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# **Historical Development of Teacher Education in Chile: Facts, Policies and Issues**

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*We dedicate this book to all teachers in Chile (initial education, preschool, basic and secondary) (Arts & Sciences and technical–vocational), as well as to teacher educators in teacher education departments and faculties of education.*

*We also dedicate the book to student and beginning teachers who will sustain the education system in the years to come.*

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# Foreword

This book describes the origins and development of teacher education in Chile, from the nineteenth century onwards. It is among the few of its kind written in the country, although there are many historical sources that deal with aspects of teacher education. These range from the first history of education written by Amanda Labarca (1939) to a number of books dealing with such history, including the most recent four volume *Historia de la Educación en Chile: 1810–2010*, edited by Sol Serrano, Macarena Ponce de Leon and Francisca Rengifo. The scholarship of all these authors was immensely useful in the construction of this historical account of teacher education in Chile, covering over two centuries.

The content and form of teacher education is similar over many countries not just because of current interchange of experiences and relevant research but also because of contacts between Europe, the United States and the Latin American countries from the nineteenth century onwards. Thus, Chile established its first normal school (also first in Latin America) on the basis of the French experience, and its first secondary preparation programme was marked by German Herbartian pedagogy. In the early twentieth century, John Dewey's educational thought inspired teachers proposing changes in the structure and form of teacher education, which they hoped would take the form of a single institution preparing all teachers (primary and secondary). Their ideal only materialised in the twenty-first century with the Teacher Professional Development Law (2016) that decreed that all forms of teacher education must be provided by accredited universities.

The close link between policy and teacher education provisions is the thread that runs across the book. Without clear policy commitment in the early nineteenth century, the first normal school would not have been established in 1842. Equally, without attention being paid by government to intellectuals' demand in the 1880s for the expansion and quality of secondary education, the Pedagogical Institute preparing secondary teachers would not have been established in 1889. The need to widen education coverage and foster its improvement as voiced by international organisations in the 1960s moved the Chilean government in 1965 to raise normal school teacher preparation to tertiary level. However, market policies impacting on teacher education growth in the first decade of the 2000s seriously undermined its quality. The decision to halt such growth as well as the acknowledgement that all Chileans should be educated in line with twenty-first century capacity requirements provided the ground for legislation that raised teacher education requirements both at individual and institutional level.

We hope this book will allow those who prepare for teaching and their educators to value both the institutional history and comparative studies of teacher education as a source of learning to teach in a global world.

Beatrice Ávalos and Leonora Reyes

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