in an enabling organisational climate (López and Chaparro, 2006).

Social work is the social discipline with the longest tradition in the country for addressing the complex problems that Colombia has faced. It has regular training programmes, and social workers collaborate in defining public policy for social intervention. Its professionals are formed as a single professional body of general competencies for social action, although the functions of employability are broad and the emphasis of the various niches of employment can be expanded from continuing education and postgraduate programmes. Social work is the profession with the strongest links to national, regional and local social services.

Academic status

Currently in Colombia there are 37 active undergraduate social work programmes, with a strong presence of sociological, political, legal and intervention legacies, from a perspective of social development (see Box 1). However, we must point out that the relevance of educational sciences has been minimal in the academic programmes, especially in social pedagogy.

There are four distance-learning programmes available from universities. These are Universidad Católica Luis Amigó, Fundación Universitaria Católica del Norte, Instituto Tolimense de Formación Técnica Profesional, and Fundación Universitaria Claretiana.

The only active graduate programme in the national context is the Master's degree in social work offered at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia.

In order to analyse the professional field of social workers, Act 53 of 1977 regulates the exercise of the profession, and one of its articles provides for the establishment of the Consejo Nacional de Trabajo Social, which is made up of the Ministries of National Education, Labour and Health (Congreso de Colombia, 1977).

Social pedagogy (and social education) in Colombia

The social and cultural dimension of education, from a community and critical perspective, has had a great trajectory in Latin America and Colombia, mainly based on the theory and practice of pedagogy and popular education (Janer et al., 2020). The systematisation of educational and pedagogical experiences in Latin America has theoretical and practical relevance with different denominations, such as community education, adult education or popular education. These integrate different theoretical influences, among them liberation theology, critical and liberating pedagogy, as well as a great militant commitment at the political level of social transformation from the contributions of the liberating revolutions of independence, education and the emancipation of the people (from each of the Latin American nations), and from the educational paradigms based on decolonial and intercultural criticism (Mejía, 2004; Vélez de la Calle, 2010), among other approaches.

Historical notes

Social pedagogy in Colombia is associated with critical pedagogies, which were developed by popular educators, academics and civil organisations (some belonging to the Consejo de Educación de Adultos de América Latina – CEAAL) (Ortega, 2014). The Bachelor's degree in community education, with an emphasis on human rights, and the Master's degree in education at the Universidad Nacional de Colombia, with an emphasis on community research, are both well recognised, with leading researchers such as Marco Raúl Mejía and Alfredo Ghiso. However, it is important to note that education has focused on school contexts, from a critical and popular paradigm. In Latin America, critical authors do not use the

nomenclature 'social pedagogy' because they perceive it to be a European discipline. However, Ghiso and Vélez use the term from a decolonial point of view.

Box 1. Undergraduate social work programmes (Source: data compiled from SNIES, 2021).

Universidad Externado de Colombia
Universidad Central
Universidad de la Salle
Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana
Universidad Católica de Oriente – UCO
Universidad Simón Bolívar
Fundación Universitaria Católica Lumen Gentium
Corporación Universitaria Republicana
Universidad Libre
Universidad del Sinú – Elías Bechara Zainúm – UNISINÚ
Corporación Universitaria del Meta – UNIMETA
Fundación Universitaria Juan de Castellanos
Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios – UNIMINUTO
Fundación Universitaria Monserrate – UNIMONSERRATE
Corporación Universitaria del Caribe – CECAR
Corporación Universitaria Rafael Núñez
Fundación Universitaria de Popayán
Universidad Santiago de Cali
Fundación Universitaria Tecnológico Comfenalco – Cartagena
Universidad Mariana
Institución Universitaria Antonio José Camacho
Universidad Metropolitana
Fundación Universitaria Cervantes San Agustín – UNICERVANTES
Universidad Católica Luis Amigó
Fundación Universitaria Católica del Norte
Instituto Tolimense de Formación Técnica Profesional
Fundación Universitaria Claretiana – UNICLARETIANA
Tecnológico de Antioquia
Universidad de la Guajira
Instituto Universitario de la Paz
Universidad – Colegio Mayor de Cundinamarca
Universidad Francisco de Paula Santander
Universidad Industrial de Santander
Universidad del Quindío
Universidad de Cartagena
Universidad del Valle
Universidad Tecnológica del Chocó – Diego Luis Córdoba

In fact, the historical trajectory shows that the beginnings of social pedagogy and education in Latin America are related to the emergence of educational and social practices focused on the struggle of peasant communities to achieve literacy and the democratisation of school education for the whole population. Thus, in this trajectory we recognise practices articulated by Paulo Freire (popular education), Orlando Fals Borda (action-participatory research) and Manfred Max Neef (development on a human scale), among others (Torres, 2018; Zolá and Polo, 2021).

This situation generates a difficulty for the specialisation, strengthening and consolidation of social pedagogy in Colombia. This problem arises due to the lack of scientific, disciplinary, historical and professional unity. However, it can be linked to any educational modality.

Consequently, as was the case in most countries globally, before institutionalised social education was recognised as a career, the number of educational and social agents was broad. Social educators have worked with various groups and have intervened in several types of situation; the Colombian population has recognised their work.

Formal education and educational policies have underestimated the role of social workers who do not have time and space for accreditation and school promotion. Despite this, in Latin America, and in

Colombia especially, critical and popular pedagogies have claimed a fundamental role of education with an emphasis on the capacity for social transformation.

Likewise, the country began to reconfigure education programmes in the late 1990s in response to social problems (for example, violence, drug trafficking and guerrilla activity), but social pedagogy did not achieve visibility at the time (Ojeda, 2009). Despite this, in 2005 the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana created the Bachelor's degree in social and community pedagogy, the first such programme in the country. Subsequently, the Bachelor's degree in social pedagogy for rehabilitation was created, as an online course. Both undergraduate programmes are now inactive (SNIES, 2021).

Disciplinary and professional perspective

Social pedagogy is described as the science that guides socio-educational actions for the prevention of social problems, the rehabilitation of individuals and groups, socio-cultural and socio-educational formation and development, and community participation. It recognises human rights as the main focus, with the aim of improving people's quality of life and well-being (Del Pozo and Astorga, 2018). In the Colombian context, this represents a relationship with popular education, the specific situations of multiculturalism and pluri-ethnicity and situations of socio-political conflict.

Teachers, with more curricular and didactic training, have the challenge of meeting socio-educational needs and possibilities that, at a global level (professional, academic and practical), has been called 'social education' or 'social pedagogy'. However, there is certainly no homogenisation across nations, this is the universal tendency.

One of the main problems in operationalising social education in Colombia is that education policies are mainly aimed at improving, evaluating and institutionalising the formal education system (strongly focused on the educational quality of standardised learning tests) attached to the Ministry of National Education.

However, some characteristics of social pedagogy differ from school pedagogy. Social pedagogy does not focus on limited time, curricular and formal content, institutionalised spaces or specific stages of human development; mainly it operates a process of lifelong learning, which implies the recognition of social and emotional learning. Moreover, its policy frameworks are not necessarily linked to the Ministry of National Education, but are attached to other administrations or organisations working on issues of equality, social protection, family welfare, justice and culture (Del Pozo and Astorga, 2018).

It is important to note that the Colombian Constitution legislates on the social function of education, from its cultural, environmental, peaceful and democratic value, based on human rights. It also recognises training in sport and recreation (articles 52 and 67) and considers drug use prevention or specialised rehabilitation (article 47, 49 and 98) (Asamblea Nacional Constituyente, 1991).

However, despite having a socio-educational dimension, these considerations are particularly significant in contexts of social vulnerability linked to three types of experiences and practices of mobilisation and socio-educational action:

- Teachers who, in scattered rural contexts, peasant, indigenous or in conflict areas, have developed a great educational work of social and community care.
- Other educational agents of civil society (for example, community mothers, leaders in community action groups, social leaders or indigenous and ethnic organisations).
- Other professionals within educational and social work (for example, psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, social communicators or social workers), in different programmes of national public or private entities, or international cooperation.

However, the need to professionalise social pedagogues or social educators is a challenge. According to Ghiso (2016), there is a need for the professionalisation of social pedagogues in Latin America, recognising the region's own experiences and traditions, such as community or popular education, which offer a great bridge of dialogue with socio-cultural animation or European social education, based on community and group awareness and action.

Academic status

Colombia has only had two specific degree programmes in social pedagogy: one from the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana; another, a degree in social pedagogy for rehabilitation, from the Universidad del

Quindío (both now inactive). Table 1 shows the main undergraduate programmes currently available in Colombia that are linked to the socio-educational field.

Table 1. Undergraduate programmes linked to the socio-educational field (Source: data compiled from SNIES, 2021).

Programme	University
Bachelor's degree in popular education	Universidad del Valle
Bachelor's degree in community education	Fundación Universitaria Salesiana Universidad Pedagógica Nacional Universidad Francisco de Paula Santander Dirección Nacional de Escuelas
Bachelor's degree in rural education	Universidad del Magdalena Universidad de los Llanos
Bachelor's degree in ethno-education	Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira UNAD Universidad del Cauca Universidad de la Guajira Universidad del Magdalena Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana

Other programmes have become inactive, for example, the Bachelor's degree in popular and adult education at the Universidad del Atlántico (Barranquilla). In addition, there are other Bachelor's degrees in social sciences (from a community and critical perspective) that also have socio-educational components and are available at various universities. However, it is important to note that Colombia has a long tradition of children's education, which is now known as early childhood education in most of the country's departments. Early childhood education remains closely linked to pre-schools and child development centres, despite the policies and reforms of comprehensive care developed in recent years placing a great importance on community management and family modality from a socio-educational perspective.

Recently, a single career in social education was proposed to the Asociación Colombiana de Facultades de Educación (ASCOFADE); it focused on work with older populations (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, Decree 2041, 3 February 2016) (Del Pozo and Astorga, 2018). This allows, as in the case of social work, the main educational and social generic foundation in the first levels, and subsequently to be trained in specialisms, according to the tradition of Colombian practices, legislation and educational policy. Table 2 shows the proposal to organise the emphasis according to Colombian socio-educational practices.

Table 2. Emphasis of social education in Colombia (Source: Authors, 2022).

Community field	Specialised field
Emphasis on popular or community education Emphasis on adult education Emphasis on ethno-education	Emphasis on social rehabilitation

Undoubtedly, for professionalisation it will be necessary to continue the work in this direction. This will provide a greater possibility of *universal recognition of the career* in the academic context in any country in the world, where the academic degree for this professional is usually called social education, as well as a compatibility of the profession in a global context. This concept is promoted mainly by the Asociación Internacional de Educadores Sociales, in whose alliance the profession and discipline are being consolidated worldwide.

Another reason for professionalisation is the need to enhance *professional value for employability*. It is complex to hire so many different independent professions (for example, community educators, adult educators, educators of social rehabilitation) to work in varying scenarios, with populations and projects of public or private entities. From our point of view, it is important to have a single professional with various specialisms, as is the case in other social and educational professions, such as social work, but which does not limit their professional practice in any field or situation necessitating intervention. As in other countries, this would allow professionals to be able to strengthen their professional practice.

In graduate programmes, there is the specialisation in Community Education and the Master's degree in Popular Education at the Universidad del Cauca, which have great presence and relevance in the region. There are also various specialisations and Master's degrees in child and family development available at many universities in the country.

To achieve professionalisation and unification of the various careers related to socio-educational intervention in Colombia, the discipline began to be strengthened in 2019, with the creation of two graduate programmes: one at the Universidad del Norte and the other at the Universidad de Nariño. The formative and academic commitment of these programmes allows any professional or person interested in the field of social sciences, education and health to train in social pedagogy. The first cohort graduated in March 2021 from the Universidad del Norte. These programmes seek to give scientific relevance to intervention in the social and educational fields, which have had a tradition more linked to popular education experiences (see Table 3).

Table 3. Graduate programmes in social pedagogy in Colombia (Source: data compiled from Universidad del Norte, n.d., and Universidad de Nariño, n.d.).

Programmes	Master's degree in Social Pedagogy and Educational Intervention in Social Contexts Universidad del Norte (Barranquilla, Colombia)	Master's degree in Social Pedagogy Universidad de Nariño (Nariño, Colombia)
Different components	Great pedagogical-social character in all areas of intervention with emphasis on childhood, adolescence and youth Great internationalisation of the teaching staff Virtual mode Double degree with the Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia (UNED) in Spain	Interdisciplinary and intercultural character Mostly national teaching staff Presence-based modality
Similar components	Both Master's degrees present common subjects and aspects, such as policies, strategies and fields. Likewise, both work on aspects related to peace-building	

This demonstrates the progress made by the country in the academic strengthening of social pedagogy in both undergraduate and graduate education programmes in the faculties of social sciences, humanities and education and programmes of social care, social work and social services.

Moreover, the creation of the Asociación Colombiana de Pedagogía Social y Educación Social (ASOCOPESSES) is considered an important milestone in this field. On 8 May 2017 the ordinary assembly for the creation of ASOCOPESSES, which was formally registered on 19 September 2017, was held. On 21 May 2018 ASOCOPESSES was registered as an entity in the Administrative Department of Science, Technology and Innovation – COLCIENCIAS (ASOCOPESSES, 2017). Its founding president was Francisco José del Pozo Serrano, at the time a social educator, researcher and professor and at the Universidad del Norte. Its board of directors and associates were child educators, social workers, jurists, psychologists, anthropologists, teachers and others. The current president is Giselle Paola Polo Amashta, a professor and researcher at the Universidad del Norte.

From 2017 to 2021 a multitude of scientific events, training and professional activities, as well as transfer and advocacy initiatives in the social and educational field, have been developed, with interdisciplinary convergence and with the aim to unite all the professions related to socio-educational intervention. ASOCOPESSES is the official Colombian network where the trajectories of social pedagogy and social education converge. It establishes academic and professional connections with social work.

To highlight this convergence, Claudia María López Ortiz, a social worker, professor, and researcher of social work at the Universidad Libre – Seccional Pereira, is on the board of directors.

ASOCOPESSES promotes all socio-educational areas and purposes in Colombia (community and specialised), with lifelong training initiatives for all related professionals. An example of this is the recent initiative of the virtual course (a MOOC, or Massive Open Online Course) entitled Educational Intervention in Social Contexts: Community and Specialised Education, which has been carried out in collaboration with the Sociedad Iberoamericana de Pedagogía Social (SIPS), mediated by the MANGUS learning platform (an online course). Social workers are also involved in this initiative.

Conclusion: convergences and divergences between social work and social pedagogy

In professional practice, both social work and social pedagogy in Colombia have had a tradition linked to critical social practice. Social workers and social pedagogues are influencing agents in Latin America, who promote popular and liberating education. Notably, methodologies were applied in social services first, before they were explicitly applied in social pedagogy. The scientific social intervention was taught and shaped in training schools, while social pedagogues were political activists with little academic or scientific traits.

The socio-educational intervention of social workers and educators has been linked to similar fields and areas in Colombia (communities, groups, families and individuals). However, social work in Colombia has had a tradition more linked to the community sphere, although currently there is traction in the organisational and health field, while the various careers in pedagogy or education have had a greater presence in the school context and are highly relevant to early childhood pedagogy, community education and popular education. The two Master's degrees in social pedagogy currently available seek to expand the training of social and educational agents and to extend the fields of action to any space, context and population during the life cycle, with a necessary presence of sustainability and well-being.

In the academic context, a tradition of social work in Colombia should be recognised, from the political and social reforms and the initial trajectories of the schools of social assistance/service, which were later consolidated in the professional formation in universities. This allows for many more undergraduate programmes in social work throughout the national territory (currently there are 37). However, there are only 13 undergraduate programmes in the country linked to social education/social pedagogy (with a community and multicultural tradition). There is no career called 'social education' or 'social pedagogy' that integrates all areas and populations, as we have mentioned, and that establishes a necessary dialogue with popular education (Caride, 2016).

Currently, Colombian social work emphasises sociology, politics, management and social development. Social pedagogy focuses on accompaniment, prevention, intervention, relationship and action (socio-educational). The educational, relational and socio-cultural aspects mainly characterise the foundations and principles of social pedagogy, and its intervention, in the international context (Úcar, 2018). Perhaps the prominence that is given to social assistance continues to prevail, from the object of study of each discipline (Serrano et al., 2014), although this is often undefined. Few universities link the component of social pedagogy or socio-educational action to their programmes. There is more presence of socio-legal or psychological components and few are socio-educational in nature.

There are some social work curricula in the country that include the subject of social pedagogy – for example the social work programme at the Universidad Simón Bolívar (Barranquilla, Atlántico), where students in the third semester are required to study this subject (Universidad Simón Bolívar, n.d.). Another example is the curriculum of social work at the Universidad Libre – Seccional Pereira (Risaralda, Pereira), which includes a subject in this discipline, albeit an optional subject (Universidad Libre, n.d.).

At the Universidad Libre – Seccional Pereira, since the ASOCOPESSES carried out work in the coffee-producing area of Colombia, social pedagogy is being strengthened in the Faculty of Social Sciences at Pereira, through its study plans and continuing education (for example, seminars and open forums).

There is a perceived relevance of and interest in social pedagogy in recent years in graduate education programmes. However, there are currently only two Master's degrees in social pedagogy and a single Master's degree in social work in the country.

To conclude this article, Table 4 summarises some of the most relevant characteristics of the disciplines of social work and social pedagogy in Colombia.

Table 4. Most relevant characteristics of social work and social pedagogy in Colombia (Source: Authors, 2022).

Discipline	Relevant authors in this field	Major disciplinary component	First undergraduate programmes	First graduate programmes
Social work	María Carulla de Vergara Camilo Torres Restrepo Gloria Leal y Edgar Malagón	Socio-legal (social sciences)	Escuela de Servicio Social of Colegio Mayor de Cultura Femenina de Cundinamarca (1946). In 1965 this programme was transferred to the Faculty of Human Sciences of the Universidad Nacional de Colombia.	Master's degree in Social Work, Universidad Nacional de Colombia (2019).
Social pedagogy	Claudia Vélez de la Calle Alfredo Ghiso Bárbara Ojeda Francisco José del Pozo Serrano	Socio-educational (educational sciences)	Bachelor's degree in Social and Community Pedagogy of the Pontificia Universidad Javeriana.	Master's degree in Social Pedagogy and Educational Intervention in Social Contexts, Universidad del Norte from Barranquilla, Colombia (2019). Master's degree in Social Pedagogy of the Universidad de Nariño from Nariño, Colombia (2019).

Declarations and conflicts of interest

Research ethics statement

Not applicable to this article.

Consent for publication statement

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Conflicts of interest statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest with this work. All efforts to sufficiently anonymise the authors during peer review of this article have been made. The authors declare no further conflicts with this article.

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