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A Gap to Overcome Between the Profile of University Graduates and the Demands of the Labor Market

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Abstract

In the global world, employability is a relevant element in economic and social development, but the lack of jobs and their quality remains a crucial challenge in developing countries. Job scarcity particularly affects the large number of university graduates who face the challenge of entering the workforce, becoming an urgent priority, especially for the increasing young population year by year. The objective was to analyze the assessment of the graduate profile vs employability in students of the Faculty of Education. The study adopted a quantitative approach, with a descriptive and cross-sectional design. The sample consisted of 84 students from the Education program with a focus on Electronics and Informatics (30), Telecommunications and Informatics (36), and Metallurgy-Jewelry (18). The university students belong to the ninth and tenth cycles of the faculty of education in the described specialties. Two instruments were applied: the graduate profile, consisting of three dimensions: general, specific, and specialty training, and the variable of labor market demands, consisting of three dimensions: reading comprehension, logical reasoning, and pedagogical knowledge of the specialty. Additionally, they were subjected to expert scrutiny on the subject matter, as well as a pilot test. The results indicate discrepancies between employer expectations, institutional policies, and graduate expectations, highlighting the need for greater alignment to improve employability and job placement. It is concluded that collaboration between the university, the Ministry of Education, and the students is essential to ensure academic training that effectively prepares graduates for success in the labor market.

Keywords: *Graduate profile, employability, university students, and labor market*

1. Introduction

As the labor market evolves and its growing instability persists, higher education has shifted its focus towards enhancing the skills and preparing university students for entrepreneurship. However, the exact definition of employability and its relation to labor market integration are still under debate. This approach aims to improve indicators of labor market integration and professional advancement for graduates of higher education institutions. It is crucial to understand these concepts of employability and graduate profile in the labor market field before embarking on any initiative (Guim Bustos & Marreno Ancizar, 2022; Instituto Peruano de Economía, 2020).

On the other hand, employability also involves developing soft skills such as leadership, teamwork, proactive attitude with empathy, assertiveness, and ethical knowledge, along with initiative and understanding of labor rights (Poquis Velasquez et al., 2020). For university graduates, critical thinking coupled with creativity and innovation is crucial for the development of professional competencies. Therefore, educators should promote continuous improvement in participation in pre-professional practice according to the demands of the labor market (López Rengifo et al., 2021). Student motivation plays a predominant role in labor market integration by putting into practice all the accumulated experience in professional training to take on the challenge of aligning with the mission and vision of the company, thus being competitive according to the required job profile (Poquis Velasquez et al., 2020).

However, in developing countries, there are few job opportunities and low-quality employment. Currently, 70% of jobs in these countries are informal and poorly paid. (Lavado & Campos, 2019).

Only 25% of paid employment is found in low- and middle-income countries. Investment in sectors such as renewable energy can generate higher-quality jobs and contribute to reducing carbon emissions. However, coordinated action is required to address gender gaps in women's labor market participation (Lavado & Campos, 2019).

In the knowledge economy, there is a push to align education with labor demands, especially in secondary and higher education, due to changes and future job positions, particularly in productive and technological aspects. Governments and companies seek profitability in educational investment by forming human capital with skills to tackle global challenges. Competency-based curriculum reforms, driven by the business sector, are being implemented worldwide to adapt to a competitive and digitized economic environment (Lucero Muñoz et al., 2023; N. Rubbi et al., 2020; Silva Montes, 2018).

This is how the education received and employment affect graduates due to the new trends in the labor market that do not match the various demands. In terms of professional competencies, a significant relationship was found between the variables of graduation, academic-curricular training, and soft skills acquired for employability (Rodríguez-Ponce, 2018). It was found that factors such as graduation, professional skills, academic background, and curriculum have a positive effect on labor market integration, with the addition of work experience before completing the professional career (Olán-Sánchez & García-Rodríguez, 2022). However, efforts to improve employment integration indicators for university graduates are still in their early stages because labor market trends demand recruiting future professionals who can adapt to new occupations or various forms of work. Therefore, it is necessary to better understand the impact of these institutions on education and employment (Pérez Cruz & Pinto Pérez, 2020).

The change in university systems under the European Higher Education Area aims to align education with labor needs and technological advancements. However, difficulties in university performance persist, and there is a gap between academic training and labor market demands. Students perceive that their academic training during their university life does not fully align with current labor market demands, so they consider that what they received in their university education is not sufficient to achieve their labor inclusion (Almeida & Luque, 2023; Martínez Clares & González Morga, 2021). Although they report low training adequacy, they demonstrate a high application of the acquired competencies in the workplace. Technical areas and community professions lead in the effective application of training, while students propose improvements in curriculum updates, more active teaching methodologies, and greater career guidance (Martínez Clares & González Morga, 2021).

The active participation of stakeholders, companies, and educational institutions in designing the curriculum is crucial to ensure alignment with the demands of the current labor market (Guzmán Torres et al., 2018).

It is undeniable that highly competent and adaptable human resources are required to meet the needs of the labor market. However, there is little research on this topic. Graduates seek jobs that allow them to grow professionally, be useful, and contribute to others, with continuous learning and a balance between personal and professional life (Chandia Godoy & Neira, 2023). They prefer innovative environments where they can be creative and take on challenges, even if it means less job security. Companies value candidates' potential more than their knowledge, emphasizing skills and professional competencies (Moreno et al., 2021). Similarly, employability is defined as complex, influenced by job search as well as individual characteristics, skills developed to cover the different types of work required for qualified professionals (Jurado Paz, Melo et al., 2020; Paz-Rodríguez et al., 2014).

Likewise, graduates and employers report a high positive perception of skills development, although there are discrepancies in the importance attributed to communication and language proficiency. In general, employers seek profiles with varied skills, while graduates are prepared to meet those demands (López Rengifo et al., 2021).

The university's response appears aligned with the needs of the market, emphasizing the importance of maintaining updated and relevant educational programs. Institutions must be proactive in adapting programs to current labor demands (Casadiego-Duque et al., 2022).

The curriculum design of the programs focuses mainly on labor market integration and accreditation requirements, relegating the consideration of educational theories (Alamo-Larrañaga, 2023; CEPAL, 2018). The influence of the competency-based approach is highlighted, aligned with international trends, but with a positive evaluation in accreditation processes. Attention to employability demands improvement in meeting a graduate profile that responds to the needs of society (Espinoza et al., 2020).

En Peru, most universities assess the graduate profile using various evaluation instruments, as well as the participation of different stakeholders to ensure the development of professional competencies (Hilario-Flores et al., 2022; Huamán Huayta et al., 2020). It is worth noting that, in the face of the need to improve the graduate profile, it is crucial to enhance the alignment of curriculum formation, teaching strategies, and evaluation methods to ensure the development of professional competencies (Huamán Huayta et al., 2020; Ozuna, 2022). It is important to emphasize that continuous evaluation regarding the quality of higher education includes activities such as tracking graduates into the workforce (Castro Pais et al., 2023). The universities need to track their graduates to establish quality indicators, improve their educational programs, and adapt to new forms of work (Pérez Cruz & Pinto Pérez, 2020). Graduate tracking allows for communication establishment, evaluation of curriculum quality, feedback collection on the education received, and design of continuous training programs. It is crucial that graduate tracking is institutionalized and carried out systematically to be effective in the continuous improvement of university education (Gette et al., 2018).

In Table 1, the relationship between the employer, the university, and the graduate's expectations is described, with graduates establishing their own competencies from their perspective (González et al., 2022).

Table 1: Competencies, ideal profile, institutional, and graduate expectations.

Competencies	Ideal employer profile	Institutional profile	Graduate expectations
Expected competencies	Competencies are essential for professional success and include leadership, teamwork, technological communication, assertiveness, proactivity, strategic management, planning, sense of urgency, and proficiency in a second language.	The actions focus on adapting to change and connecting with the environment. They include responding swiftly, implementing flexible policies, updating programs, planning strategies, and collaborating with different sectors.	Graduates expect a good salary and employment related to their studies, as well as opportunities for growth, recognition, and a satisfying career.

Source: (González et al., 2022)

In Table 1, there is evidence of a discrepancy between employers' expectations, institutional policies, and graduate expectations. While employers seek adaptability and connection with sectors, educational institutions prioritize financial aspects and job placement programs. Graduates' expectations, such as competitive salary and career growth, may not fully align with the competencies demanded by the labor market. Therefore, greater alignment is required between the skills and expectations of graduates, labor market demands, and institutional policies to improve employability and job placement. Additionally, understanding the association between labor market variables and public institutions is necessary to go beyond simple job generation, managing knowledge, and developing labor competencies in students (Jaramillo & Campos, 2021).

That's why it's necessary to establish a work plan that benefits all sectors equitably, especially considering social disparities (Díaz Pérez & Villafuerte Álvarez, 2022). It is necessary to rethink the ways of analyzing labor market demand trends in a changing context to guide decision-making in both the labor and educational fields (González et al., 2022).

Similarly, it is necessary to develop additional competencies such as English proficiency in the workplace, which is a challenge for every professional and is utilized in scientific, technological, and literary contexts (Montenegro Ayón et al., 2022)(Ramos-Peña, 2019).

The implementation of activities for evaluating the graduate profile is guided by key principles: gradualness, participation, evidence-based criteria, and usefulness for both the student and the educational system (Hilario-Flores et al., 2022).

A progressive assessment approach is proposed, conducted throughout the training process and culminating in a final evaluation in the last semester. During training, milestones are set to verify competency progress, with regular reports and improvement actions. The final assessment is carried out through a competency matrix and specific criteria, managed by a committee of teachers, with reinforcement actions for students to reach the desired level. Four trends were identified in the assessment of the graduate profile in university programs: assessment at the end of studies, contrasting with external opinions, progressive during training, and a comprehensive system. The assessment model proposes two cohorts in the sixth and eighth semesters, and at the end of the program, with performance benchmarks (Pucuhuaranga et al., 2019).

Furthermore, Alamo-Larrañaga, (2023) established that a stronger professional profile increases job opportunities; therefore, it is necessary to encourage participation in extracurricular activities and establish professional internship programs in collaboration with industries. The globalized labor market presents challenges for young university graduates when seeking their first job, influencing their occupational mobility, which is conditioned by personal factors such as education, age, and gender (Morales & Van Hemelryck, 2021). Similarly, compensation policies are aimed at ensuring equal opportunities in education and reducing inequality gaps in the educational market. Therefore, it is essential for university students to acquire skills to seek and maintain employment, such as communication skills, ability to face interviews, and knowledge to undertake (Zapata Chiroque et al., 2023).

In this context, Hilario-Flores et al., (2022) the graduates and employers reported a high level of achievement in both generic and specific competencies, facilitating employability. Competencies like critical thinking and ethics stood out. Employers recommended incorporating additional skills such as creativity and leadership into future curricula.

Similarly, Damian Simón (2017), mentioned that there are advantages in some hybrid university careers, but instead of facilitating job placement, hybrid graduates compete at a disadvantage to find employment. This is due to two main reasons: the lack of social recognition of the profession with low demand, and the lack of a clear professional identity in the graduates, which makes it difficult for them to justify and defend the relevance of their hybrid education.

University graduates in Spain have advantages in labor market insertion compared to other educational levels, but these advantages disappear when compared to their European counterparts (Pérez & Aldás, 2023). The choice of degree has a significant impact on the likelihood of employment and its quality (Gorjón et al., 2022).

Fields of study such as computer science, engineering, and health show better insertion outcomes, while areas of arts and humanities face challenges (Méndez et al., 2021). Polytechnic universities and private institutions tend to offer better job opportunities (Canal Domínguez & Rodríguez Gutiérrez, 2020). Therefore, it is recommended to improve vocational guidance, promote student mobility, and adapt the university degree offerings to the labor market demands (Pérez Cruz & Pinto Pérez, 2020)

The study focused on graduates highlights the development of competencies for labor market insertion in a competitive context with limited resources. Although proficiency in English is valued, its use is not frequent. The most useful learning units are political science and law, while environment and sustainability are less relevant. Key skills include research and communication. The majority work in the public sector, where knowledge of public administration is in demand, followed by political marketing and public policies. The most relevant competencies include project management, resource application, and policy design. Others such as entrepreneurship and leadership are also important. There is a correlation between acquired competencies and those required at work, although some areas may need more attention to close the gap (Ramos-Peña, 2019)

The analysis of employability and profitability according to the graduates' profile varies depending on the field of study and the acquired competencies. Careers related to agricultural activities have higher employability, while engineering fields focused on physical infrastructure are more profitable (Espinoza Avellaneda et al., 2017). Competencies in both undergraduate and graduate studies increase job opportunities (Umbral, 2022). The difference in employability between public and private universities is minimal, but graduates from public universities have a 10% higher profitability than those from private ones (Espinoza Avellaneda et al., 2017; Nogales et al., 2020).

Furthermore, current job placement, according to university graduates, undergoes significant changes linked to the evaluation of university quality, but these changes are limited and biased (Martín López et al., 2021). Therefore, it is essential to promote research that provides tools to strengthen university policies and address the challenges of job placement (Paz-Maldonado & Silva-Peña, 2020). Universities must reformulate training programs to align them with market demands. More empirical studies are needed to better understand these processes and plan effective curricular interventions (Solé-Moro et al., 2018).

The research is framed under the proposal of Edgar Morin, who argues that education can be relevant when it adapts to diverse and complex environments, but manages to form individuals capable of developing general, specific and specialty competencies. In conclusion, Morin's thinking is inherently integrative in university education (Varona Domínguez, 2020).

Likewise, Tobón's theory sustains that the integration of knowledge, awareness and skills in the formation of the individual allows the development of capacities to face the environment in which they develop (Tobón et al., 2015).

Thus, the student in training must consolidate the graduate profile. The graduation profiles in the educational context usually represent a set of capabilities, skills, knowledge and attitudes that students are expected to acquire and demonstrate at the end of their professional training (Hilario-Flores et al., 2022). These skills and competencies may vary depending on the specific context, but in general, they are designed to prepare students to face the challenges of the world of work and society, as well as to contribute significantly to the society in which they live (Huamán Huayta et al., 2020; López Rengifo et al., 2021).

The graduate profile, at the university level, has different positions. However, three dimensions are maintained (a) general training (b) specific training and (c) specialty training (López Rengifo et al., 2021).

In relation to General Education, it is seen as a resource to remedy deficiencies in knowledge and skills acquired in basic education. In this way, it allows university students to understand different areas of knowledge beyond their main specialization, thus enriching their academic training (Parra Sandoval, 2021).

In relation to the specific training that each university student must develop, theory must be related to practice for an adequate labor insertion that shows the development of competencies and skills to solve situations of the environment. Therefore, the training within the educational system has to include actions that allow the student to go through specific programs that generate individual or collective entrepreneurship (Rico-Gómez & Ponce Gea, 2022).

In relation to the specialty training, the university student must include didactics for the disciplinary understanding of any subject with an integrative and holistic approach that solves the disciplinary contents; such as pedagogical skills in educational practice (Gaete-Moscoso et al., 2020).

In this sense, the university plays a fundamental role in bringing the world of education closer to the world of work by developing employability skills (González-Morales & Santana-Vega, 2020). Finally, it is important to keep in mind that many graduates do not work in their field of study. This situation can lead to a saturation of positions, as there is stronger competition for available jobs, and increase the preference for hiring more qualified people (Sánchez-Olavarría, 2014).

2. Methodology

The research adopted a quantitative, descriptive, cross-sectional and non-experimental design approach, which allowed the analysis of the data without manipulating the variables, and the cross-sectional nature of the study ensured that the results reflected a specific moment in time, offering valuable insights for future research and practical applications (Hernández-Sampieri & Mendoza Torres, 2018).

The sample was made up of 84 students from the Faculty of Education with a major in Electronics and Computer Science (30), Telecommunications and Computer Science (36), and Metallurgy-Jewelry (18). The undergraduate students were in the ninth and tenth cycles of the Faculty of Education in the specialties previously indicated, as part of the final stage of their academic training. The sampling was non-probabilistic, by convenience (Palacios et al., 2018).

A graduation profile questionnaire consisting of 3 dimensions was used: general, specific and specialty training with scores: Regular (59 to 69), Good (70 to 799, Very good (80 to 90) and Excellent (91 to 100). The instrument was developed and designed by the university in accordance with the current syllabus and curriculum.

Likewise, the labor market requirements instrument consists of 3 dimensions (a) reading comprehension, (b) logical reasoning and (c) pedagogical knowledge of the specialty, with the following scores: Apt ≥ 30 points and Inapt < 30 points, according to the scales made by the authors. Content validity was judged by five experts based on the V Aiken concordance coefficient 0.8 and 0.9. The first instrument was subjected to a pilot test, obtaining a Cronbach's alpha 0.8 and the second instrument was statistically subjected to the KR 20 and the result was 0.9. This second instrument has its origin in the single national test applied by the Peruvian Ministry of Education to all teachers who wish to work in public institutions as career teachers. If they manage to pass then they have the possibility of being integrated since there are more tests for their entrance to the public teaching career. Subsequently, during the execution of the study, the respective administrative procedures were carried out and authorization was requested from the authorities for the study permits.

Prior to the application of the instruments, informed consent was requested and it was carried out in person, being feasible to collect the required information. The time for the application of the instrument was approximately 20 minutes for each study subject. Likewise, the data collection period was 30 days. Permits, spaces, and schedules were arranged to facilitate the application of the instrument. The data were then tabulated using the SPSS program, version 26 in Spanish, and the results were presented in graphs and tables. Throughout the research process, the respective ethical considerations were considered. The autonomy of each participant was respected, i.e. they had the possibility to participate or not. Even if, in the process, they did not wish to continue. Likewise, fairness was evidenced by including everyone without exception, respecting the right of choice. At the application stage, participants were informed that the results obtained will only be used for research purposes (Espinoza Freire & Calva Nagua, 2020).

3. Results

In this results section, the data collected from the study are presented and analyzed using tables (Table 2 and Table 3) for a better understanding. These results are fundamental to draw conclusions relevant to the study area.

Table 2: The graduation profile of the Faculty of Education in the specialties of Electronics and Computer Science, Telecommunications and Computer Science, and Metallurgy and Jewelry with its dimensions

specialties	Score	Variable: Profile of graduation from the program of studies		Dimension 1: General training		Dimensión 2: Specific training		Dimensión 3: Specialized training	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Electronics and computing	Fair 59 to 69	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Good 70 to 79	6	20	0	0	0	0	18	60
	Very good 80 to 90	20	67	24	80	24	80	12	40
	Excellent 91 to 100	4	13	6	20	6	20	0	0
	Total	30	100	30	100	30	100	30	100
Telecommunications and information technology	Fair 59 to 69	5	14	0	0	0	0	15	42
	Good 70 to 79	12	33	6	17	21	58	9	25
	Very good 80 to 90	16	44	24	67	12	33	12	33
	Excellent 91 to 100	3	8	6	17	3	8	0	0
	Total	36	100	36	100	36	100	36	100
Metallurgy - Jewelry	Fair 59 to 69	2	11	3	17	3	17	0	0
	Good 70 to 79	9	50	6	33	3	17	18	100
	Very good 80 to 90	5	28	3	17	12	66	0	0
	Excellent 91 to 100	2	11	6	33	0	0	0	0
	Total	18	100	18	100	18	100	18	100

Table 2 shows the results of the three education specialties with the requirements of the labor market in its three dimensions (a) general training, (b) specific training and (c) specialty training.

In relation to the Electronics and Computer Science specialty, 100% of the students reported being qualified between good, very good and excellent. Likewise, each of its dimensions.

About the Telecommunications and Computer Science specialty, 86% report that it is good, very good and excellent. However, when verifying the dimensions on the pedagogical knowledge of the specialty, it is evident that 42% are rated as regular.

Regarding the specialty of Metallurgy and Jewelry, 89% are rated as good, very good and excellent. However, when verifying the dimensions of logical reasoning and reading comprehension, it is evident that 17% present a regular level.

These results require awareness on the part of university authorities, who should include in their curricula content related to reading comprehension and logical reasoning. These skills are fundamental not only for the fulfillment of academic standards, but also for the development of critical thinking and analytical skills in students. In addition, their incorporation would contribute to improve performance in various areas of knowledge, strengthening the comprehensive training of future professionals.

Table 3: Labor market requirements of the Faculty of Education in the specialties of Electronics and Computer Science, Telecommunications and Computer Science, and Metallurgy and Jewelry with their dimensions.

specialties	score	Variable: Labor market requirements		Dimension 1: reading comprehension		Dimension 2: logical reasoning		Dimension 3: Pedagogical knowledge of the specialty	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Electronics and computing	Apt ≥ 30 points	23	76.7	24	80	27	90	18	60
	Unfit < 30 points	7	23.3	6	20	3	10	12	40
	Total	30	100	30	100	30	100	30	100
Telecommunications and information	Apt ≥ 30 points	13	36.1	18	50	18	50	3	8.3
	Unfit < 30 points	23	63.9	18	50	18	50	33	91.7
	Total	36	100	36	100	36	100	36	100
Metallurgy - Jewelry	Apt ≥ 30 points	5	27.8	12	66.7	3	16.5	0	0
	Unfit < 30 points	13	72.2	6	33.3	15	83.3	18	100
	Total	18	100	18	100	18	100	18	100

Table 3. shows the labor market requirements of the Faculty of Education in the specialties of Electronics and Computer Science, Telecommunications and Computer Science and Metallurgy and Jewelry with their dimensions (a) reading comprehension, (b) logical reasoning and (c) pedagogical knowledge of the specialty.

Regarding the Electronics and Computer Science specialty, 76.7% are qualified as apt. However, there is a need to strengthen the dimension on pedagogical knowledge of the specialty (40%), followed by reading comprehension (20%) and finally logical reasoning (10%).

Regarding the Telecommunications and Informatics specialty, 63.9% are qualified as unqualified. And when verifying the dimensions on the pedagogical knowledge of the specialty, it is evident that 91.7% have not achieved the standards established by the Ministry of Education of the country. Likewise, they present difficulties in reading comprehension (50%) and logical reasoning (50%). Therefore, it is urgent to implement reinforcement workshops in these dimensions.

Regarding the specialty of Metallurgy and Jewelry, 72.2% are qualified as unqualified. When verifying the dimensions on the pedagogical knowledge of the specialty, it is evident that 100% have not achieved the standards established by the Ministry of Education of the country. Likewise, they present difficulties in the logical reasoning dimension (83.3%) and reading comprehension (33.3%).

These results require a previous evaluation of the curriculum and study plans to insert the requirements standardized by the Ministry of Education, to strengthen and achieve job opportunities.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This section highlights the importance of aligning the competencies of university graduates with the demands of the labor market. Emphasis is placed on the discrepancy between employers' expectations, institutional policies and graduates' expectations, highlighting the need for greater alignment to improve employability and labor market insertion (González et al., 2022).

In relation to the General Training Dimension, university students show high scores, in discrepancy with the labor market standards that their levels are low or not apt. It is here where the need arises for greater integration of specific job skills in the curriculum, as well as workshops for continuous reinforcement of acquired competencies and to foster in students' habits of continuous training in accordance with national and international standards.

Regarding the Specialty Training Dimension, university students demonstrate competence in their specialized training, but the results of the entrance exam to the public teaching career reveal deficiencies in the practical application of this knowledge. Therefore, it is necessary to review teaching strategies and reinforce the application of knowledge in the work context.

In the Pedagogical Knowledge Dimension of the Specialty, there is a discrepancy between the results obtained in the entrance exam to work as a teacher and the graduate profile. Therefore, the pedagogical components of the curriculum should be reviewed and strengthened to ensure that graduates are prepared for the real demands of the labor field.

Therefore, it is imperative to understand the variables of the labor market and public university institutions to go beyond the simple generation of employment and manage knowledge and the development of labor competencies in students. (Jaramillo & Campos, 2021). To this end, an equitable work plan must be established that takes into account social disparities and guides decision making in both the labor and educational spheres (Díaz Pérez & Villafuerte Álvarez, 2022).

Likewise, implementing an integrated educational proposal requires breaking with routine and adapting to the diverse needs of students. Responding to this diversity is considered an ethical and humane act in education (Lucero Muñoz et al., 2023). Even develop additional skills, such as English proficiency, to adapt to increasingly demanding work environments (Montenegro Ayón et al., 2022).

In this sense, it is emphasized that a stronger professional profile increases job opportunities, which implies encouraging participation in extracurricular activities and establishing pre-professional internship programs in collaboration with companies and industries for job placement (Alamo-Larrañaga, 2023).

The above reflects the complexity and importance of aligning university education with the demands of the market to improve the labor market insertion and employability of graduates. The question arises as to who is responsible for the discrepancy between the performance of graduates in the exit exams and their lack of preparation for the labor market in their specialty. The training process does not only fall on the students, but involves a shared responsibility between the university, the Ministry of Education, and the students themselves. The university, as an educational entity, has the responsibility to design academic programs that prepare students for the demands of the labor market (Jaramillo & Campos, 2021).

On the other hand, the Ministry of Education must provide guidelines and standards to guide the quality of the education provided (Díaz Pérez & Villafuerte Álvarez, 2022). However, it is also essential that students take an active and leading role in their learning process as they develop the skills and competencies necessary to face the challenges of the world of work (Lucero Muñoz et al., 2023).

Despite the encouraging results obtained in the evaluation of the graduates' competencies, it is important to contrast these findings with the results of the Ministry of Education exam, which only highlights knowledge, leaving aside other skills possessed by the student. In this sense, the coherence between the competencies acquired during the academic program and the skills demonstrated in the final evaluation should be evaluated. The discrepancy between these two sets of results provides valuable information about the effectiveness of the curriculum and the areas that require further improvement in preparing students in the education sector for the labor market.

Finally, collaboration between the university, the Ministry of Education and the students is essential to ensure academic training that effectively prepares graduates for success in the labor market.

One limitation encountered is the sample size, which does not allow generalization of the results. Another limitation is the professional career, as it can be extended to other professional careers and a comparative study between different public universities to identify best practices in preparing students for the labor market. Including, curricula, teaching and curricular programs offered by the university institutions.

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