

Considerations of the University-Enterprise link in the Short Cycle Sustainable Trade Training Program

Consideraciones del vínculo Universidad Empresa en el Programa de Formación de Ciclo Corto Comercio Sostenible

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ABSTRACT

In order to give immediate response to the demand for qualified personnel for production, services and local development in Cuba, and the continuity of higher studies, students at the intermediate level can opt for short cycle programs, in which the training process has an important component in the link with professional practice, therefore, the objective of the work is to expose the authors' criterion of the conception of labor practice in the Higher Level Training Program Short Cycle Sustainable Commerce. Research methods were used to deepen and compile materials that allowed characterizing the importance and necessity of the link between the university and society. Labor practice is an important link in the application of the topics included in the academic component, especially in the short cycle university training, in this case to the commercial activity.

Keywords: labor practice, university-business link

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RESUMEN

Para dar respuesta inmediata a las demandas de personal calificado para la producción los servicios y el desarrollo local en Cuba, y la continuidad de estudios superiores, los estudiantes del nivel medio pueden optar por los programas de ciclo corto, en los cuales el proceso de formación tiene un componente importante en la vinculación con la práctica profesional, por ello, el objetivo del trabajo es exponer a criterio de los autores la concepción de la práctica laboral en el Programa de Formación de Nivel Superior Ciclo Corto Comercio Sostenible. Se utilizaron como métodos de investigación para profundizar y compilar materiales que permitieron caracterizar la importancia y necesidad del vínculo de la universidad con la sociedad. La práctica laboral es un eslabón importante en la aplicación de las temáticas incluidas en el componente académico sobre todo en la formación universitaria de ciclo corto, en este caso a la actividad comercial.

Palabras clave: práctica laboral, vínculo universidad empresa

INTRODUCTION

In 2018, the institutionalization of the Short Cycle Higher Education Level as a subsystem of Higher Education is approved in Cuba and entrusts the Ministry of Higher Education, hereinafter MES, (Resolution 98, 2018); in issuing the complementary rules that respond to the provisions of the legislation (Decree Law 359, 2018) in its second resolution expresses the aspects to be taken into account for the implementation of this level of education, among which are the duration of the curricula, entry requirements, and the fact that the opening of such training programs respond to the needs of bodies and agencies of the Central State Administration, national entities and Provincial Councils, reconciled with the Ministry of Labor and Social Security; it is in the universities where the training process takes place, and where the fact of maintaining the efficient link between the university and employers is expressed in order to achieve greater quality, support and joint work throughout the teaching process.

It is worth noting that the principles governing the short-cycle training program are those of Cuban higher education, among which is the link between study and work, which means that the theory will be based on what they need to apply in practice and then in their workplace.

The problem faced by Cuban universities at present with this type of short-cycle training is manifested in the following question: how to guarantee that in the work practice developed by the students, the missions that allow them to achieve the expected competencies of the graduate of this program are carried out. ?

For this reason, the objective of this work is to expose, according to the authors' criteria, the conception of the labor practice in the Higher Level Training Program Short Cycle Sustainable Commerce. It is worth mentioning that the authors did not have any conflict of interest in the conception and development of the work.

There have been several scenarios in which the relationship between the university and society has been presented and analyzed, and this link must have an integral approach and continuous interaction; several academics have stated that universities have a decisive influence on the economic, social and cultural development of their

environment, based on their substantive processes: education, research and outreach or liaison. (Jimenez, 2016)

In the case of Cuba, higher education has been characterized for being in constant improvement, that is why for several years the strategy has been aimed at interrelating university processes, constituting its main challenge, the fundamental aspect to achieve this interrelation is the fact of strengthening the university-industry link: "The mission triptych of the university: training, research and extension, must satisfy and respond to the needs of society" (Ríos & Busto, 2013). (Ríos & Busto, 2013). According to the authors, university management is facilitated through this link, in terms of educational infrastructure, material resources and scientific research, among others.

Among the principles that govern the training programs in Cuban universities, including those of short cycle, is the Marti's principle of the study-work link, through this action the student makes contact with society, applying the knowledge acquired and materializing what is conceived in the model of the professional, being of great importance the formation of values inside and outside the institution. (Ríos & Busto, 2013)

von Feigenblatt, (1201) The work practice synthesizes the essential objectives of training for being the means to establish the theory-practice relationship, maximum expression of learning and consolidation of knowledge and skills and to develop capacities for creation and decision making according to the characteristics of the problems that arise. (Elena, 2014)

The work practice is the organizational form of teaching work that aims to promote an adequate mastery by students of the modes of action that characterize the professional activity, through their participation in the solution of the most general and frequent problems present in the professional or social scenario in which they are inserted and, at the same time, to promote the development of values that contribute to the formation of an integral professional, suitable for their future performance in society. (Resolution No. 02 /18 of the MES), hence the importance of pre-professional practices in higher education students in any university is unquestionable, since it enhances the interaction of the actors involved in this process of student training.

There have been several experiences of the so-called professionalization system in the educational system, in this sense, educational models called school-work have been developed in some countries, as well as the so-called short careers or higher university technician, very typical of countries that apply in their educational system the practical-theoretical principle, where interaction with the professional world of companies is of utmost importance. (Ramírez, 2017).

For this type of short-cycle training programs, since their duration is from 2 to 3 years, the conception of work activity is of utmost importance, constituting 20% of the hours of the Study Plan, so that the theory-practice link must become a predominant element in the student's training, favorably influencing his future professional life, since this conception starts from the professional problems that are nothing more than situations,

conflicts, inconveniences, etc., inherent to the profession that he must solve in his subsequent performance.

The practical training of a university student, more than a mandatory curricular component, should become an exercise of continuous personal and professional learning, since it constitutes the beginning of their professional life. In this sense, to achieve this insertion in the working life, it is necessary for the university to be closely linked to its environment, having a favorable impact on the economic and social development of its community, its territory and the country, which in turn contributes to the quality development of the university processes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Different methods were used in the research, which are described below:

1. **Historical - Logical:** As a basis for the theoretical foundation for the study, conceptualization and analysis of the research, characterizing its behavior around the research topic. Starting from the necessary link between the university and the company and its close relationship with the substantive university processes, in particular with the extension or linkage and within it the labor practice as an organizational form of the teaching process.
2. **Analysis - Synthesis:** Used throughout the research carried out, specifically to deepen and compile materials that allowed characterizing the importance and necessity of the link between the university and society.
3. **Induction - Deduction:** It was used to determine, from the information gathered, the conclusions that allowed responding to the problematic situation posed in reference to the university-enterprise link in the short cycle training programs, in particular to the development of labor practices as a form of teaching organization.

RESULTS

The development of the internship begins with the search for the host organization and culminates with the evaluation that is carried out within the framework of a process that sets its responsibilities based on the defined objectives, where the results achieved are measured, the integration of the student and of course all this with the follow-up by the tutors.

During the internship, the student is jointly supervised by a teacher tutor and a tutor from the host organization. The evaluation will be based on the work carried out in the company, the written report and the oral presentation before a panel formed by the company/organization and the university, on the basis of criteria that allow the evaluation of the competences expected individually at each stage.

The progress of the practice should respond to the exercise of study culmination, where tutoring from projects reaches a professional dimension to the academic knowledge, which implies promoting the accompaniment by professionals at different stages with the aim of developing the professional skills of the future graduate.

It is considered that there are topics that could be integrated into the work practice, such as: entrepreneurship, standardization, economic intelligence, sustainable development and project management. These aspects will provide students with an entrepreneurial spirit since they will be involved in a methodological process of creation and transfer of a company, and will be permanently related to national and international standards in the different areas of management, as well as to the problems of sustainable development of companies and organizations, and in this way they will participate in strategic decisions and bets.

The Labor Practice in the Short Cycle Training Program Sustainable Commerce.

At the request of the Ministry of Domestic Trade (MINCIN), the Study Plan corresponding to the Short Cycle Training Program Sustainable Trade was conformed, which complies with the requirements established by the Quabana higher education. (Resolution 98 , 2018)

For this purpose, the National Commission of the Career is created, whose governing center is the University of Havana, which chairs it, with the participation of representatives of the Ministry of Domestic Trade (MINCIN) from this moment on, and of the universities whose territories are interested and have the conditions for the development of the program.

As background, the Faculty of Accounting and Finance of the University of Havana, which will implement the program as part of its training process, signed a Collaboration Agreement with the Knowledge Management Center of Domestic Trade, subordinated to MINCIN, whose objective is to establish complementation and cooperation relations for academic, labor and research training activities in different areas of knowledge, including COMMERCE. In its third agreement of the aforementioned agreement, the company commits itself to the placement of undergraduate students for the realization of the labor-research component, for which the tutoring activity of the professionals of the commerce activity becomes essential.

In the professional's model, the following was established as the profession's object of work: the wholesale and retail commercial activity of goods and services, and as fields of action: the commercialization of wholesale and retail goods of gastronomic, lodging, technical and personal services. The general objective is that at the end of the program, students should be able to: efficiently execute internal trade activities in accordance with legal and ethical norms in correspondence with the constant updating of the Cuban Economic Model.

In the conception of the Teaching Process Plan for the Higher University Technician Sustainable Commerce is conceived for 2 years, defining the objectives by years and on this basis the academic and investigative work component that responds to them. (Resolution 98 , 2018).

It is conceived in a scheme of three cycles: General Training, Financial Economic Accounting Training and Specialized Training, organized in such a way as to guarantee their integration. In the authors' opinion, labor practice is the important link in the integration of the subjects included in the academic component, and will be the

materialization of the university-enterprise link, which is why the fields of action and spheres of action express the specific sector to which the program is directed, since commercial activity is developed in various sectors of the economy, although MINCIN is the body that regulates this activity in Cuba.

The work activity of students in the first year is conceived as a systematic practice, in the first semester as a familiarization with the activities of internal trade in MINCIN organizations, and in the second semester begins to link with the research component associated with an activity where the interests of the agency are reconciled taking into account the demands and that of the students; It is at this moment where the practice professionals come into play, those who must be categorized as teachers of higher education by the university level of the program, of course always in coordination with the supervision of the teachers of the corresponding higher education centers.

Already in the second year, this investigative work link should be outlined, aimed at the development of the work of culmination of study, so it should be concentrated, systematically accounting for the progress made to date, in particular, it should be conceived based on the diagnosis of the selected topic in the entity where he/she performs his/her work activity.

In order to achieve the above, the authors specify that the academic component should be focused on the commerce sector, in a conception of education at work and interdisciplinarity, without forgetting both the national and international environment in which the activity is developed. In order to ensure that the work practice in the Short Cycle Sustainable Commerce Training Program is the link between the integration of the topics included in the academic component and the professional activity, the following questions should be answered:

What should be the composition of the faculty that contributes to the fulfillment of the program's objective?

Are the academic activities organized in such a way as to encourage the approach to the practice of the profession, in this case the commercial activity?

Does the way the internship is conceived in this program facilitate the link between university and company?

This type of short cycle training in Cuban higher education is very young, to the fact that university training in commercial sciences has been revitalized, since it was interrupted in the 60's of the last century, that is why in the opinion of the authors there is a strong methodological work to develop that to begin with give answers to the aspects pointed out in the questions to achieve a marked approach to the practice in the profession, in this case the commercial activity.

CONCLUSIONS

As it is stated, labor practice is the organizational form of the teaching work that aims to promote an adequate mastery by the students of the modes of action that characterize the professional activity, particularly in the Short Cycle Training Programs that are distinguished by their theoretical-practical approach, taking into account the

above, which is based on the experience of the authors in the conception and implementation of the Sustainable Commerce Program, the following conclusions are reached:

The Short Cycle Training Programs should be distinguished by their theoretical-practical approach, being the work practice the predominant element in the student's training, which should have a favorable influence on their future professional life, since this conception is based on providing solutions to professional problems in the business environment.

The academic component should be conceived in terms of what students need to apply in their work practice and in their future professional life, all with an entrepreneurial spirit and with participation in decision-making, which should contribute to strategic bets that modify the environment with a criterion of sustainability.

The academic component of the Short Cycle Training Program Sustainable Commerce should be developed in the conception of knowledge and relationship of the national environment, particularly with the activity of domestic trade, all with a criterion of interdisciplinarity based on the values included in the curriculum.

In its methodological conception, the labor practice, being the important link in the materialization of the university-business link in its integration with the topics included in the academic component, should focus on the fields of action and spheres of action expressed in the designed Study Plan; in the specific case of Sustainable Commerce, since the activities are directed towards internal commerce, it is necessary to take into account the conformation of the faculty and the forms of teaching organization that guarantee the success of the training process.

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