

Valorization of the supervised professional internship: foundation and implementation in Higher Education in Angola

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Abstract

This paper aims of to reflect on the value of the Supervised Professional Internship, its foundations and implementation in Higher Education in Angola. The study focuses on Pedagogical Practice and its supervisory processes, which do not sufficiently train future teachers to exercise the teaching profession. It also emerges from the experience of the authors and their reading of various documents and studies carried out by researchers in different educational contexts in general and in Angola in particular. The study was qualitative in nature and was part of the interpretative paradigm. Its triangulation was based on content analysis and the authors' discourse. The results showed the need to value the Supervised Professional Internship, based on, harmonised and contextualised in the regional socio-educational and training reality, and to improve the conditions and adequacy of the prerequisites set out in the normative documents in order to raise the quality of the training of future primary school professionals.

Keywords: Initial Teacher Training. Supervised Professional Internship. Pedagogical Practice. Quality of Teacher Training.

Valorização do estágio profissional supervisionado: fundamentação e implementação no Ensino Superior em Angola

Resumo

A presente comunicação tem como objetivo refletir sobre a valorização do Estágio Profissional Supervisionado, seus fundamentos e implementação no Ensino Superior em Angola. O estudo reincide sobre a Prática Pedagógica e os seus processos supervisivos que não capacitam suficientemente o futuro professor para o exercício da profissão docente. Igualmente, emerge da vivência dos autores e da leitura feita em vários documentos e estudos realizados por investigadores e investigações em diferentes contextos educativos no geral e de Angola em particular. O estudo foi de

natureza qualitativa, inserido no paradigma interpretativo. A sua triangulação fundamentou-se na análise de conteúdo e o discurso dos autores. Os resultados evidenciaram a necessidade da valorização do Estágio Profissional Supervisionado, fundamentado, harmonizado e contextualizado na realidade socioeducativa e formativa regional, e na melhoria das condições e adequação dos pré-requisitos orientados nos documentos normativos para elevar a qualidade da formação dos futuros profissionais do Ensino Primário.

Palavras-chave: Formação Inicial de Professores. Estágio Profissional Supervisionado. Prática Pedagógica. Qualidade da Formação Docente.

Valorización de la pasantía profesional supervisada: fundamentación e implementación en la Educación Superior en Angola

Resumen

El objetivo de esta comunicación es reflexionar sobre el valor de la Práctica Profesional Supervisada, sus fundamentos e implementación en la Enseñanza Superior en Angola. El estudio se centra en la Práctica Pedagógica y sus procesos de supervisión, que no capacitan suficiente a los futuros profesores para el ejercicio de la profesión docente. Surge también de la experiencia de los autores y de su lectura de diversos documentos y estudios realizado por investigadores en diferentes contextos educativos en general y en Angola en particular. El estudio fue de naturaleza cualitativa y se inscribió en el paradigma interpretativo. Su triangulación se basó en el análisis de contenido y en el discurso de los autores. Los resultados mostraron la necesidad de que las Prácticas Profesionales Supervisadas sean valoradas, fundamentadas, armonizadas y contextualizadas en la realidad socioeducativa y formativa regional, y de que se mejoren las condiciones y se adapten los prerrequisitos establecidos en los documentos normativos para elevar la calidad de la formación de los futuros profesionales de la enseñanza primaria.

Palabras clave: Formación Inicial del Profesorado. Prácticas Profesionales Supervisadas. Práctica Pedagógica. Calidad de la formación del profesorado.

Introduction

The aim of this article is to reflect on how Supervised Professional Internships are valued, their foundations and implementation in Higher Education in Angola. This approach focuses on Initial Teacher Training (ITT) courses for Primary Education. This is because the Supervised Professional Internship (EPS) in Higher Education, Angola in particular, is a factual novelty and a necessity in ITE to improve the quality of future professionals in the education arena.

The internship process and especially the permanence of interns in the schools of application has been taken into account in some medium-sized teacher training institutions in Angola. In higher education, some educational institutions implemented the EPS process a few years ago, such as the Instituto Superior Ciências da Educação do Huambo (ISCED-Huambo), with the name “professional internship” as an example.

It is configured as a legislative guideline with the approval of Decree-Law No. 273.168 of 21 October 2020, which ‘[...] defines the conditions for the creation, organisation, operation and evaluation of ITE courses so that they are recognised as a qualification for the teaching profession in pre-school education, primary education and secondary education’ (p. 5293). From this perspective, the EPS represents a component of the ITE curriculum structure that favours all training by including specific teaching methodologies and pedagogical practice, as it covers,

[...] the integration of knowledge relating to a subject area(s) of the teaching training syllabus that each course qualifies and empowers with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values relating to the specific processes of teaching and learning, as well as the contribution of this area of teaching to transversal curricular areas, namely education for citizenship, as well as experiential knowledge, by carrying out observation and analysis activities, of the school context and the surrounding community where the future teacher carries out their professional performance (art. 4, point x, decree-law no. 273.168, p. 5196).

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This didactic-pedagogical component allows for the application of theoretical and practical knowledge provided by the future teacher's previous professional training (Gonçalves; Silva, 2017). However, it is fundamental for improving the theory-practice relationship and the teaching and learning practices of the teaching activity.

Its foundations need to be thoroughly analysed in terms of their conceptual and practical processes and their suitability for the context studied, and they focus on teaching practice and its supervisory processes, which do not sufficiently train future teachers to exercise the teaching profession.

Its implementation is an important step in changing and achieving new forms of teaching and learning to improve the professional practice of

those involved. For this reason, it is necessary and results from the constant concern of academics, education professionals and society worried about the poor quality of training and its professionals for primary education in Angola.

The ITE is currently of interest to an increasing number of professionals and researchers in the field of education. Being authorised and qualified to teach requires a relatively long period of training (Mesquita; Roldão; Machado, 2019), especially in the training of supervisors of teaching practice, an indispensable factor for the implementation, consolidation and evaluation of the EPS. This is why the EPS appears to be a driving force behind establishing a process of supervising teaching practice as a space for trainee students to live and work in schools.

This process today and in various national training contexts, Angola in particular, has been the subject of discussion by higher education professionals and researchers, involving some teachers (supervisors) from teacher training institutions and colleges, sporadically some teachers from the schools of application and some trainees.

4 These discussions, although from the point of view of the arguments and foundations of the national educational and training policies present in the legislation and normative documents, have some theoretical and conceptual meaning, their application and contextualisation in professional practice are still contradictory, some due to the weaknesses and threats facing the teaching and learning process, as is the case in Angola.

Hence, this approach is guided by the following research question: how can Supervised Professional Internships be valued based on their foundations and implementation in Higher Education in Angola? We consider that our understanding is geared towards one objective: to reflect on the value of the Supervised Professional Internship (SPI), its foundations and implementation in Higher Education in Angola.

Supervised Professional Internship in Initial Teacher Training: a conceptual, practical and contextual review of Higher Education in Angola

The SPI in Higher Education in Angola with the approval of Decree-Law 273. 168, of 21 October 2020, is established at undergraduate level, a difference, for example, with educational policies in Portugal, where, in some higher education institutions in this context, students' undergraduate training culminates with Initiation to Professional Practice (IPP), integrating observation and collaboration in education and teaching situations, and the Supervised Teaching Practice (STP) at master's level, carried out in the classroom, at the school of internship, and these activities should 'provide the student with experiences of planning, teaching and assessment' and in these promote 'a critical and reflective stance in relation to the challenges, processes and performances of everyday professional life' (Decree-Law, no. 43. 38, of 22 July, p. 1).

Thus, according to Corte and Krause-Lemke (2015, p. 31001), EPS is '[...] considered to be the moment when the theories learnt by academics are combined with practice and when the student experiences and acts effectively in their field of training'.

According to article 4 of Decree-Law no. 193. 119, of 10 August 2018, which approves the General Curricular Standards for Undergraduate Courses at Higher Education Institutions in Angola, on the specific principles of curricular organisation, point 5 refers to the Theory-Practice link, considering: (1) the teaching and learning process must link Theory-Practice, the Higher Education Institution to society, training to work and combine methods and forms of organising teaching and learning in theoretical and practical classes, laboratories, scientific events, fieldwork and study visits; (2) the implementation of this principle presupposes the establishment of partnerships between Higher Education Institutions and civil organisation entities.

Initial Teacher Education is considered to be the necessary training to obtain the qualification and licence to exercise the teaching profession, and is usually considered to be the first stage in a continuous process of teacher training (Marcelo, 1999; Mesquita; Roldão, 2017).

In Angola, in particular in the ITE schools, there were oscillating moments in terms of the internship process, as there was a concentration in the

curricula of specific subjects, especially pedagogical practice, where in most institutions this subject was offered mainly in the second half of the end of the course, an aspect that conditioned future teachers in the development of their professional identity (Cardoso; Flores, 2009).

A identidade profissional, se fundamenta, assim na natureza específica da atividade exercida (a ação de ensinar), o saber requerido para exercer, o poder de decisão que permite modifica-lo (Roldão, 2002; Cutatela; Paulo; Tinoca, 2019).

The SPI, which appears as a component of the structure of the curricula and in a complementary way in the FIP, covers activities of observation and experience of teaching practice in the classroom - planning, teaching and assessment of students' learning in the school and in the relationship with the surrounding community carried out by students, at the end of the course, in primary education institutions, under the supervision of the teachers of this and the training institution, aimed at providing them with the adequate mastery of competences inherent to the exercise of future professional activity, in the field of teaching for which the course attended qualifies and qualifies (art. 4, Decree-Law, no. 273.168 of October 2020, point O). No. 4, Decree-Law No. 273.168 of 21 October 2020, point O).

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In this way, the internship has always been an '[...] Achilles heel [...]' in the FIP curriculum, because teaching practice occurred irregularly. Generally, future teachers finish their degree having taught only 4 lessons, which was not enough to train them in the skills needed to practice the profession (Cardoso; Flores, 2009; Cutatela, 2022), an aspect that made it difficult for students to face the role of teacher in the situation of teaching practice in the classroom (Cardoso; Flores, 2009).

That's why it's important for the FIP to have a plan of reliable and contextual actions in place so that the implementation, development and evaluation of the EPS translates into precise, practical, active, constructive and reflective activities inside and outside the classroom that favour meaningful learning for the future professional.

In order to be trained to teach, it is essential to also take into account the beliefs that the prospective teacher carries, their thoughts and attitudes, as well as the interactions they establish in the contexts in which they move and where they learn to be a teacher (Mesquita; Roldão; Machado, 2019),

especially in the formation of the necessary knowledge in the process of supervising teaching practice.

This training should also cover the appropriation and improvement of various disciplinary, curricular, educational, scientific, experiential, cultural, investigative and pedagogical knowledge, according to Perrenoud, (2000); Altet, (2000); Tardif, (2002); Formosinho, (2009); Vasconcelos, (2009); Mesquita, (2015). The latter are considered the most numerous types of knowledge where the theory-practice relationship takes place, with the main relevance to teaching practice.

This knowledge is generically reflected in the curricular structure of the ITE course in primary education in Angola, which is configured in point 1 of art. 15, p. 5199-5200, of Decree-Law no. 273.168, of 21 October 2020, the following components: a) cultural contextualisation; b) language training and the subjects to be taught; c) general educational training; d) teaching methodology and pedagogical practice; e) Supervised Professional Internship.

The valorisation of these components in the EPS process should broadly contemplate the knowledge of each specific field of teaching, and of the culture, training and skills of the language of instruction; the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values relevant to the performance of future teachers in the classroom, at school, in relations with families and the surrounding community, and in the development of the education system integrated with national policy on the structure, organisation and administration of this system, the processes of student development, learning and motivation, the socio-historical context of education, pedagogical management of the curriculum in the classroom and the school, pedagogical differentiation and inclusion, the development of an investigative attitude in professional performance in a specific context and the civic and ethical dimension of the teaching profession.

In this sense, we pay more attention to the specific teaching methodology component and the corresponding pedagogical practice, as it covers, as we have already mentioned, the integration of various fundamental skills for the professional development of future teachers, where they will be able to exercise their professional performance.

Likewise, we look at the EPS component, as it covers training based on professional teaching practice, tutorially supported, in primary education institutions for the development of competences and professional performance

in the classroom, at school and in relations with the community. However, consideration of these components should focus on the learning to be carried out based on reflective and critically analysed scientific research.

In Angola, especially in higher education, it is still incipient to find teachers with specific training in didactics and specific methodologies, and even less so in the areas of pedagogical practice and supervision, according to studies carried out by Vasconcelos (2009); Cardoso and Flores (2009); Formosinho (2009); Cutatela (2022), a reality at ESP-Bié.

The level of training and professional qualifications of some of the teachers at the schools where the internship is to be carried out is also incipient, which is why training in these areas is desirable. Therefore, the Higher Pedagogical Education institutions must guarantee partnerships with the schools of application in their protocols (art. 37.2 of Decree-Law 273.168 of 21 October 2020). Considered,

[...] the collaboration of a sufficient number of classes and the respective suitably qualified teachers so that all admitted students can carry out the tutorially supported professional internship with the workload provided for in the curricular grid or study plan of their training course. (art. 7, 3, Decree-Law, 273.168, of 21 October 2020, p. 5204).

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Point 3 of Article 37 of the previous Diploma also states that teachers who receive trainees in their classes must have professional teaching qualifications and consolidated teaching experience in the same field, so that the course attended by the trainees qualifies and qualifies them for the profession.

Thus, the implementation of the SPI at the Bié Higher Pedagogical School (ESP-Bié) for students in the 4th year of the Primary Education course, by way of example, took place over 6 months (February to July) corresponding to the 2nd semester of the 2022/2023 academic year, insufficient time to implement a more solid supervisory process capable of providing and promoting quality professional training for the student. That's why point 1 of article 37 of Decree-Law 273.168 of 21 October 2020 states that the EPS takes place over the course of a school year in various classes in the same teaching field for which the courses attended by the trainees qualify.

As a first experience in ESP-Bié, EPS was a time of great challenges, but also of countless contradictions due to the scarcity of professionals trained

in some specific areas of this field and the lack of knowledge of its structural processes and curricular functions.

Despite being part of a new training process that is indispensable in the professional training of future teachers, there is currently an urgent need to promote more co-operative and collaborative work between the institutions involved and between their professionals, i.e.,

[...] Higher Pedagogical Education institutions must, in collaboration with the management bodies of the schools of application with which they establish protocols, promote training in the supervision of the teaching practice of the teachers of the classes in which the trainees intern and support the development of the quality of teaching of these schools. (Point 4 of art. 37 of Decree-Law no. 273.168, of 21 October 2020, p. 5204).

In operational terms for the training of future teachers, only students who have passed all the course units or subjects are admitted to the EPS. It is therefore up to

[...] the teachers of the classes receiving the trainees, support them in observing and preparing lessons and other school activities, analyse the teaching materials they prepare, observe and comment on their teaching performance and recommend the necessary improvements as a result (art. 36, Decree-Law no. 273.168 of 21 October 2020, p. 5204).

[...] supervisors at Higher Education pedagogical institutions periodically observe and analyse the lessons of each trainee in the schools where they are training, guiding them to make the necessary improvements, and fortnightly opportunities are organised for the trainees to share and reflect on their teaching practice during their professional internship (art. 38, Decree-Law no. 273.168, of 21 October 2020, p. 5204).

The final assessment of the EPS, based on Article 39 of the previous Diploma, aims to verify whether or not the trainee is fit for the autonomous exercise of the teaching profession in the speciality for which the course qualifies and qualifies.

From the supervision of pedagogical practice to the Supervised Professional Internship, rationale and implementation in Initial Teacher Training in Higher Education in Angola

According to Cohen and Caseiro (2017), supervision of pedagogical practice has for a long time been considered only in the context of ITE, and carried out in professionalising pedagogical practice or EPS environments. It is important because it focuses on initial training, teachers' professional development, its influence on learning through students' professional internships and the development of the school's organisational learning. Therefore,

[...] supervision of teaching practice is not only aimed at initiating teachers into teaching, it is also an important instrument in the process of accompanying and monitoring the organisation of the teaching process, in the design, management and evaluation of the classroom, with repercussions on the development of teaching professionalism, through the dynamics established and the processes of reflexivity achieved (Mesquita; Roldão, 2017, p. 10).

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For Gomes and Medeiros (2005, p. 35), the supervision of teaching practice '[...] is an indispensable process that leads to the integral development of the trainee, with a view to preparing them for their future teacher training'.

In the Angolan reality, the supervision of teaching practice in some ITE institutions has always been taken into account only in the last curricular year of the future teacher's training, as we have already mentioned, particularly in higher education institutions with teacher training courses, whose exit profile points to the completion of studies by the 4th academic year (Decree-Law, No. 193.119, of 10 August 2018).

In this process, the final assessment depended on final-year students teaching 4 practical classes in the schools of application during the 2nd semester of the last academic year, as pointed out in the studies carried out by Cardoso and Flores, 2009; Cutatela, 2022. From these studies, it was possible to conclude that 4 lessons taught during the whole of academic training do not sufficiently train the future teacher for the teaching profession (Cardoso; Flores, 2009; Cutatela, 2022).

Thus, the transition from the process of supervising pedagogical practice to EPS brought moments of (re)adaptation for the teachers and/or supervisors of the training schools and novelty for the future teachers and cooperating teachers of the application schools, although sporadically, they may have already experienced such practice with the trainees of some intermediate teacher training schools.

We understand that the emergence of any trend in an educational and training reality brings new challenges and implications in the way of conceiving and interpreting the processes "[...] organisational and functional of the internships, the roles of the different participants in the training process (institutional supervisor, cooperating supervisor, trainee); the interactions/relationships, reflection; and evaluation" (Gonçalves; Sanches; Figuerreiro; Martins; Mesquita; Mesquita; Rodrigues; Novo, 2019, p. 94).

The implementation of EPS at the higher education level, particularly at ESP-Bié, for example, occurred spontaneously and immediately in its application and materialisation. For this reason, there was poor preparation of its professionals and their processes.

Therefore, from the authors' experience in teaching, their participation at different times as supervisors of some trainee students completing their course, combined with the fact that one of the authors coordinated this curricular unit at ESP-Bié in the 2022/2023 academic year (the year of its implementation), as well as from the literature reviewed, normative and institutional documents, it was possible to identify certain weaknesses to be addressed to improve this discipline in the FIP for primary education, such as:

- (i) Being a new, complex process with a very high level of demand for our reality due to the lack of logistical and material conditions (transport, environment, and the excessive number of students in the application schools' classrooms), training resources, and the shortage of professionals in some areas of knowledge.
- (ii) The lack of knowledge and reproduction of models and techniques by students and the minimal capacity to construct knowledge that leads to more active, meaningful, reflective, and critical learning in teaching.
- (iii) The weak mastery and knowledge of specific teaching methodologies and pedagogical practice, curricular training areas learned by students in previous years of their education.

(iv) The existing fragility in the relationships between training institutions, the provincial education office, and the institutions for internship application, despite the guidelines expressed in Angolan educational policies regarding strengthening relationships between higher education institutions and other educational institutions, particularly primary education institutions (art. 4º, 2, Decree-Law No. 193.119, of 10 August 2018; art. 37º, 2, Decree-Law No. 273.168, of 21 October 2020).

(v) The lack of material and pedagogical resources, and the scarcity of consumable goods and essential services to ensure the regular functioning of EPS (art. 19º, 20º, Decree-Law No. 273.168, of 21 October 2020).

(vi) The lack of training in didactics and specific teaching methodologies, pedagogical practice, and EPS on the part of some supervisors from the training institution, and some teachers selected from the application schools.

(vii) The shortage of teachers in both training schools and application schools in specific teaching areas such as physical education, history, musical education, and manual and plastic education. These subjects are included in the curriculum, programmes, and timetables for primary education. However, when students are selected to teach these subjects, they encounter a lack of teachers and/or supervisors to accompany and supervise these classes in practice.

(viii) The absence in the process of follow-up, monitoring, and continuous evaluation of the internship by some teachers and/or supervisors from the training schools due to the high teaching load they have in other subjects at their respective institutions, and some teachers from the application schools, some feeling inferior due to their academic level (intermediate and basic), and some considering that the presence of the trainee student can fully cover their teaching hours.

(ix) The lack of professional identity (sense of responsibility) of some teachers and/or supervisors from both the training institutions and the application schools in assuming their functions and roles and the lack of transparency in the supervisory processes, making the evaluation process of future teachers complex and limited.

(x) The lethargy in the process of curricular harmonisation at the level of higher education institutions, causing the late materialisation of EPS application in

practice, equally conditioning the regularisation of some institutional norms to improve and standardise this curricular unit in the FIP for primary education.

Valorisation of Supervised Professional Internship in Initial Teacher Education in Angola

The SPI allows future teachers to know, analyse, and reflect on their working environment (Corte, Krause-Lemake, 2015). It constitutes a curricular unit whose process should be guided by supervisors from the training institution and an experienced cooperating mentor who accompanies and helps students acquire the necessary skills for their future profession (Gonçalves; Silva, 2017).

The value of this curricular component in the ITE for early childhood education should not be exhausted in a traditional perspective of the supervisory triangle (Gonçalves; Sanches; Figuerreiro; Martins; Mesquita; Mesquita; Rodrigues; Novo, 2019) with representativity in practice. It should also deliberately involve institutional contexts and the surrounding culture, according to Oliveira-Formosinho (2002); Gonçalves, Sanches; Figuerreiro, Martins, Mesquita, Mesquita, Rodrigues and Novo (2019), valuing the ecological constructivist dimension that implies collegial and dialogic supervision, oriented towards the construction of a democratic society and based on the conception of teaching as a moral and political act (Vieira, 2009; Gonçalves, Sanches; Figuerreiro, Martins, Mesquita, Mesquita, Rodrigues, Novo, 2019).

Thus, the SPI, in the work context, assumes essential importance as training environments in the framework of initial training, since "professional practice is understood as a triple and interactive training situation, which places in reflective dialogue, through collaborative learning, the trainees, the field professionals, and the trainers" (Gonçalves; Sanches; Figuerreiro; Martins; Mesquita; Mesquita; Rodrigues; Novo, 2019, p. 93).

The valuation of the SPI should provide quality ITE. However, it is still noticeable that some of its actors (teachers and/or supervisors, trainees) are absent or resistant, due to lack of knowledge, in practice.

Other actors view the internship as a new process, especially the final year students who consider that the SPI does not give them dignity, prestige, and sufficient competencies for the exercise of the profession and for society when compared with students of the same course, whose culmination

of training in the same curricular domain is the defence of a monograph instead of the internship.

All this is due to the fact that the FIP, for example, at ESP-Bié, the early childhood education course is undergoing a reorganisation process regarding pedagogical practices. For this reason, two plans prevail: A (Primary Education) and B (Early Childhood Education).

Thus, the curricular grid of plan A (the previous one) the pedagogical practice began in the 2nd year and continued until the 4th year of the curriculum plan. However, future teachers apply practical knowledge in the last year, which Canário (2001, p. 12) considers as a final stage of ("application"), which, to some extent, limits their preparation to face situations in the application of these contents.

In the Primary Education course at ESP-Bié, pedagogical practice is taught from the 2nd to the 4th year of the curriculum plan for the training of future teachers, corresponding only to the initial phase (pre-internship, beginning and end of pedagogical practice) (Formosinho, 2009), as all moments are duly followed and it ends with punctual teaching practice in the classes of cooperating teachers (with little influence on evaluation) in the 4th curricular year as observed in the Pedagogical Project and Curricular Plans of ESP-Bié (2016), in the selected schools.

Pedagogical Practice I is taught in the 2nd academic year as a familiarisation discipline, after the future teacher has gained knowledge in general subjects such as general psychology, general pedagogy, general philosophy, etc. It integrates knowledge in areas such as general didactics, scientific research methodology, etc., and has 4 hours per week, totalling 120 teaching hours per year. It can be considered, according to Formosinho (2009), as initial pedagogical practice, or pre-internship (Oliveira-Formosinho; Formosinho, 2018), although all activities programmed in this stage are not materialised in the context under study.

Pedagogical Practice II, with 4 hours per week and a total of 120 teaching hours per year, is taught in the 3rd academic year. It integrates the process of observing classes, simulating classes with their colleagues in the classroom, visiting schools, and integrating knowledge of specific didactics and research methodologies in education, etc. It is an intermediate stage between theoretical and practical knowledge.

Pedagogical Practice III occurs over 6 weekly periods, totalling 180 teaching hours per year. It is developed within and outside the institution, i.e., in schools where, together with the pedagogical practice teacher and the supervisor, they accompany and evaluate future teachers.

Plan B (Early Childhood Education) (the current one) the undergraduate course in primary education was designed based on the guidelines expressed in Decree-Law No. 193/119, of 3 August 2018, Decree-Law No. 273.168, of 21 October 2020, and Decree-Law No. 205.135, of 3 September 2018, which approves the National Programme for Training and Management of Teaching Staff, and other regulatory norms of the Higher Education subsystem.

In EPS, the aim of pedagogical practice is to improve the quality, skills, and performance of teachers and trainers as one of the priorities in the National Training Plan for Staff 2013-2020 (PNFQ) and reaffirmed in Agenda 2030, in its four objectives and the 5 critical dimensions that constitute its core, namely, people, prosperity, planet, partnership, and peace (...), in light of three fundamental elements – social inclusion, economic growth, and environmental protection.

The course lasts for 4 years, corresponding to 8 semesters, with a total workload of 4,800 hours, equivalent to 320 Credit Units. Each semester, the workload totals 600 hours, equivalent to 40 Credit Units. The curriculum plan is structured in semi-annual curricular units, from the first to the fourth year, with an EPS in the last year.

According to no. 1 of art. 16 of Decree-Law no. 273.168, of 21 October 2020, the distribution of hours by course components is as follows, considering that 50% of contact hours are dedicated to components 1 and 2; 30% of these hours are dedicated to components 3 and 4. EPS occupies 1200 hours. For students' autonomous work, 720 hours are reserved.

In the first 4 components, relevant curricular units were integrated to achieve the facets of the teacher profile, ensuring the balance and internal coherence of the curriculum plan.

Valuing the implementation of EPS becomes important in FIP for primary education because it emerges at a time when educational changes and their training policies in Higher Education for future professionals have

increasingly altered the course of the development and teaching-learning process in Angola.

Valuation of EPS improves the process of supervising pedagogical practice, in a more cooperative/collaborative vision among the protagonists of this process through the internship.

It improves the applicability and greater mastery of the educational and training processes of primary education by trainee students.

It facilitates cooperation/collaboration between the teachers of the training institution and the teachers and/or supervisors of the application school, with the trainee students.

Thus, its implementation in its application context should be valued through sessions of critical reflection, according to Gonçalves, Sanches; Figuerreiro, Martins, Mesquita, Mesquita, Rodrigues, and Novo (2019), which include some assumptions such as:

- (i) Inform: knowing how to explain what you know and what you do;
- (ii) Describe: knowing how to explain the meaning of your training by analysing professional practice;
- (iii) Confront: knowing and understanding the social value of the profession and its professional thinking and acting;
- (iv) Reconstruct: knowing how to recognise the need for permanent revision of your professional thinking and acting to promote professional action (Liberali, 2011; Gonçalves, Sanches, Figuerreiro, Martins, Mesquita, Mesquita, Rodrigues, Novo, 2019).

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Conclusion

From the analysis conducted on the value of SPI in the Angolan context, it is possible to conclude that the issue of its foundation and implementation in FIP courses in Higher Education is current, necessary, and timely in various social, cultural, and professional environments.

As the goal of supervising pedagogical practice is "the professional development of the teacher" (Alarcão; Tavares, 2013, p. 16), it is important that the implementation of EPS promotes the participation of teachers and trainers as experienced mentors and supervisors, prioritising sharing and

collaboration, contributing to the improvement and development of knowledge and the capacity of future teachers for the teaching profession (Cutatela, 2022). This shared interaction is the privileged way of co-constructing knowledge and professional training for teachers (Alves, 2013).

The value of supervising pedagogical practice in the Supervised Professional Internship is fundamental for quality teacher training. The comparative analysis between regulations, contributions from different authors mentioned in the study, and the contextual reality recognises the importance of implementing supervision and improving its foundations in the context of EPS. Continuous training of supervisors, the allocation of resources, and institutional recognition are key elements that contribute to the effectiveness of supervision and, consequently, to the initial training of teachers prepared for contemporary educational challenges.

It becomes indispensable to frame and contextualise the foundations and implementation of the internship, critically, reflectively, and carefully observing the purposes outlined in normative documents (legislative, institutional) and their adequacy to the contextual reality of each Higher Education subscription where FIP courses are taught for the professionalisation of future primary school teachers in Angola.

Strengthening collaboration with the teachers and/or supervisors of the training and teaching institution of the future teacher, with permanent support from both administrations, and these with the teachers of the application schools of the trainee's practice institution is imperative. Therefore, Gonçalves, Sanches, Figuerreiro, Martins, Mesquita, Mesquita, Rodrigues and Novo (2019), consider that the supervision of professional internships needs to be rethought as a curricular component, where:

- (i) Respect for the dignity of the other in respecting their functions and roles is duly recognised;
- (ii) Positive consolidation of the work developed by the evaluated requires cooperation and understanding between the parties;
- (iii) The impartiality and professional discretion of the evaluator reveal the capacity and willingness to apply procedural mechanisms leading to a fair evaluation and fair, integrative feedback according to the purposes provided in the regulations;

(iv) Authenticity and integrity, in which all actors participate, must manifest in the capacity and willingness for self-questioning, subjecting their own intentions, convictions, and evidence to a process of critical examination (Batista, 2011; Gonçalves, Sanches, Figuerreiro, Martins, Mesquita, Mesquita, Rodrigues, Novo, 2019), a fundamental process in the timely training and capacity building of their professionals (teachers and/or supervisors from training institutions and application schools) and staff involved in this process generally in the supervision process (Gonçalves, Sanches, Figuerreiro, Martins, Mesquita, Mesquita, Rodrigues, Novo, 2019).

Thus, it would also be important to improve the means and material conditions for the development and strengthening of a better in-person environment in the application schools by their actors, thereby ensuring a quality FIP that is organised, reflective, and critically, collegially, dialogically, and ecologically evaluated, according to Oliveira-Formosinho (2002).

It is also important that Higher Education Institutions, as partners of provincial education offices, find support solutions for the material and physical conditions of primary school structures to improve the accommodation of trainees and enhance the relational environment in the teaching and learning process with students.

Therefore, the articulation and materialisation of the principles set out in normative documents will be necessary when accompanied by the creation of material and logistical conditions and means and that, in this collaborative process, positive feedback is transmitted (Alarcão, 2010) between the parties to elevate the future teacher's modes of action in their professional practice.

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