

Higher education: Training in Addictions

Educación superior: Formación en Adicciones

Ainhoa Lozano ^{1*}, Mercedes Gomez ²

1 University of Salamanca; ainhoa.lozano.molina@usal.es, ORCID: 0000-0003-2626-6627

2 Complutense University of Madrid; mimgp@ucm.es, ORCID:0000-0002-0418-2337

* Correspondence: ainhoa.lozano.molina@usal.es

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Summary: The Complutense Institute of Drug Addiction was created to provide training to professionals who worked with addicted people, due to the problem of the heroin pandemic that caused high youth mortality in the 1980s. Take a tour of the training given to professionals in medicine, nursing and psychology who joined forces to respond to social needs, gives us a glimpse of how the problem of addictions has been mutating over time and with it the training of professionals. The general objective is to reflect the teaching changes and training that is currently provided. For this purpose, a retrospective descriptive qualitative methodology was used, through documentary analysis. The results show the need for continued training in health professionals and highlights the lack of postgraduate training in Higher Education, especially focused on the public system. It is concluded that the need for continuity of training in health professionals is evident since it is shown as a fundamental improvement in professional practice and as an essential tool to treat addiction problems that emerge today.

Keywords : Higher Education, addictions, training, medicine, nursing, psychology

Abstract: The Complutense Drug Addiction Institute was created to train professionals who worked with addicted people, due to the problem of the heroin pandemic that caused high youth mortality in the 1980s. Taking a tour of the training given to medicine, nursing and psychology professionals who joined forces to respond to social needs, makes us glimpse how the problem of addictions has been changing over time and with it the training of professionals. The general objective is to reflect the changes in teaching and the training that is currently being given. For this, retrospective descriptive qualitative methodology has been used, through documentary analysis. The results show the need to continue training in health professionals and highlight the lack of postgraduate training in Higher Education, especially focused on the public system. It is concluded that the need for continuity of training in health professionals is evident since it is shown as a fundamental improvement in professional praxis and as an essential tool to treat addiction problems that emerge today.

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1. Introduction

In 1985 there was no real and adequate response from the administrations to the problem of addictions, resources with specific treatment for addicted people were non-existent and health professionals did not have any type of training, in fact, the response that There was something to address the problem that was carried out by social entities or by families who grouped together in associations (1).

The Organic Law of 11/1983, of August 25, of the University Reform (LRU) intended to reflect the importance of teaching that was adapted to the research and teaching requirements of society through an open and bidirectional institutional framework between the University and society (2).

The Complutense Institute of Drug Dependence (ICD) was a center fundamentally dedicated to scientific and technical research, teaching activity and technical advice from a multidisciplinary perspective in the field of addictions, which became the provider of information for other organizations. and had documentation of the last four decades of the training that has been provided to health professionals. Two key ideas arise from their studies, the first is “the great need for training professionals in addictions, since the information rates were low and could be explained more by self-taught training than by rational and programmed teaching at a university level or similar.” and secondly, by “the perception of the students who expressed high concern and an evident motivation to obtain training in this field, better oriented to social needs” (3).

Therefore, in this work we have the objective of documentary and retrospective synthesis of the training received by health professionals and point out the differences in training in this last decade. The relevance of this work is to see if there is training in Higher Education that responds to current needs.

2. Methods

This study, of a retrospective descriptive nature, proposes a retrospective documentary analysis carried out thanks to two stays carried out in the ICD documentary archive at the Complutense University of Madrid, which were carried out in the periods from May 1 to July 31, 2019. working on data collection and sharing with expert professionals and from October 1 to March 10, 2020 working on the analysis of student reports and databases.

The material used has had two different parts. The first part comes from the retrospective documentary analysis of the documentary archive of the Complutense Institute of Drug Addiction, which has been extensive and was divided by the researcher into 6 blocks to be able to carry out said analysis: memories of the ICD training project, analysis of the training of professionals , general reports, teaching documentation, analysis of databases and similar documentation. The first of them are the reports of the training project for professionals in addictions that consists of 4 volumes, volume I: Theoretical foundations and teaching project, volume IIA: Expert program and first-year master program, volume IIB: Second master program course and volume III: Institutional project and management project, needs report and professional program.

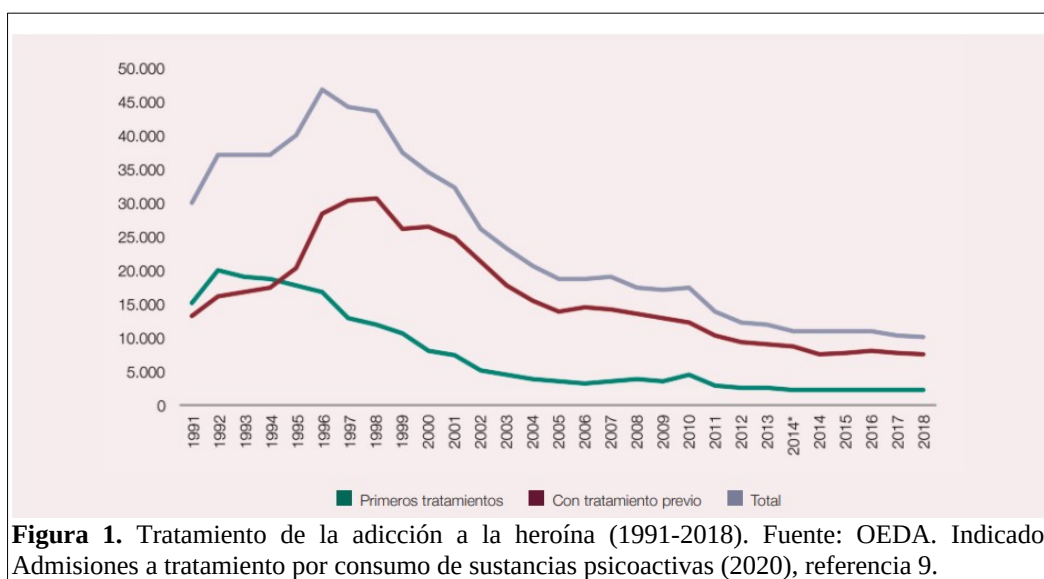
In addition to everything, all the ICD reports from 1988 to 2020 have been read and synthesized, which presented three formats: The reports until 1995 were saved in floppy disk format, from 1995 to 2010 in book and from there the documentation was recorded on CD-ROM.

The teaching staff's documentation is a total of 78 files in which all the subjects that have been taught are reflected, being varied, adapted to their time and evolving with the training given by the teaching staff, which were required by the needs of the professionals. that were changing. This information has been rich in content, since the reports are ratified by matching what was taught in the training with the documentation provided by said teachers. There was a database with great content that makes the analysis productive. Free searches were carried out on different official web pages that transmitted relevant information such as the National Plan on drugs, the World Health Organization, the Institute of Addictions of the Community of Madrid, Proyecto Hombre, Red Cross, Anti-Drug Agency and libraries. of all public universities nationwide. Thus, we have worked with the collection of scientifically rigorous documents of defined origin and quality, based on objective and relevant information. The parameters for the study are the theoretical and

practical contents taken from the documents provided by the ICD archive, the theoretical and practical contents of the expert and master's training (Public Universities of Spain). Document analysis is differentiated into three parts by a communication process, a transformation process and an analytical-synthetic process (4).

3. Results

If we make a comparison of the phenomenon of addictions in these years, the greatest problem that existed in 1985 was the heroin epidemic and currently in 2020, the problems are the variability of the different addictions (currently, there are about 150,000 people who are undergoing treatment, with 40% cocaine, 30% cannabis, 25% opioids) along with the rise of behavioral addictions (5). The statistical data of the addiction phenomenon are shown in Figure 1, with regard to heroin.



The initial idea was to make a comparison of the similarities and differences of the theoretical models that supported Higher Education four decades ago with those that are carried out today. But, this has not been possible because the theoretical framework that supported academic training is the one that continues to be used today for the practice of health professionals (there are ideas presented in the 80s that are currently being implemented).

We can encompass some of the ideas shown in various models, such as the Minnesota model for its comprehensive view and the openness of science as a key and basis in training, the Hazelden model for its effectiveness or the social identity model of recovery (6). . The effectiveness of this model is justified by one of the most in-depth studies on this subject, such as the MATCH Project (1993). All advances based on scientific evidence have meant that training is modeled, covering needs with reliable tools. In this evolution, the most significant change has been the introduction of other drugs and behavioral addictions, which has meant that their training has had to be expanded, but the values and principles that give the focus of the training have been so well-founded that they are They continue to teach (in a divided manner) in the degrees of nursing, psychology and medicine.

The ICD has defended throughout its history the importance of training based on the biopsychosociological framework with a multidimensional, multidisciplinary and multiparadigmatic matrix. The teaching project structured the professional areas of action

and the different levels of training. The specific training that students must obtain, as well as the content of the programs and the pedagogical methodology, such as assessing the competence and responsibilities of the university in these teachings. Let us remember that they worked from a global intervention model that, as Mikman and Shaffer (6) pointed out, had to be a multiprofessional intervention of an open and cooperative nature. Training was proposed for professionals who work with addictions, with rigor, established and recognized. The purpose for these professionals was to ensure that those interested in it specialized and also contribute to defining a specific professionalism for the treatment of addictions, within the integrative vision. They had three fundamental pillars: education (to acquire the necessary skills), instruction (an interrelational idea so that the student can relate all the theories, there is transformation and significant learning) and finally, training (practices as a fundamental pillar of training). . They proposed an eclectic system that combined theory and practice, the formal environment and professional work, with the intention of specifying training depending on the type of professional like the University of Montreal (8). These teachings were replicated by different organizations and many professionals were nourished by these teachings.

In training for addictions, knowledge when teaching must be transformed into professional skills and competencies so that professionals are able to assess their own knowledge and competencies, as well as their limits, considering that their training is a stage within a period of continued teaching. Therefore, professionals should have broad skills and abilities such as decision making, problem solving, knowing how to integrate theory into practice, knowing how to work interdisciplinary, all with analysis and synthesis based on the scientific method and research with exhaustive self-assessment so that knowledge can later be transmitted in different contexts. All knowledge, abilities and skills must be reflected in a good and solid theoretical preparation, which must arm the student with a limited series of solidly acquired knowledge, in practical training that contrasts the theory acquired or being acquired, with practice. and a moral configuration, so that he knows how to realize his responsibility before society and before himself (8). Of the latest models being worked on today, the one carried out by Becoña (5) is interesting since it is a comprehensive and integrative model of drug consumption and is widely used by health professionals. Regarding the training provided in 2021, the need for continuity of postgraduate training of professionals in Higher Education is clear, as shown in figure 2.

When searching for current training in addictions in public universities for nursing, medicine and psychology degrees, we have discarded subjects that are not exclusive to addictions, such as the subject offered at the University of Zaragoza in the medicine degree. of dermatology, immunopathology and toxicology. Therefore, this sample does not mean that topics on addictions are given in a fragmented manner in different Universities, but rather that they are not taught exclusively as a differentiated subject and not as specialized training.

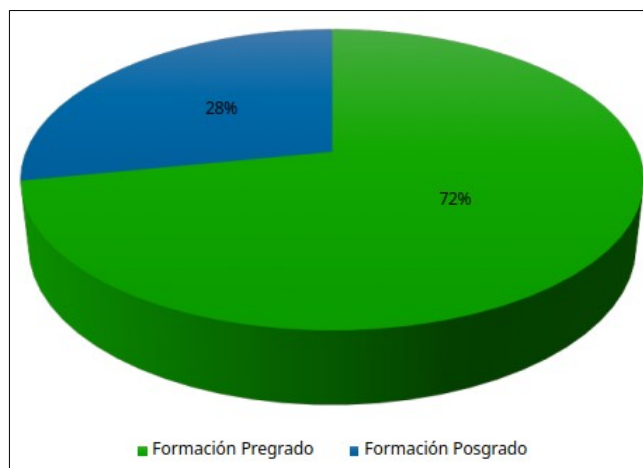


Figure 2. Higher Training in Addictions.

The public universities that provide training in this subject are the following:

- Autonomous University of Madrid: there is a subject taught in the master's degree in neuroscience called neurobiological bases of drug addiction. In general, there are some short-term courses that provide psychological intervention in drug addiction (DD) and prevention. However, there is no data on subjects as such in the degree of medicine, nursing or psychology.
- At the public University of Barcelona there has been an unofficial master's degree in DD since 1986 (82 credits) and they also offer a postgraduate degree in DD (15 credits). in addition to having a continuing training institute where they work with an online postgraduate degree in behavioral addictions (30 credits).
- Autonomous University of Barcelona: there is a specialization course on addictive behaviors (6 credits) focused on the three professions (nursing, medicine and psychology) and it is in online format. In addition, in the medicine degree they have an optional subject on addictions and drug addictions.
- University of Girona: in Psychology there is an optional subject on intervention in addictions (3 credits) and in Medicine there is an optional subject on intervention in addictions (5 credits).
- University of Lleida: in the psychology degree there is a DD elective (6 credits).
- Rovira y Virgili University: they have an elective in DD and other addictions in the nursing degree (3 credits); In the medicine degree there is an optional subject in the third year (3 credits) and in the psychology degree there is another DD subject in the third year (6 credits).
- University of Alcalá de Henares: they have an optional subject on addictions in the psychology degree (6 credits). There is no expert, master or mandatory subjects.
- University of La Rioja: leads a European project to prevent drug consumption and in the medicine degree there will be a DD elective (3 credits).
- University of Zaragoza: in the psychology degree there is a specific mention in addictions.
- University of Castilla la Mancha: in the faculty of medicine there is a subject on addictions.
- University of the Basque Country: in the nursing degree, the subject of DD and nursing care (6 credits) is offered as an elective in the third year. In medicine there is an optional DD subject (6 credits). And in psychology there is an elective on health and dependency disorder (4.5 credits).
- Public University of Navarra: in the psychology degree there is a specific subject on addictive behaviors in the mention of clinical and health psychology.

- University of Salamanca: in the psychology degree there is an elective on the psychobiology of drug addiction (3 credits) and in the medicine degree there is an elective subject called drug addiction, management of drug-addicted patients, family support and advice.
- University of Gran Canaria: in the medicine degree there is an optional subject called drug addiction, management of drug-addicted patients, family support and advice (3 credits).
- University of Miguel Hernández: in the psychology degree there is an elective on prevention and treatment of DD (6 credits). In addition to having its own master's degree in European studies in alcohol and drugs (60 credits).
- University of Valencia: in the psychology and medicine degrees there are electives in addictions (4.5 credits). They have their own master's degree in research in treatment and associated pathologies in DD (120 credits).
- University of Almería: in the psychology degree, within the mention in health psychology, there is the subject psychological intervention in addictions (6 credits).
- University of Córdoba: in the medicine degree there is a DD elective (3 credits).
- University of Jaén: in the nursing degree they have an optional subject in the 4th year on nursing care in DD and other addictions (6 credits).

One fact to highlight is that there is no public university that offers an official master's degree in addictions and the training of both a master's degree and an expert degree has remained a redoubt.

4. Discussion

The documentary analysis highlights the need for teaching in addressing addictions, with a base of rigorous theoretical models to obtain the knowledge and attitudes that allow professionals to have an adequate intervention and have minimum guarantees for their practice. In teaching, comprehensive theoretical and practical training is of vital importance. Making a comparison of the training received in the 1980s with the training that is currently provided is left out since there are many similarities, and because the information we have truly comes from the former. There are different levels of training such as undergraduate studies that have not been given interest since we are talking about training that is done for professionals, but since there is so little postgraduate training currently, it has had to be explained to know what they teach professionals in this matter. of addictions and the few subjects taught in the degree are not multidisciplinary. We should continue working with the Ministry of Universities (11) to provide postgraduate training focused on continuing education and specialized training with experts and implement an official master's degree that makes it possible to pursue a specific doctorate in addictions (12).

On the 30th Anniversary of the Proyecto Hombre Association (13), the importance of teaching for the transferability of knowledge from the University to future professionals and therefore to improve society is evident. Currently, there is a tendency towards speed and shallowness of the subject, therefore, it is necessary to take the witness of professionals who have done previous work in the subject. We must learn from the work and problems that have occurred historically. A few months ago a colleague was arguing saying that we had no information about the new drug (Fentanyl) that was beginning to spread like heroin and that was going to end up being an epidemic. If we took into account the work carried out previously on "urgent education" that had to be planned and delivered in record time to stop what was happening in the 1980s, we would have a precedent with a scientific basis to deal with the problems that arise every day. today.

The future lines of work would be to continue with the indications of the National Strategy on Addictions, since we would have to work with a unified team to respond to the needs, specifically regarding behavioral addictions, little is known and the problem and the affecting people at a dizzying pace. There is no specific postgraduate training publicly available in this regard. There is already demand and training? Another aspect to take into account is how such training could be proposed. Let us remember that what we worked on in the beginning continues to be the work done on addictions in the centers. The research perspective would have to be through expanding knowledge on addictions, starting from a rigorous line of scientific evidence linked to a comprehensive vision by several disciplines added to the experience and background of addictions professionals.

5. Conclusions

- When carrying out the retrospective documentary analysis of the formation of the ICD, it is evident that there are no multiprofessional experiences in addictions described in the literature such as those reflected in this historical evolution of the center.
- Addictions present a challenge for education since much training has stopped being provided. Higher Education should work in a more in-depth way and without leaving aside experts in the field when making decisions with political implications.
- Postgraduate training should continue focused on continuing education and specialized training to implement an official master's degree that makes it possible to take doctoral training and continue researching. This specialized training has to be rooted in multidisciplinary knowledge and be linked to practical training.
- The ICD has been a meeting place between professionals and networks were created that promoted the response to drugs. We should reflect on the current problems in addictions and future lines of work for effective prevention through teaching.
- There are current challenges and realities for professionals who need to have more resources and educational training on addictions. Technology surrounds us, its consumption increases and preventive measures are not being taken into account to avoid problems due to their use.

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