
Conceptualización y perspectivas de la gestión docente en la carrera universitaria

Concepts and perspectives related to educational management in university majors

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Resumen: Se identifican elementos de análisis que justifican la necesidad de integrar los sistemas de control que emanan de los documentos normativos, nacionales y ramales del Ministerio de Educación Superior de Cuba y de la Contraloría General de la República-Ley 60/2011 y, en función de la estrategia y la estructura de la organización, mejorar la gestión docente. Se resalta el rol del eslabón de base en la gestión docente para la formación del profesional y la importancia del uso de instrumentos de control.

Palabras clave: Gestión docente; Calidad; Management control; Control interno

Abstract: This paper identifies analysis elements that justify the necessity to integrate the control systems that derive from the normative, national and regional documents of the Ministry of Higher Education of Cuba and the Comptroller General Office of the Republic- Law 60/2011 and, depending on the strategy and structure of the organization, improve the management of teaching. The role of the basic aspects related to the management of teaching for professional training, and the importance of the use of control instruments are highlighted here.

Keywords: Management of teaching; Quality; Management control; Internal control

Introduction

The implementation of strategic planning is a task of the entire university community and not exclusively of the rector and his closest team of collaborators of the Board of Directors. However, this understanding requires the concatenation of three basic concepts in teacher management: efficiency, effectiveness and efficacy, and to offer tools and attributions to those responsible for executing it.

Many teachers have asked themselves: Is the management or decentralization of majors properly decentralized in the University or academic area? Are there tools available to assume the responsibility and effectiveness of decisions? Is the relevance of the matter understood at the lower levels of the basic management system in the University?

For almost two decades the Direction by Objectives used by the Ministry of Higher Education of Cuba (MES) has been implemented as a valid and effective management system. In the last courses, the planning documents of the MES have been characterized by defining the most important spheres of action by determining the work guidelines and Key Results Areas (ARC), with the corresponding measurement criteria. It is assumed that from the analysis of the ARC the objectives are formulated in a participatory manner, and the management of undergraduate training is carried out. Subsequently, through the control system, compliance with the outlined goals is periodically verified and the necessary corrective measures are taken to ensure that the institutional objectives are achieved.

The idea that derives from the direction of the whole university community, and the verification of insufficiencies in the effective functioning of the major and year senates's work, have indicated the need to identify and implement the use of a managerial tool by the use of methodological work, will facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of the functioning of the management system in professional education at the University. Hence, the teaching management has become the objective of this paper.

A proposal aimed at strengthening the capacities of the basic link in each major and in the different dimensions in the university processes: directive, administrative, and pedagogical, is made in this paper, so that the objectives foreseen by the MES are met in a responsible and consistent way, according to the guidelines of the Communist Party of Cuba and the Cuban State, in a way that the UG can respond to the needs that originate in the educational environment.

Development

The proposal presented arises from the idea that to carry out good teaching management, an effective professional is needed for the decision making related to the methodological work of the major, and to have a global vision of the major as a totalitarian system of professional training in all scenarios, beyond the content of the particular disciplines defined in the study plan.

The coordinators of the major's groups with a broad perception capacity are a necessity; they serve as integrators of all the activities of the curricular project or curriculum, such as

supervision and control of the performance of the groups of the year and of all the personnel involved in the formative processes and their results, in the instrumentation of a balance scorecard, in the improvement of processes, contributing their knowledge and role as common denominator for the effective development of the major.

From the review made to the management instruments for the accreditation in some of the Cuban universities about the control of the measure of efficiency of the performance of the substantive processes, it is perceived that in all cases there is homogeneity in the definition of the strategy and in the design of the objectives and their management models. A fact revealed and justified by the systemic character of the MES.

However, in other contexts, the literature points to a lack of definition of the strategy in the planning of these activities, which is according to different authors, the appropriate instrument that would help achieve this purpose (Ortiz, 2014 and González, 2014). However, there is a lack of homogeneity in the universities in the development of instruments for management control according to the indicators of the accreditation process, since each University has assumed it in a different way.

In this direction, the need to achieve in the MES system a strategic planning that in the conceptualization of its mission and vision implicitly integrates the guidelines and objectives of the Party and the objectives of the MES in correspondence with the ARC, with the variables related to the quality standards that favor the university development, the accreditation of their programs and substantive processes and, consequently, greater contributions to the local development under the fulfillment and application of the precepts and regulations of the Law 60/11 of the General Controllorship of the Republic of Cuba.

The strategic plan of the University is the map that guides the action in the short and medium term of the organization; it is a compass that indicates the path to move from a current situation to a desired one, expressed in the organizational objectives. It is circumscribed to three predominant variables: knowing what you want to achieve (strategic intentionality towards the mission and vision), how to achieve what you want (management capacity to rebuild and build an effective university management system), and with whom to achieve the objectives (strategic governance with leadership and communication). The

harmonious and coherent combination of these factors is what allows the results of organizational performance to be transmitted in quantity, quality and opportunity to society, that is, the training of competent graduates, appropriate technical scientific products, generated or transferred to the organisms of the central administration of the State and society in general.

The main obstacle to achieving this integration of management tools occurs in the transformation, first of all, of human resources, in their ways of thinking and acting, combining the tactical and strategic in the development of an effective management of the institution. This idea is based on the analysis of the results of the 2015-2016 work balance and where, for example, it is stated that the fundamental factors for the non-accreditation of programs of some majors at the University of Guantánamo (UG) are: the non-systematic self-evaluation, the non-compliance of the indicators and the non-monitoring of the improvement plans.

Regarding the research, shortcomings such as low index of first level publications, insufficient impact of the research and its evaluation, and the management of R & D projects are pointed out. Studies of managerial processes such as Gerry and Kevan (1997), Stoner (2009), Koontz (1995) reveal that above any structure there are people and organizational culture, and if they do not get involved in the processes of change they are likely to continue prevailing the old norms, and the traditional way of administering and providing the public services of the University. An aspect that can be seen in some majors when it has been raised to a teacher with the title of doctor the need to assume the responsibility of a methodological group and this has not accepted, is obviated by the person responsible for attributing the task that this title is a requirement for effective performance, which is frequently used to change the teaching category, and essentially accredits it for efficient and effective performance of their teaching functions.

Other evidence that frequently derives is the prevailing disciplinary thinking in the faculty that limits the functioning of the groups that make up the basic link, and that the planning, organization and implementation of the substantive processes of the University in this link are not always effective, nor efficient.

It is interesting to consider the definition of university management given by Ortiz (2014) in his PhD thesis, who states that:

It is a process of planning, organization, implementation, control and improvement of university processes in an integrated manner to increase their quality, in the pursuit of excellence and satisfaction of society's demands (effectiveness), through greater effectiveness in decision-making and rationality in the use of resources (efficiency). Conducting the processes of management and decision-making with methods and practices structured in the University means putting action above reason. The basis of any planning or management system is in knowledge (data-information-knowledge), as there are structured elements to lead the processes of change. In knowledge, the answers to the complex problems that reality imposes are always given and management can be organized to adapt, adapt and develop the organization towards the institutional political project in correspondence with the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba, the guidelines of the congresses of the Communist Party of Cuba and indications of the MES. (p.36)

According to article No. 24 of R.M. 210/07

The methodological work is the work performed by the subjects involved in the educational process, in order to achieve optimal results in this process, prioritizing the educational work from the instruction, to fully meet the objectives formulated in the curricula. (p.5)

In addition, it is indicated in article 32 of the same resolution:

The major group is responsible for carrying out the methodological work at this organizational level. It groups the professors who lead the discipline and year groups that make up the major at the headquarters, the major coordinators of the university centers and the student representation. Its purpose is to achieve compliance with the quality of the professional model, directing the work of the disciplines and the years. (p.6)

The main function of the major group is to give methodological advice to deans of major faculties, or heads of major departments, as the case may be, with the purpose of contributing to the quality of the professional's model, coordinating the methodological work of the disciplines and the years. The pedagogical conduction of this group is in charge of a professor called "major coordinator", who responds for his work before the academic authorities mentioned. This group is made of the professors who lead the disciplinary groups and the years that make up the major in the central headquarters, the major coordinators in the municipal university centers and the student representation.

The proposals and recommendations derived from the methodological work of this group only acquire directive character when they are approved by the corresponding decision level. Something very curious is that the term management in this resolution is used only once when it is established in article 43: "the fundamental forms of methodological work are: teaching-methodological and scientific-methodological. These two forms are closely related to each other and in the management of methodological work they must be integrated as a system in response to the proposed objectives." (Modified Ministerial Resolution 2010/07, p.8). That is, the subordination of methodological work to teaching management is recognized.

The major in the Quality Management System

Taking as premises that the University is an organization that learns and promotes change (Knowledge management for innovation) it is important to promote process-centered management and build on a dialogue between theories and practices; regulations, planning and prescriptive models do not alone ensure effective management and, even less, an improvement in self-learning or in the integral training of students. It is concluded that taking a process-centered approach involves considering the continuous improvement of the training process, not as a set of resources and new regulations, but mainly as a process of innovation and change where different logics are found and even stressed, and whose center is in the methodological / pedagogical collectives and in the daily practices of the academic leadership of the different educational managers. So, the coherence between methodological and administrative is the key to achieving the quality of teaching-methodological work.

If it has not been more effective in all majors it is due to two very simple reasons:

1. Poor interest of the teacher to break with the traditional academic-instructional informative paradigm and become a designer and manager of the contingencies of the training process.

2. The "little time" that really has for the involvement with the work of the collective of year or major. Even more, these groups operate one or two hours a month to coordinate activities, with the remaining 90 hours of work without change in their behavior. Why should a two percent change in the teacher's professional performance have a significant impact? Both aspects lead to two essential elements, on the one hand: the planning of the department of the overcoming to the academic personnel and the insufficiencies in the control mechanism and, on the other, in the poor management of the groups of the basic link for the control and monitoring the performance of each group. Both denote lack of effective coordination of the main educational managers of the training processes. The aforementioned idea can be identified if the R & D and Innovation projects that pay or support the needs of the majors are valued intentionally due to an underdeveloped university techno-structure.

A review of the evidence in the self-assessment process for the accreditation, and of the 2016 internal control in the UG to improve the management in the major indicates that it contributes positively to the effectiveness of the operation, but they tend to show little or no effect on the satisfaction of the teacher, and although many reports on the behavior of the indicators reveal positive results of the methodological collectives on the quality of teaching, these are not guaranteed permanently.

- Carrying the processes of teacher management as one of the elements of university management and decision-making in methodological collectives with structured methods and practices means putting reason above action. The basis of any teacher management system is in knowledge, because it provides the answers to the complex problems that reality imposes and allows organizing the teaching management to adapt, adapt and develop majors towards the achievement of the demands of the curricular project (study plan) and its implementation by the collective of year.

- The other pillar that sustains and enriches organizational learning is leadership. This is linked to the ability to conduct processes that a person or a group of people has over others in order to achieve certain goals of collective interest.

In the organizational chart of the University of Guantánamo, a traditional structure is perceived in the amount of power and authority distributed according to the administrator-subordinate relationship. However, the poor impact that project management has had in some areas shows that it is necessary to visualize another more functional structure that is already latent in planning, but that in the day-to-day life of the university does not show clarity, and it is the matrix approach. In this approach, there are two types of structures simultaneously. The permanent functional departments have authority for the standard activities of their units, but project teams are created, as needed, to implement specific programs, for example, the vice-rectory of professional training has as main work direction the training of the professional, without faculties or subordinate teaching departments to exercise direct authority, which makes coordination and management control more difficult.

In both cases, management by projects is not valued, the head of the major is frequently not given express responsibility for the results of the major, and the regulatory framework is limited to the coordination and advice of the dean or department head but appointed by the dean to assume the responsibility of pedagogically advising the collective of professors of the race; or the university extension office, focused on student welfare and the coordination of cultural activities, is unable to design, implement and evaluate a large extension project that streamlines management, increases efficiency, and increases the impact both to the university community and to the environment from the major.

In general, there are some problems in teaching management in majors expressed in aspects such as: work has been done spontaneously and without using the normative documents in a coherent and systematic way (plan of study and related ministerial resolutions, or related to the management of teaching or the training process); the database that generates the evaluation cuts are not used because they do not have an automated decision-making system or a computer system to support the decision-making process recognized; limitations in the use of SIGENU and the database provided by the UG Training Capacity software;

restrictions on managerial functions or institutional management of the heads of methodological collectives, mainly in those of major and year, and overlap with the administrative activities of the departments; managerial inexperience and in the curricular design that limit the effective introduction of the precepts of the Quality of the SUPRA and the N.C. ISO 9000 in process management.

To contribute to deepening these elements, actions are proposed such as: accelerating the process of awareness and implementation of the teaching management system in the academic areas; design of a monitoring and evaluation matrix for major management and the year group; implement systematic training actions of heads of methodological collectives by academic area, with emphasis on the year and the major, to improve teacher control.

The evaluation, whether for the management control of the implemented system, the accreditation or of internal control, is the last phase of the planning process, which consists in the comparison of the performance results with the proposed objectives and goals. In this sense, the evaluation is a management tool that allows decision making by providing information about the degree of compliance with the objectives of the plan, the deviations in the fulfillment of the objectives and their causes, as well as the main problems and complications in major management that requires attention. That is, to manage you have to control, to control you have to measure and without indicators of the desired state, there is no directionality in the management.

The measurement of results through the indicators allows majors to evaluate the results obtained to detect deviations from what was expected, see the causes, formulate actions to counteract the undesired results and include what is expressed in the improvement plan.

The objectives of a management control system through a matrix monitoring and evaluation are: to know if the goals proposed in the action plans of each group are met in quantity and quality with an opportunity according to the programmed; consolidate a culture of self-evaluation in the different administrative academic units, based on planning; make transparent the results of the management of the different units to the authorities and to the university community; monitor the work of the academic, methodological and

administrative units to determine the approximation and distance of the strategic and operational objectives of the institution; stimulate the feedback process with the information collected; and allow the application of adjustments in the improvement plans.

From the perspective of the control of each organization it is necessary to identify the characteristics of each responsibility center (people, functions, hierarchy, responsibilities, degree of decentralization of decisions, relationship with other units, coordination mechanisms) since this must be carried out in function of their degree of responsibility in the decision variables that affect the result and that are therefore under their influence.

The centers of responsibility from the perspective of control facilitate the communication and negotiation of objectives, clarify the responsibilities of each center in the decision process, stimulate motivation and initiative, the evaluation of the performance of each responsible and the identification of problems.

When the responsibility centers are determined and coordinated, indicators can be established to work on the initial objectives of the different units, measure and evaluate the behavior and degree of compliance with the activities and responsibilities of each center *a posteriori*, design the information system that facilitates decision making and control, facilitate the definition of objectives by concentrating on these indicators, measure the contribution of each center to the result, and evaluate the performance of each responsible.

This is achieved through the identification of the key variables of each area and of the organization as a whole. These ideas are reflected in the Strategic Planning of the University, which is logical because this foundation is very similar in general to the classic concept of control, and in a certain way coincides in certain aspects with the requirements of the control system established by the Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic. Both concepts defend and base the establishment of standards and critical points allows the management to focus directly on indicators that inform it about the situation (*a priori* or *a posteriori*) of the organization. The plans facilitate the comparison with what has been achieved, but sometimes attempt against innovation when they are limited to the control of results, obviating the systemic and dynamic character of university management and the University's own structure.

Conclusions

The understanding and use of the concept of teacher management by the university community is insufficient because all teacher - training activities are focused on teaching, research and extension, obviating institutional management. It is necessary to develop training activities for the university community in two fundamental directions: project management and teacher management control.

In this area of management, the importance of the academic aspect in the determination of the quality of the University is evaluated and recognized through the characteristics of the curriculum, the methodological aspects and the evaluation of learning and, in particular, the dynamics of knowledge that circulates; and it is expressed in each actor, teaching director and student. In order to read and interpret teaching management, it is necessary to relate it to the other areas of university management, since among them there is a mutual interdependence that nourishes, dynamizes and affects them.

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