Análisis epistemológico del concepto formación laboral
Epistemological analysis of the concept of work training

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Resumen: Este artículo fue el resultado de un proyecto de investigación del Centro de Estudios sobre Formación Laboral, de la Universidad de Holguín, que dedicó su atención a resolver la problemática de la inclusión de la formación laboral en el proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje de la Educación Superior. Tiene como objetivo presentar un análisis epistemológico sobre el desarrollo del concepto formación laboral, para lo cual se utilizaron métodos teóricos y empíricos, análisis y síntesis e histórico lógico. La conformación de un referente teórico es el resultado más significativo de esta obra.

Palabras clave: Formación Laboral; Epistemología; Formación Profesional; Práctica social

Abstract: This article is the result of a research project of the Center for Studies on Labor Education of the University of Holguín, which devoted its attention to solving the problem of the inclusion of labor training in the teaching and learning process of Higher Education. It aims at presenting an epistemological analysis on the development of the concept of job training, using theoretical and empirical methods, analysis and synthesis and logical historical methods. The creation of a theoretical reference is the most significant result of this work.

Keywords: Labor Training; Epistemology; Vocational training; Social practice

Introduction

As a result of a research project of the Center for Studies on Labor Training (CENFOLAB) of the University of Holguín, Cuba, this article is presented. The definitions treated are training, and vocational training. To achieve its purpose, different national and international bibliographic sources are analyzed, opening the way to a better understanding of the research object.

Related theses of Cuban professionals compiled in the last twenty years are studied, as well as materials from the internet, and different books published, where the definitions of labor formation are expressed by different researchers.

The article analyzes similarities, and conceptual and practical differences between labor training and vocational training. The places selected for this brief comparative study are Argentina and
Spain, and sources from the African and Asian continent were consulted, although we acknowledge that the leadership in terms of references is Europe, and a relevant area is the Caribbean and Latin America, and we excluded the United States and Canada.

**Development**

The concept of *job training* is derived from other more general *training* and *work*. Simpler in its definition, *work* is understood as relative to, and is conceptualized as "all those situations or elements linked in one way or another with work" (Ponce, 2015, p.1). In terms of *training* the analysis is more complicated by the diversity of points of appreciation and by the epistemological path that it presents.

The term *formation* is used by pedagogical literature since mid eighteenth century. In modernity it was coined by representatives of the European Enlightenment from new classical and humanist positions, rescuing ideas from the ancient Greek world, and patenting the location of the human being at the center of all activity. On that basis, Higher Education had been reformed in the following centuries.

The study of Quintana (1988) deepened the concept. In its pages it mentions the criterion of the German Schmidt that appeared in a text published in the year 1876 where it is expressed that *formation* "is the configuration of the inner man towards a harmonious vital manifestation in itself ... struggling to separate from her the negative elements; In such activity, through an appropriation, consideration and assimilation of the preceding formative elements" (1876, p.708). This concept has a deep idealistic sense, manifested in an era where it was difficult for science to separate itself from religiosity. Although it determines the activity as a transformer of the personality it does not admit the social relation as a determining element in this evolution.

In the same way, the same criterion is taken by a Catholic theologian and educator of the same nationality, Franz Xaver Eggersdorfer, who argued that *formation* "is the way in which the individual or a community participates in the spiritual content of the universe" (1962), a posthumously published appraisal in which the subjectivity contained in religious beliefs was also present, but where the community position was rightly included.

For his part, the German university professor of the University of Cologne, Hermann Groothof (1967) emphasized that:

Training is characterized as follows. (1) It is necessary to distinguish between authentic training and institutional and organized training, that is to say, school education, which has
only a preparatory nature. 2) The formation is so much of the heart as of the spirit, for which it is not possible to speak of a formation only material or only formal. 3) The propaedeutic formation cannot be subtracted from the dealings with man and things, although properly, it usually appears in literary study. 4) Training has to do with the world; it must open the world to man, but at the same time he must suppress the self-alienation that occurs when man immerses himself in the world. (P.39)

This view is closer to the contemporary appreciation that is used on training in the Cuban school where men must relate to the nature and the society that surrounds them, and in this way be the protagonist of their destiny. However, the formation of a student is a result of the time and place in which the process takes place, as well as its socio-cultural interaction. Therefore, in this sense, the world and man are complements and should not be limited or regulated; there is nothing foreign to the subject or outside it that dominates it.

Finally, it includes the German philosopher and pedagogue Karl Friedrich Wessel who, in an ontogenetic analysis of the concept, explains formation as the "relationship arising from the activity of man with respect to spiritual achievements, the ideal realm of social development and also to the material riches that individuals obtain through training "(1975, p.136). Here we can appreciate ideological coincidences that cannot be ruled out, such as the attitude of man in the duality of his inner and outer world, affiliation to the historical analysis of society, and the role of activity in human development. A multidisciplinary observation is made that integrates man as a bio-psycho-social unit.

The PhD in Pedagogy Aurora García and Enma Medina summarize in their compiling work that:

Training refers to the process that allows to integrate, compose, create, and transform, to acquire new and superior quality. It is also considered that the formation allows the development of all the potentialities of the individual, with his conscious participation; Aims at reinforcing the internal configuration of the person to make it more useful to society, places the person as the central axis of the pedagogical process, so it stimulates self-regulation, autonomy and openness. (2014, p.12)

Chavez, et al. (2005), on the other hand, refer to training as that which "expresses the direction of development, that is to say, where this should be directed ... the level that a subject reaches in terms of the explanation and understanding he has of himself and of the material and social world" (p.10).
With regard to job training, different authors are presented; they approach the concept from different levels of teaching. In Special Education: Ramírez (2008) and Yanet Fernández (2010); In Primary Education: Eduardo Ávila (2003), Margot Cobas and Lilliam Tauler (2007); In Basic Education: Wildo Baró (1997), Antonio Font (2005), Martha Valdés (2005), Elina Padrón (2005), Eduardo Fernández (2006), Katia Fernández (2006), Glenis Fernández (2011) and Gumersindo Batista (2014); In Higher Education: Ada Infante (2011); In Technical and Professional Education: Daniel Thompson (2009).

In higher education, research on the subject is scarce. Of particular care are the members of the Center for Studies on Labor Training: Alexander Salgado (2009) and Yamilka Ochoa, et al (2009), with their continuing work on the theoretical positions of the authors Alberto Leyva and Laura Mendoza (2004).

Other literatures stand out by their treatment to the labor formation from general positions. Testa (2003) addresses the categories of education, technical creativity that occupy this research. Cerezal et al. (2000), contextualizes the issue at the end of the last century, and Baró (2002) proposes a methodological alternative to apply in the Cuban school.

Pablo F. Peñate, an author who deserves academic respect for the solidity of his arguments, defines job training as "a process of transmission and acquisition of the set of knowledge, skills, procedures and strategies they need to analyze, understand and solve problems of social practice "(2002), where he emphasizes the way to transit to achieve this formation from the three knowledge areas: cognitive, application and practical; He attributes an important role to motivation and education in values, without particularly referring to any of them. This work - which opened the way to the encyclopedic reference - only deals with primary and special education, and it does not understand job training as a result, and simplifies it as an educational process fixed exclusively at early ages.

Rodríguez (2015) defines job training as:

A dynamic and systematic process, which action is aimed at discovering and developing in people the skills and capacities that allow them, together with the different forms of education, to prepare for the efficient performance of a professional or work activity that suits their interests and those of the community, promoting the development of a productive and creative culture that recognizes the pedagogical and social sense of work.
Here the author does not declare knowledge as meaningful to prepare an apt and able person at work. Cerezal, et al (2000) says that job training is:

The process of transmission and acquisition by the students of the set of knowledge, skills, procedures and strategies needed to analyze, understand and solve the problems of social practice and which are aimed at enhancing "know-how" and "How to do it", guided by the value system acquired both in classes and in everyday experience. Hence, it is present throughout the educational process, both inside and outside the classroom. (P.13)

In this definition analogies are observed with others already analyzed, especially in the treatment of labor formation exclusively as a process, present only in the educational setting of the students and not in other people of equal or greater age that require a formation of the kind. It coincides with the axiological potentialities and in highlighting the role of practice as a determining factor to strengthen what has been learned.

The processes lead to an outcome, valid for a given time and in established circumstances; but at the same time it will be transformed, so that its development is appreciated as a process of new type that moves to other outcome, superior to the extent that the difficulties previously detected are eradicated and the proposed objectives are achieved. In this context, CENFOLAB is occupied with a definition of job training: "... process and result of the development of the personality qualities that orient the subject to provide a service or obtain a product of utility and social necessity in its transformation throughout life "(Leyva, 2006, p.24).

These achievements of pedagogical nature are not limited to the students because they notice their continuity in the search for better results beyond an ordinary school stage. However, it differs with the extension and applicability of the concept for the stage of life after retirement when a professional break is necessary. Here the noun life must be accompanied by an adjective that establishes a limit not to be confused with the human existence until death, instead, generally extended to a few years after retirement.

In relation to the concept of vocational training, the definitions published by foreign writers, who for the most part use similar definitions, were analyzed. For Casanova (2003)

Vocational training is an activity whose purpose is to discover and develop human skills for an active, productive and fulfilling life. Accordingly, those who participate in vocational
training activities should be able to individually and collectively understand and influence the conditions of work and the social environment. (P.10)

Argentine educators established a Basic Glossary on Vocational Training where the definition is around the "set of training offers that articulate in a coherent and systemic way have as objective the training for work and at work, whatever their level of qualification" (2016, p.2). This policy includes all levels of education with a vision that favors individuals in the areas of insertion, retraining or specialization in the occupational areas. The training is continuous in order, for the subject to face his work with quality.

At present, different countries approach this phenomenon as an alternative of the university education. In Spain it depends on the Autonomous Communities and the route to a specific teaching is divided between two cycles, one of medium degree and another one of higher degree. The latter belongs to tertiary education; therefore, they are institutionalized as higher education (CEDEFOP, 2016).

This system has been strongly criticized by the Catalan specialist Homs (2008) for the ineffectiveness in the management and development of the process to meet the needs of each territory. This theorist explains in his work that the definition of vocational training presents a duality in its conception. One is related to the training system, where each country expresses its autonomy taking care of the social and business reality. The other has to do with the culture of each nation in this sense and equally associated with the professional path of people and the functioning of companies. (P.7)

In general terms, the similarities between the definitions of vocational training, and vocational training itself can be appreciated, which is why they are part of the theoretical framework proposed in this article, coinciding with the continuity of the training process. However, the texts on the second concept are directed essentially to the world of the labor market, where the educational growth of the individual does not matter as much as his conversion in an independent object of the culture of work. The interests of the capitalist market prevail in these analyzes.

**Brief history on the use of the vocational training concept**

The concept of job training started to be used in the 1990s of the last century. Previously, subjects related to this conception were approached from terms such as: education, teaching, arts or manual work (of European origin and introduced in Cuba by influence of American pedagogy), education or technology for work, for life, and others. The most common is labor education.
latter frequently used, from an institutionalized educational point of view, to denominate what is understood as job training. It happens often the error of treating them as synonyms in a broad sense of the word. Also by use, when referring to training, researchers relate it to the categories instruction and development, which shows confusion from an indiscriminate terminological use. Likewise, it is common for vocational training to erroneously summarize the treatment of manual activities within the educational system. In this sense, to make a brief tour of the influence of European thinkers in the introduction or union of work with study we intend to highlight some names. The German theologian M. Luther, who did not conceive a complete formation of man without the inclusion of manual labor to other teachings, thus enhancing human vigor and intelligence; The Czech philosopher J. A. Comenius who, from his advanced didactic, understood the importance of including handcrafts in the school programs. In the seventeenth century the English philosopher J. Locke understood that, from his position as a liberal politician, he needed to learn the trades. The German philanthropist A. G. Franke insisted on improving the quality of education given young people and their training capacity for assuming the challenge of incorporating trades into the educational system of their time. Subsequently, it is worthy to mention the French-Swiss revolutionary J. J. Rousseau who dedicated space to propose carpentry as a vehicle of creation where the imagination was propitiated in natural environments. The Swiss who reformed the pedagogy of his time J. H. Pestalozzi, fostering popular education and the bond of the classroom with the manual skills of his students. And also the French politician L. M. Lepelletier, who draw the institutional organizational line of teaching through the work in workshops. Already in the modern epoch others stand out, like the German pedagogue A. G. F. Froebel who expanded in his country a methodology of manual labor in early ages. The English professor E. Braugham who advocated the incorporation of the masses to the process of liberal, abolitionist and industrial education; the Italian presbyter G. M. Bosco, who created specialized institutions based on the "preventive system" that he promoted in the Italian peninsula and other European and American regions. Also the mathematician and physicist V. Della Vos that in the Russian Imperial Technical School deployed a system of methods for the training of the students in the handling of the necessary tools for their profession. And the creator of Sloyd and founder of the School of Nääs, O.
Solomon, which encouraged the training of teachers from active educational methods to boost the progress of Swedish students in the combination of manual labor and intellectual effort.

In Cuba it is emphasized the role of the professor of the Normal School of Chicago A. Everett Frye who, in his position during the North American intervention as Superintendent of Schools in Cuba, during the first military occupation of his government in the Island, obtained the support of important national professionals like Enrique J. Varona, and introduced major reforms in public schools; and the Swedish professor A. Heindengren who published the Manual of Cuban Sloyd in 1906, the first work on the experience in the methodology of manual teaching in the Antillean country. As early as the beginning of the century, tasks were developed for manual labor in the island's classrooms.

In other latitudes these principles were approached according to their historical and developmental characteristics. In Africa, during the colonial administration, the need was to suppress the traditions of the continent and impose a European model. The educational system applied forcefully by Europe was elitist and served to its political interests. The first duty of the African school was: "to strive to provide a concrete and practical teaching, and carefully preserve in the indigenous child a taste for manual labor and agricultural life ..." (Cortés, 2007, p.266).

Although discriminatory and subject to colonial utility, it can be interpreted as a systematic attempt to apply the study from the village to the field work itself. Other trades were also favored to prepare them as producers.

In Asia, it is necessary to mention the case of three countries that in the 1970s published their experiences through the Asian Center for Innovation in Education for Development. This study was carried out by educators Ruth Hie King Wong of the Singapore Institute of Education; Chitra Naik, Director of State Education in Maharashtra, India; and the Iranian psychologist Iraj Ayman, President of Tehran's National Institute of Psychology. Countries that from a different reality presented the common effort to promote structural changes and educational reforms to achieve training in young people that would allow them to insert themselves into working life, with an emphasis on continuing to "develop vocational and technical training in various manual and applied trades and the service sector "(Wong et al, 1975, p.16). Each of these examples stimulates practical teaching- industrial activity as an important part of the progress of their nations.

In the Latin American and Caribbean region, there are challenges such as inserting vocational training and technical education in lifelong education; achieving an integrality, financing and
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centralization of the process that favors the training of the students; achieving minority inclusion and mainstream access to technologies; optimizing the training of teachers; among others. However, one of the greatest tensions is the lack of synchronization among the efforts of educational systems and the needs of the world of work, since the former has not fully assumed the role it must play as a provider of force of skilled labor required by the productive sector of goods and services. (UNESCO, 2005, p.14)

According to data published in 2013 by the Latin American Development Bank (Llisterri et al., 2014), the inadequately prepared labor force is a limitation for achieving sustainable progress on the continent. The worst located country in this sense is Costa Rica with 48.70%, almost half of its workers do not have the appropriate training to perform their functions. The 35.90% of the Latin American companies identify as a limitation of the first order the improper education of the labor force.

Although educational coverage has improved in the area in the last three decades this is not translated into an improvement in the quality of teaching, and generation of skills and abilities of the workforce as required. There is a divorce between the public bodies that govern education and work in these countries. Integration between education systems and training is necessary, although it is not sufficient to solve the problem of labor training in Latin America.

The main characteristics of vocational training in Latin America and the Caribbean are: 1 / that it has become more important, imposed by the current challenges in the organization and management of production and work; 2 / it has gained in general, is now not just for a particular position, competition, situation or work area; 3 / is not limited to the period before the working age, it is a permanent process - together with other educational forms - that accompanies the human being in its duration; 4 / it is a responsibility of all, mainly the socio-state component; 5 /and it represents a variable content on labor relations. (Casanova, 2003, pp. 13-14)

These five points for the Cuban context show similarities. The same organizational challenges exist from the updating of the Cuban economic and social model; it coincides with the importance of this type of training in these times; it is part of the general culture that continues to be sought and is a commitment to unity among all factors. Adding to it, the identified issues regarding education must be acquired within the family and the school as a life processes, and in it, there is a especial consequence of the technological changes so frequent today.
Finally, it should be added that in the Western Hemisphere education or vocational training are terms used to designate the same. In the same way that the concept of labor training is managed in Cuba, it is agreed in some respects that it is a process organized by national education systems and must last a lifetime. In spite of this, it has limitations in the sense that it is only dedicated to the cognitive (knowledge and skills). It also begins at a stage of human development very close to working age and is occasionally an alternative to higher education. In Cuba, at present, it is a concern of all levels of education.

Conclusions

The epistemological analysis of the vocational training concept made possible a study of the national works dedicated to the subject, meaning the ones of pedagogical interest. The experiences presented by other countries are valid to deepen a comparative study. The historic- and- graphical review of the phenomenon in Europe, and the similarities and / or differences with other terms should be taken into account for future research. In this work the work formation or training is assumed in its duality of functions as process and result, emphasizing its psycho-pedagogical projection, using as motivating activity for the individuality of each subject and its social conscience about the labor qualities.

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