
Desarrollo histórico de la superación de los profesores de Agropecuaria desde 1959 hasta 2015

Historical development of the capacitating programs of agricultural teachers from 1959 to 2015

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Resumen: En el presente trabajo se hace un análisis histórico del desarrollo de la superación de los profesores de Agropecuaria en la provincia de Guantánamo desde el primero de enero de 1959 hasta el año 2015 teniendo en cuenta los siguientes indicadores: contenido de la superación, formas de superación utilizadas, y condiciones socioeconómicas y productivas en que se desarrolla. Los resultados obtenidos constituyen un material de consulta para los investigadores de esta temática.

Palabras clave: Superación Permanente; Profesor de Agropecuaria; Educación Técnica y Profesional; Tutor de la entidad laboral

Abstract: This paper presents a historical analysis of the development of the capacitating programs of the teachers of agriculture in the province of Guantánamo from the first of January 1959 until the year 2015 taking into account the following indicators: content of the capacitating, forms of capacitating, and socioeconomic and productive conditions in which it develops. The results obtained constitute a reference material for the researchers of this topic.

Keywords: Permanent capacitating; Professor of Agriculture; Technical and vocational education; Tutoring labor practices

Introduction

Technical and Professional Education (TPE) is the subsystem of education which mission is: to scientifically direct the comprehensive training of qualified technicians and skilled workers for work, in correspondence with the economic and social development of the country, through the integration of educational institutions with productive and service entities, committed to the values and principles that characterize our social system (MINED, 2003, p.4).

These words show that the permanent improvement of teachers is an imperative need in the face of the demands of scientific and technical development in today's world. A historical-logical analysis of the capacitation of professors in the agricultural specialty in Guantánamo province since the triumph of the Revolution on January 1, 1959, until 2015, allowed for its periodization.

To carry out this analysis, legal documents (ministerial resolutions, plans and programs of study), periodical publications, and research carried out by Aragón (1974), Patiño (1996), González (1997), Valcárcel (1998), Añorga (2001), Roca (2001), Santisteban (2003), Santos (2005), Aragón (2009), Rodríguez (2012), Collado (2012) were consulted. It was found that it has developed in correspondence with the priorities and demands that each period of the development of the Revolution has demanded in the socioeconomic, cultural and ideological political aspects both from the national and territorial points of view.

The essence of this process does not differ from the development of the capacitation of the teachers of the Technical and Professional Education (TPE) in Cuba. Analyzed from the dialectical relationship of the general and the singular, the specificities of the agricultural specialty were found in each stage of the historical period studied.

The study of any historical process and its periodization is complex, and for its discernment it is necessary to methodologically construct minor subdivisions, that is, periods and stages. In this regard the definitions provided by Sanchez (1998, p.23) are taken into account: "periodization is the essential definition of the main content of the stages of the evolution and development of historical processes, characteristics of the people, country, region or humanity in its set"; also the stated by Plasencia (1994, p.40): "in the [period] several lapses are synthesized in which certain historical problems are solved that have fundamental significance for the realization of the trend of a certain historical epoch", the stage is a "concept" of less temporal breadth within particular historical periods".

Taking into account these concepts, a historical analysis of the development of the professional improvement of agricultural teachers in the province of Guantánamo is made, which allows revealing the main characteristics of this process.

Development

For the study of the process of capacitating the agricultural teachers in the province of Guantánamo from 1959 to 2015 four stages are proposed.

- First stage (1959-1975): capacitating agricultural teachers conditioned by the existing urgency for the development of education after the triumph of the Revolution.
- Second stage (1976-1989): consolidation of the capacitation of agricultural teachers at the national level.
- Third stage (1990-2001): consolidation of the capacitation of agricultural teachers at the provincial level.
- Fourth stage (2002-2015): consolidation of the capacitation of agricultural teachers at the municipal level.

To analyze the evolution of this process, we have the following criteria:

- Content of the improvement
- Forms of improvement used
- Socioeconomic and productive conditions in which it develops

First stage- Capacitation of agricultural teachers conditioned by the existing urgency for the development of education after the triumph of the Revolution (1959-1975).

According to Aragón (2003), this stage was characterized by a quantitative growth that made possible to increase the network of polytechnic centers of the Ministry of Education given the imperative need to train a qualified staff and to raise their preparation in the technical order to work in the production and services sector.

In the first years, there were not enough teachers to take on this task, which is why new university graduates were used, as well as senior students of these majors, graduates and undergraduates of the technological institutes. The professors chosen were the undergraduate high school students and some graduates who were in the Engineering major at the University of Havana who, from the first to the third year, received a preparation in the subjects of their study plan, and a short course in pedagogy and didactic taught mainly by Soviet advisers.

In 1973, the Higher Pedagogical Institute for Technical and Vocational Education in the capital (ISPETP) was created, and made responsible for the training, improvement and pedagogical requalification of TPE teachers.

According to Aragón (1974): "During this stage great importance was attached to the training of new teachers and to capacitating the existing ones, given the situation that most of them did not have a pedagogical training corresponding to this level of education" (p.5).

That is why in 1975 the pedagogical units of the TPE centres are created directly attached to the pedagogical institute in the capital, which are in charge of the training and qualification of the professors who were in exercise, and of the systematic improvement through shorts courses.

In summary, at this stage the main objective was aimed at training new teachers and capacitating the existing ones given the situation. The contents of the improvement were fundamentally related to the pedagogical aspect, since the professors came from engineering majors without preparation to teach.

The forms of capacitation used were courses and seminars organized systematically, confirming the existence of a centralized national improvement model as a necessary, systematic and continuous process. The personological improvement is not present since the priority was to extend the educational services throughout the country.

Second stage- Consolidation of the capacitation of agricultural teachers at national level (1976-1989).

In these years a nationally centralized model is maintained, but a tendency to decentralization of the capacitation is beginning to be seen to respond to the needs of the provinces. The modifications in the model begin to be analyzed as a result of the researchs of the Ministry of Education.

The links between the different organizational levels of the TPE and the ISPTPE were formal, while the graduates in this were incorporated into the subsystem, surpassing themselves through courses that the Pedagogical offered, without having as reference the characteristics and needs of the teachers.

A tendency to decentralization began with respect to the content of the capacitation. With the purpose of directing, planning and controlling the overcoming of the professors of the TPE, agricultural specialty, through postgraduate studies, the faculty of improvement is created in the ISPETP. The courses were carried out in a concentrated way in a full-time semester, which made possible a scientific-technical and scientific-methodological preparation of the professors of both entities, and an important link of approach of the ISPETP with the Agricultural Polytechnic Institutes (API).

Centralized activities continue to be developed at the national level along with others in the provinces. It began to enhance the work of improvement in the teaching departments as a fundamental unit of methodological work in API. Most of the actions were aimed at the pedagogical and didactic improvement of the professors for their better professional performance, relegating to a second plane the improvement in the technical order which was left to the spontaneity of the individuals or the interests of the API.

Therefore, this capacitation was conceived in actions and in a fragmented way. National seminars were held for methodologists, leaders and inspectors, guided and developed by the Ministry of Education. In the agricultural specialty, the fundamental contents were aimed at polytechnic and labor training, methodological work in capacitating the teacher, independent work, the application of the work study principle, and ideological political education.

In the last years of this stage there is an expansion in the profiles of the majors so many contents are incorporated into postgraduate education. (Castro, 2004). This was the starting point to plan, organize and execute the improvement, in which the forms of organization are gradually introduced according to the contents.

In 1976 the postgraduate courses for theoretical contents were introduced, in 1979 the postgraduate courses with a greater integration of theoretical contents, and in 1980 the postgraduate training for contents related to the labor practice. (Castro, 2004)

The referred postgraduate courses were developed in the institutions of the capital of the country with their human and material resources, and the capacitation in the enterprises of the provinces begins.

Summarizing, the fundamental objective of the capacitation in this stage was directed to the pedagogical and didactic preparation, whereas the capacitation in the technical order was not within the priorities.

In recent years, due to the socio-economic and productive conditions, there is an expansion in the profiles of majors so that many contents are incorporated into postgraduate education adopting the forms of courses, and training begins in the enterprises of the provinces.

Third stage- Consolidation of the capacitation of agricultural teachers at provincial level (1990-2001).

The conditions of the country during the special period forced actions to be taken at the national level in all economic, social and educational spheres. There was a need for the teachers of Agropecuary to overcome the real needs. From there, the first positive results were obtained:

- The requirement for teacher evaluation was enhanced, and the characterization of teachers was improved.
- Capacitation was diversified according to needs, which led to new ways of capacitating such as: trainings, full-time requalification (the teacher was released during a course to solve their shortcomings in both the scientific and technical content as pedagogical practice); requalification in the workplace (when conditions did not allow them to be released and replaced during a course).

The latter was the most used because it was common for the teacher to teach several subjects and in many cases that he was the only one in that field. Now, it was not based on an offer from the Higher Pedagogical Institute (ISP in Spanish) but on the real needs of the teacher. The HPI attends requests and diagnosed requirements.

- The sabbatical year was implemented, consisting in the liberation during a course of those that are worthy of stimulation so that they could increase their scientific, technical and pedagogical preparation, training in research, scientific direction, and political, methodological and specialty topics.

- Branch commissions were created that grouped representatives of the different technical specialties of each branch, and subject commissions. In them, methodological and strategy aspects of each branch were decided, taking into account the prioritized problems.
- Graduate studies begun that granted enrollments to ISPETP and HPI professionals, to methodologists, and to a lesser extent to the professors of the polytechnic institutes.
- Collaborative methodological training is established at all educational levels as a fundamental way for methodological activity.
- The ISPETP, which up to that point was in charge of the training and capacitation of the professors, reduced the enrollment and reoriented the HPI of the other provinces of the country to study the specialty, which began to work in these centers. Therefore, in spite of continuing being the guiding center for the TPE, the direction of the improvement began to be the responsibility of the province. So a decentralization began to be appreciated of the capacitation of teachers.
- On the other hand, the capacitation system was established based on the study plan design model, which took into account the subjects common to all branches or majors. This system of capacitation was closely articulated, being the ISPETP Héctor Alfredo Pineda Zaldívar, the guiding center, which assumed and contributed the general designs of the courses, the general guide for the diagnosis, the guidelines for the evaluation and the methodological advice for developing capacitation, and participate directly in the control together with the Ministry of Education and the provincial directorates of education.

The capacitation of the agricultural teachers of the Guantánamo province was attended directly by the specialists of the Department of Agronomy of the HPI Raúl Gómez García, who at the beginning of each school year projected the strategy to follow. These activities had a monthly frequency and were carried out in a general way in the same institute, prioritizing the capacitation in the pedagogical order.

In this stage the fundamental objective of the capacitation was to solve the individual and collective needs of the teachers, so the variety and multiplicity of the contents and forms of the improvement began to respond to the objective and concrete conditions of the context of the professional.

Some of the ways of capacitation posed in the Cuban Polytechnic School Model are taken into account, although not all the potentialities offered by them were exploited.

In addition, they were not articulated with other forms of capacitation in order to develop a strategy with a systemic approach that would allow integrating the educational problems of teachers, both casuistically and collectively, as well as the problems and particularities of the polytechnic institutes and the needs for capacitation of the teachers.

Fourth stage- Consolidation of the capacitation of agricultural teachers at the municipal level (2000-2015).

During the school year 1999-2000, the Ministerial Resolution 85/99 of the Ministry of Education was put into effect, which provided the details for the development of methodological work in combination with the different forms of professional and postgraduate capacitation that allowed to reach the suitability of the directors and teachers.

This resolution proposed that the methodological work activities to be developed were part of the methodological reunion about training: methodological meetings, methodological and demonstrative classes, open classes, subject preparation, and control of teaching activities, being the first three the most used for the methodological treatment of the subjects in the different group commissions led by the Department of Agronomy of the ISPETP as the guiding center and organizer of this activity in the TPE.

It is also the responsibility of the HPI during this stage to participate in the training of educational structures, especially in the preparation of the municipal directorates of education and of each methodologist so that the capacitation is accomplished. "It corresponds to HPI to have greater responsibility in the design of the capacitation of the professors and to it corresponds the training of the tutors and teachers in everything related to capacitation actions with the students of the HPI during this stage and under the new conditions" (Gómez, 2001, p.8).

In this stage the National Seminars begin to be developed and broadcasted by television for educators who pursued as a basic objective to contribute to elevate the political, methodological and scientific preparation of the directors and the professors. Since the

2004-2005 school year, a set of transformations was introduced in the TPE as part of the great educational battle taking place in the country.

The theoretical model for the integration of the polytechnic school-world-work is implemented based on the recognition of the educational function exercised by labor organizations, and the emergence of a new figure responsible for the professional training of the future worker: the tutor of the labor entity who, together with the professor of the Polytechnic Institute, was responsible for the professional technical development of the student. Therefore, it was necessary to design capacitation methodologies that allowed the development of quality pedagogical work.

A system of capacitation actions was designed as a transit model in all the collaborative commissions of subjects where the capacitation of the teachers was integrated from three fundamental areas: the technical, the pedagogical and the research work, which took place in the ISPETP.

In the context of the agricultural specialty, when API are constituted in microuniversities, the professional development of teachers acquires new dimensions. If, before implementing this process, the improvement was essentially framed through training, courses, diplomas, and other organizational forms implemented centrally from higher education centers and agricultural training schools, now, as the walls of the University extend to the polytechnic institutes, the professional improvement process extended its conception, since the training of the average technician and the qualified worker, the initial education of the professional of the higher education, and the permanent capacitation of the professors in practice were developed in unison.

Despite these improvements, the ways of capacitation changed very little, and they are essentially the same since 1996: the course, training and diploma as the main ones, and others such as self-improvement, the specialized conference, the seminar, the workshop, and the scientific debate, the first two in force since earlier dates.

Among the forms of capacitation, the methodological seminars of the MINED, the collaborative methodological training, distance learning courses, tele-distance education, emerging courses, habilitation courses, and diploma courses stand out.

There are achievements in this stage: the projection of the objectives and contents of the capacitation from the educational reality and the personological diagnosis, capacitation of the agricultural majors' teachers based in the education of the microuniversities in the polytechnic institutes, the integration of the polytechnic school - labor world, the creation of the master courses in Educational Sciences, in TPE, and the graduation of Ph.D. in this branch.

In general, there is a progressive rise and diversity in the ways of capacitating, however, their impact on pedagogical practice does not yet meet the needs of teachers.

Conclusions

The logical historical study carried out on the process of professional capacitation of agricultural teachers at the Guantánamo province from 1959 to 2015 made possible to recognize that this issue has not been addressed in a systematic way, and that the works in existence have a descriptive nature. They reveal as essential characteristics: the transition from professional development from a national to a municipal context based on the contents, forms, and socioeconomic and productive conditions in which it develops, and upward transformations.

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