

CHALLENGES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF GRADUATE EDUCATION IN THE KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

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Abstract

This research aimed to analyze the challenges faced by graduate education management in the knowledge society about curriculum management, research processes and training itself; for this purpose, a qualitative approach was adopted from the hermeneutic paradigm, and the case study was defined as the methodological input. Open-ended questionnaires were applied to 10 teachers and 10 graduate students from private universities in Bogota. Among the conclusions, it is highlighted that universities are called to empower endogenous curricular models that should emerge from the particular needs of Latin American regions and nations, without resorting to replicating imported models. Furthermore, concerning quality research, it was found that it should be measured not only by publication rankings and citation metrics but also by the impact and incidence in the transformative processes of education and finally, to favor student retention, it is necessary to review state and institutional policies of economic support, given that it continues to be a determining factor in desertion.

Keywords: Curriculum management, Knowledge society, Education, Postgraduate education.

Resumen

Esta investigación se dirigió a analizar los desafíos a los que se enfrenta la gestión de posgrados en educación en la sociedad del conocimiento con relación a la gestión curricular, los procesos investigativos y la formación propiamente dicha; para ello se adoptó un enfoque cualitativo, desde el paradigma hermenéutico y se definió el estudio de caso como entrada metodológica. Se aplicaron cuestionarios de pregunta abierta a 10 docentes y 10 estudiantes de posgrado de universidades privadas de Bogotá. Dentro de las conclusiones se destaca que las universidades

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están llamadas a empoderar modelos curriculares endógenos los cuales deben emerger de las necesidades particulares de las regiones y naciones latinoamericanas, sin recurrir a la réplica de modelos importados. Con respecto a la investigación de calidad, se encontró que ésta debe medirse más que por rankings de publicación y métricas de citación, por el impacto e incidencia en los procesos transformativos de la educación y finalmente para favorecer la permanencia estudiantil, es necesario revisar políticas estatales e institucionales de apoyos económicos, dado que sigue siendo un factor determinante en la deserción.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Gestión curricular, Sociedad del conocimiento, Educación, Formación posgradual

1. INTRODUCTION

In addressing the issue of postgraduate management, several challenges are identified today as a result of the tensions that arise, on the one hand, between quality and coverage; and on the other hand, given the demands of national and international certifications that give status to postgraduate programs, which in some way, keep them current and competitive in the face of markets full of postgraduate training offers, given the importance of the qualification of academic and research processes.

This implies asking about issues such as the hiring of teachers with suitable profiles, internationalization processes, teleworking, flexibility and inclusion within the curriculum, among other aspects that are considered the axes of management, which may be affected by the management of budgets and the allocation of resources, affected by the income from enrollment in higher education institutions.

In a complementary manner, as pointed out by Roger et al. (2021), in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, universities were grouped into three groups according to the preparation of teachers in the use of technologies for teaching and learning, infrastructure and program management; among them are the vanguard institutions, defined as those that positioned themselves by their expertise in virtual education; the emerging ones, which adapted their pedagogical processes according to the circumstances and requirements; for example, they used the face-to-face modality mediated by some technology platforms; and finally, the so-called “developing” ones, which, due to their face-to-face modality, had to suspend classes until they gradually incorporated the use of some technological mediations.

On the other hand, it is also necessary to virtualize the student service processes, especially those related to admission procedures, selection interviews, enrollment, and certifications, as well as those related to permanence and graduation. In other words, postgraduate management needs to continue to be made more flexible and renewed to adapt to the challenges of the current context, such as teleworking and training for the reduction of the digital divide.

For example, the virtualization of classes has significantly facilitated the permanence and accessibility of courses, given that in countries such as Colombia, starting a graduate program also implies continuing to work to cover maintenance and tuition fees. On the other hand, when these expenses are not covered, the student additionally needs to obtain loans or scholarships to cover the costs.

In correspondence with the above, to address the research problem, the general objective was to analyze the challenges faced by the management of graduate education in the knowledge society, and the specific objectives were: first, to recognize the difficulties encountered in curriculum management; second, to describe the tensions that arise in implementing quality research processes; and third, to identify the challenges in the training and retention of graduate students.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Through the systematization of several researches related to the topic of postgraduate management in Latin America, especially those concerning quality management in postgraduate programs in Education, it can be evidenced that the background, as well as the foundations of the same management that have been advanced in Higher Education Institutions, speak about the importance of impact assessment and monitoring of processes related to the same postgraduate programs; as Bernaza states: “The postgraduate constitutes a way for the continuous development of professionals and to achieve a general and comprehensive culture, so necessarily the postgraduate pedagogical process has to be developmental” (2015: 37).

According to Guevara et al. (2021), particularly with the arrival of the pandemic, the issue of management in the field of education is a topic of capital interest and importance since it should be considered that “educational organizations are among the most important factors of economic and social development of nations (p. 181); thus, it is recognized that management for the advancement of the processes inherent to education, requires tact, commitment and continuous updating by managers, educational administrators as well as teachers and students.

Campaña-Lara et al. (2020), for their part, mention how higher education in Latin America integrated process management models into their educational systems as a part or main component of the measures established at the state level for their supervision, regularization and categorization. These authors established a comparative study presenting the advantages and disadvantages that can be generated in the management processes incorporated into higher education, both in Europe and Latin America, from an inductive-deductive analysis, even establishing some recommendations for HEIs in Latin America.

In addition, Piñero et al. (2021) have presented several models for the management of graduate programs, most of which tend to promote the permanent improvement of their quality; however, according to these authors, care must be taken to avoid the overcrowding of students to the detriment of the quality of academic processes. This implies increasing the number of teachers with master’s degrees and doctorates dedicated to high-impact research with permanent contracts so that, in the HEIs themselves, this research transforms curricular and teaching practices, as well as the way of conceiving pedagogical and didactic processes.

For Hernández and Cerinza (2018), there is a no less important challenge and that is to develop high-quality research using interdisciplinary work strategies, as well as internationalization of the same postgraduate programs to invigorate the training and research processes, forming networks and collaborative teams with various related institutions, as well as

with public and private organizations. Collaborative work and research suitability are key factors “to properly face the three challenges that Morin confers to knowledge to overcome its fragmentation: a) a greater understanding of the global; b) of the complex and its relationships; c) of the uncontrolled and rapid expansion of knowledge” (p. 103). Thus, according to the authors mentioned, it is necessary, even at the level of HEIs in our continent, to review the management models and how they face the challenges to avoid perpetuating ineffective practices at the administrative level and for the evolution of postgraduate education.

On the other hand, the analysis made by Castro et al. (2008) on the subject of knowledge management shows: “a process of continuous transformation of data into information, information into knowledge and knowledge into knowledge to conduct a process of searching for a solution” (p.174), which gradually reconfigures the exercise of management in the same graduate programs, which are forced to “reinvent themselves” in terms of curriculum, research, teaching and extension. Therefore, according to them, it is key to adequately manage the production of relevant knowledge to achieve the objectives proposed at the level of postgraduate education in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Likewise, Vásquez (2020) warns about a marked tendency to increase the mobility of both teachers and students, promoted by inter- and transnational education styles, which encourage academic exchange. He also states that, after the pandemic, online programs and virtual postgraduate education are gaining strength; consequently, many HEIs have been forced to move their borders by offering new postgraduate programs, even with different tactics such as the so-called “virtualized mobility” of teachers and students.

Regarding these new phenomena associated with the way postgraduate programs are managed in Latin America, Sime and Diaz (2019) mention the importance of postdoctoral programs being managed from a high awareness of their importance in the transformation of academic processes, as well as the correct use of ICT's, curricular flexibility, the commitment to diversity, inclusion and the growing search for new ways of making pedagogical presence from dialogue, adaptation to new challenges and challenges as well as the commitment to new forms of knowledge management in inter and transdisciplinary contexts; especially, from the epistemological formation of teachers and thesis tutors.

Likewise, Ramírez et al. (2016), regarding the elaboration of theses and papers at the level of several graduate programs in Latin America, note the following: “it is a dynamic process not free of ups and downs that intertwines students' abilities to meet changing demands, of increasing complexity, with learning produced in the interactions with peer groups, professors and thesis director” (p.71); this also indicates that another challenge for management in the postgraduate field refers to the optimal training of teachers as thesis advisors and tutors, as well as of students in their research skills; also the attention that should be placed on the management of the improvement of the communication climate between teachers and graduate students.

Likewise, Quiñones et al. (2019) emphasize that improving academic programs is necessary for permanent training professionals in Latin American HEIs. The authors state that the sustainability of graduate academic programs under the current conditions of their development is

restricted by the execution of academic and management exercises aimed at continuous quality improvement in all processes inherent to this level of training.

In the same way, it means that in the long run, management in the postgraduate field helps the certification and accreditation of high-quality HEIs in Latin America, thanks to the optimization of the processes of self- and co-evaluation, as well as the good use of external evaluation by peers. All this favors and endorses the positive evolution of the HEIs themselves, especially those whose educational projects and development plans are aimed at more dynamic and proactive management, generating a greater degree of cohesion and participation of all the agents and actors in the postgraduate training process.

In this regard, the reflection revolves around how pedagogical processes related to the development of thinking skills could be optimized, as well as key issues at the postgraduate level, both in education and socio-humanistic sciences, as well as in other critical-social or empirical-analytical sciences.

On the other hand, Abreu and de la Cruz (2015) highlight how management in the postgraduate field in the contexts of Latin American countries should be aimed at encouraging spaces for the creation, analysis and reflection on new forms of social relationships and empowerment of thinking skills; only in this way, a new vision of leadership around the world of postgraduate knowledge expressed in different ways of doing science, as well as the construction of knowledge and transforming socio-cultural practices could be empowered.

In this regard, Abreu and de la Cruz mention: “The most relevant problems for today’s society require the intensive use of knowledge, teamwork, a high theoretical and conceptual capacity, and a great capacity for articulation with the context of practice” (2015: 166).

According to Valle Villamarín (2022), when talking about management in the educational field, traditional topics such as the teaching-learning processes, the teacher-student relationship, as well as new strategies to improve the creativity of both teachers and students, and of course, the proper use of information and communication technologies in an era where it has been shown that education towards the present and the future requires technological inputs such as digital platforms, to achieve the ideal of quality coverage, must be taken up again.

Finally, Cuevas (2016) had already been warning that a change in the postgraduate management model in Latin America implies: “the permanent improvement of the teaching staff, the continuous updating and evaluation of professional training programs so that they are relevant to the social needs of production and sustainable development” (107-108). This could be achieved gradually if there is a political and academic will on the part of managers and administrators in the field of higher education in the continent, as well as teachers who should be increasingly concerned about optimizing their professional qualifications and, of course, from the awareness of the students themselves of their leading role of the first order in the academic processes as active subjects of their human, scientific and professional training.

3. METHODOLOGY

The qualitative approach chosen in the development of this research work allows to inquire about a phenomenon within its context, to identify meanings, epistemes, beliefs, traditions, values and ideologies, among others, in order to access the practices that shape the reality of its members; Here then, the researcher plays a major role, becoming a node that connects the researched and the community that is accessed for it; while his approach to the culture and world of the population, will allow deciphering those aspects that account for their interests, respecting their perspectives and points of view, in the light of the confrontation with their theoretical and paradigmatic references.

As pointed out by Delgado et al. (2011), the researcher is the place where information becomes meaning, given that the unity of the research process, ultimately, “is neither in theory nor in the technique, nor the articulation of both, but the researcher himself” (p.77).

This allows to ask ourselves about the understandings and interpretations that account for the meanings constructed by the participants, which emerge in language as a mediating process and generator of meanings of life; thus adopting a hermeneutic paradigm, which in the words of Ríos et al., thus constitutes the possibility of mediating the understanding of man, understanding that as a speaker, he carries in himself his understanding (2005:56).

Therefore, it is necessary to use techniques in which the word becomes a bridge between what the researcher and the community perceive and feel to reveal situations related to the object of study.

In this regard, the method adopted was the multiple case study, which aims to focus on a group of people, in this case, 10 teachers and 10 graduate students from private universities in Bogota, and the ways of experiencing some aspects of their reality that, thanks to an in-depth look at the phenomenon in its context, favors, on the one hand, the quality of the information obtained; and on the other hand, the conclusions, through the analysis of the findings.

Stake (2008) states, “The good case study is patient, reflective, and willing to consider other versions of the world, and its uniqueness and complexity of the phenomenon, its embeddedness in its contexts, its interrelationship is observed” (p.27).

Finally, an open-ended questionnaire was used to access the information, validated by expert peers and allowed the participants’ voices to be explored from the initial categories.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The following are the trends found in the hermeneutic exercise of the information obtained, which show the challenges faced by the management of postgraduate education in the knowledge society from the protagonists’ perspective.

The findings are categorized into three sections; the first presents the difficulties in curriculum management, followed by the tensions to implement quality research processes and the challenges and strategies for forming and permanent students in graduate programs.

References support each section and textual quotations from the students and teachers interviewed, coded with the letters E and D and numbers from 1 to 10, respectively.

Difficulties encountered in curriculum management.

Two decades into the 21st century, concepts such as globalization and internationalization permeate geopolitics and implicitly educational and curricular management; nevertheless, according to the student's perception; "Although the processes of academic and cultural exchange with universities in the Global North are important, from a macro-systemic perspective, the colonialist acceptance continues to predominate, "imitating curricular proposals from universities in Europe or North America, that is to say, there is no colonialist acceptance" (E5); that is, there is no two-way exchange of knowledge, but rather a reception and adaptation of that created and endorsed by the dominant culture" (E6).

In this regard, it is important to carry out an internationalization that is primarily Latin American (E6), recognizing thinkers, philosophers, pedagogues and researchers as theoretical references and attending to the training needs of common contexts, "developing a globalized agenda in the short, medium and long term" (E4), strengthening the appropriation of Latin American knowledge in order to carry out an equitable exchange and internationalization at a global level.

In parallel, students and teachers mention three important aspects of the internationalization process, the first of which is bilingualism, which is mistakenly limited to using English as a second language. However, it is a predominant language in scientific dissemination; in the knowledge society, it is not the only one (D2). Additionally, although the English language is a prerequisite for access to some postgraduate training programs, both students and teachers recognize that the level taught in primary, secondary and tertiary education is insufficient to reach the level required and necessary in postgraduate training programs (E1, E3, E8).

The second has to do with using Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) as a didactic strategy for the teaching and learning process. In this regard, students point out that it took a global crisis such as COVID-19 confinement to recognize the potential of mirror, asynchronous, hybrid and remote classrooms to internationalize and make the curriculum more flexible (E3, E9, E10).

Although face-to-face and socialization processes are important for learning, in postgraduate education, enhancing and optimizing virtual resources (D4,6) safeguards the issues of cost, mobility and time (E2, E4, E8), which are determining factors in academic economics.

Moreover, a third aspect, which refers to the importance of "generating alliances that offer double degree" (E4), is that inter-institutional intervention is not limited to the process of internships, validation of research methodologies, or deliberation for the approval of theses (E6, E8, E3) but in a validation that supports the degree obtained, in such a way that "a real inter-institutional and international curricular commitment is materialized" (E4).

On the other hand, it is worth mentioning that internationalization should not be limited to student mobility or the hiring of foreign teachers but rather to the joint creation and exchange of a complex and global curricular proposal (D3, D4); however, they are aware of the lack of planning, budget, financing, time and incentives for both teachers and students to develop it (D4, 5 and 6).

Now, in the face of the challenges of curricular flexibility, students argue that “the University as an Institution continues to be very conservative both in the educational model of teaching” (E2) and in the evaluation process (E3), even in the 21st century, a traditional model predominates. Therefore, initiatives regarding curricular flexibility actions remain unrealized proposals (E1) unless structural changes are made in how knowledge is constructed in postgraduate training programs.

This implies, according to the teachers, making inter-institutional agreements but framed in an inter and transdisciplinary conception of science, disciplines and intellectual fields (D5) that allows the integration of “epistemologies, methodologies and practices that overcome the current isolated programs, linear seminars and stultified teaching-learning practice” (D2), in addition to a curriculum that places the researcher in situations that are happening both in their immediate context (D4) and in the context of their context (D5), linear seminars and stultified teaching-learning practice” (D2), added to a curriculum that places the researcher in the situations that are happening both in his immediate context (D4) and worldwide and generate critical and reflective processes about it from the seminars (D1). “In Colombia, postgraduate training at the doctoral level is excessive and too exhaustive, exhausting and even exhausting” (E6) due to its curricular design, rigidity in the study plan, as well as in the system of credits and semester or annual grades, as opposed to programs abroad where students create their curriculum according to their interests and needs (E6, E10, E8).

Finally, the importance of making the curriculum more flexible as a training strategy is highlighted, not only as professionals but also as citizens of the world and managers of knowledge who can project truly equitable and inclusive scenarios (D5) that respond to the multiple needs of education in the 21st century.

Tensions that arise to implement quality research processes

Working for the construction and dissemination of knowledge involves some processes with many difficulties from the perspective of teachers and students, the first of them has to do with quality standards, which, although they seek the qualification and endorsement of knowledge by the academic community, falls into a capitalist vision of knowledge, by the same demands that are made to researchers by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation Minciencias and universities, by the Ministry of Education MEN (D3), which are pressured to obtain the so-called high-quality accreditation.

Without questioning the importance and necessity of proposing qualification standards, the call is to observe the implications that this entails; for example, the high cost of tuition for a doctorate, about the average income of its students, which forces them to resort to a financial system that generates a long-term debt that rarely equates with the salary income, especially in the educational field, once the degree is obtained (E5, E6); Additionally, the payment required by some publishers to publish in indexed journals, with a significant quartile, necessary to add points in order to obtain recognition as a researcher, group or research institution (D2), which leads to inequality and discrimination for those who despite knowing do not have the economic resources

because “there is greater interest in the indicators and ranking than in the content and impact of research” (E1).

Regarding the research training process, the teachers point out that the undergraduate program does not provide students with the development of research competencies. Therefore, they start a master’s or doctoral program with significant gaps that affect their development and timely graduation (D4); these weaknesses are centered on the difficulty in writing academic texts (D1), the lack of clarity in formulating a problem or question that leads to successful research (E5) and the “lack of knowledge of a purely research methodology, since the great majority of these end up as monograph” (E5). However, postgraduate programs do not assume the problem either, leaving the student adrift since it is taken for granted that it is the student who must arrive with the required profile, a matter that is not always fulfilled due to the need to accept students to fill the quotas (D1).

Finally, students exhort on the importance of conducting research that impacts the classroom in such a way that real transformations are made (E1, E6) “sometimes it seems that theses, in one way or another, end up being writings that do not find sense or meaning in the classroom... it should be a bet for a change at all levels: in mentality and practice” (E6).

Challenges in the formation and permanence of students

Regarding the challenges, the main one is to encourage a research culture (D3), which includes a deepening and theoretical, epistemological and methodological appropriation through innovative teaching-learning proposals (D2) that “transcend the infantilization of the academy with more debates and less safe, rigid and predetermined space” (E4), that promote the development of research skills, the appropriation of a second language (E1) and encourage work in research groups and networks (D6).

As part of this research culture, both institutions, as well as teachers and student researchers have several challenges to assume; institutions, for example, should make alliances and inter-institutional agreements in order to obtain economic support (D1) to reinvest and finance research and thus offer significant incentives to both teachers and students (D2, D4). Also, offer various forms of internships, and facilitate the exchange of both teachers and students in the formation of seminars, internships and co-direction of theses (D1, D7, D4).

Teachers, in addition to being fully qualified, must have the ability to read local, national and international problems, as well as the needs of students, in order to become a reference in the orientation of research proposals (D2) “less descriptive and that truly contribute to the transformation of society” (E2).

Likewise, students should clarify their motivation when entering a postgraduate training process and be aware that “a postgraduate degree does not only imply access to an economic improvement in salary, it is important that the interest in developing research can move away from it and recognize the pressing needs of the school and Colombian education” (E6).

On the other hand, an important aspect of evaluating postgraduate training is the rate and causes of student desertion. Among them is the economic factor, at the state and educational policy

level, for example, the budget allocated for education, science, technology and research, which is not sufficient for education professionals to have access to postgraduate training with state funding and support, is a determining factor (E4). In addition to the economic factor, the lack of time availability is a determining cause “many times academic activities often intersect with professional work” (D4).

From the interpersonal area, a cause identified has to do with the accompaniment and relationship that the student has with the advisor. Among the most common problems expressed by the students are the overload of tutoring by the advisors that do not allow them to perform quality accompaniment. The dismissal or voluntary withdrawal of the advisor is also mentioned, which notoriously affects the student’s process, as well as the lack of empathy between the advisor and the student because it influences the academic environment, motivation and willingness to carry out collaborative work (E 2, 3, 5, 6).

The professors and students also state that a significant cause is the length of time and the high cost involved in studying (E3), in addition to the rigidity of the study plan and the methodology for completing the thesis (D3); for example, in other countries, the doctoral thesis can be done through the publication of a dissertation (document and an article in a high-impact journal) or articles (minimum 3 in indexed journals); likewise, it is possible to opt for a thesis with International Mention, if the thesis has the approval of another university, with a language different from the language of origin, complying with some requirements in defense of the thesis itself (E6).

Because of the above, it is important that Colombian universities, without copying models, observe what is happening abroad and evaluate their postgraduate programs “so as not to continue to lag in measurements that, whether it is ok or not, determine the recognition of intellectual production in Latin America” (E6).

Moving forward in the presentation of the results, once the problems have been recognized, it is important to take a step forward with the strategies that both teachers and students consider appropriate to favor the permanence of students in graduate programs.

The main strategy is structural and has to do with educational policies related to the budget allocated to research and innovation, in such a way that financial support is allocated, as well as the granting of scholarships, incentives, discounts, and payment facilities, (E1, E3, D4) from the official sector and with the contribution of the private sector at the Iberian or Latin American level, as the Erasmus program in the European Union (E6), together with support programs by the Ministries of Science and Education, which are not limited to the promulgation of quality standards and accreditation, but invest in the achievement of these standards by the institutions and researchers.

On the other hand, universities in Colombia should analyze that the cost of graduate semesters averages 10 million COP in institutions that do not reach position 1,000 in the Shanghai ranking, which is equivalent to paying for three semesters abroad in an institution valued in the first 200 positions of the same ranking. Although the cost of living is higher abroad, the academic experience possibly represents greater learning and recognition (E6).

In addition to the above, the time factor is a determining factor for which the recognition of teachers as researchers by the institutions where they work is proposed, either with the granting of study commissions, hours within the timetable allocated to research, flexibility in the timetable or the academic assignment, in correspondence with the research production, obviously demonstrating the quality of the processes and the commitment of those who develop them (E1, E4, E6).

Time also has to do with the duration of the doctoral program (E1, E3, E6), the number of subjects and credits that do not always contribute to the research interest (E4), the hours dedicated to the delivery of work that does not materialize more than in a grade (E3), includes receiving adequate counseling when starting the program, with the purpose of “defining in advance the style, themes, purposes, line of work and possibilities of developing the project in harmony between the institution represented by the professors and the applicant” (D3).

Finally, considering the economic cost of training and the time needed to invest in a doctorate, it is suggested to adjust the curriculum so that the seminars contribute from the first semester (D4) to the epistemological, methodological and practical training of the research itself, working together with the research groups of the various lines of the institution, and not in an isolated and fragmented manner. This implies teachers-advisors with permanent contracts (E2) to guarantee their permanence, accompaniment and commitment; likewise, when the process of presentation of advances, candidacy and support is carried out, the jurors, who are also advisors of other works, must take into account the process carried out without reducing to zero all that has been built (D4) for this it is indispensable the constant dialogue and feedback between the advisor and the student and between the advisors and the line directors.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Difficulties in curriculum management

Among the many difficulties they face in curriculum management, higher education institutions in Latin America are called upon to empower endogenous curricular models which should emerge from the particular needs of Latin American regions and nations without resorting to replicating models imported from other latitudes. This, in turn, would imply a great commitment to more flexible curricula, open to diversity and inclusion, as well as to the inter- and transdisciplinary integration of knowledge that is built not by a mere accumulation of subjects but by research and active participation in academic networks of both teachers and students, who are called to interact proactively and dynamically in the construction of the same curricular exercise from their interest and participation.

Similarly, about the issue of the internationalization of the curriculum, it is important to say that there are several challenges related to the “new digital literacy” of both teachers and students, as well as the training in communicative and labor competencies from the current demands of the world of work as well as from the current information and communication technologies, which call for transforming the rigid structures of many curricular models that small groups of “expert” develop, to move towards more participatory models that take into account the socio-cultural praxis of the curriculum in both intra and extra-academic spaces, which advocate an

epistemological openness to new knowledge and knowledge in dynamic dialogue with the accumulation of traditional knowledge and the classical sciences.

Tensions for quality research

The main tension is found between the research demands and the cost-benefit relationship faced by researchers; whether they are teachers, trainers or students, given that the retributions do not compensate for the time and economic investment made in the phases of production, implementation, dissemination and contrary to expectations, the researcher ends up paying for sharing his knowledge and expertise to be accepted by the academic community either through the publication of an article in indexed journals, participation in academic events, the high costs of tuition and internships, among others.

In addition, research quality should be measured not only by publication rankings and citation metrics but also by the impact and incidence on the transformative processes of education, which meet the real needs of the context and contribute to the construction of a Latin American epistemology immersed in state policies that involve funding for education, research and innovation.

Challenges in training and permanence

Undertaking postgraduate training requires, among others, three challenges to guarantee permanence. The first is that the student has a motivation that goes beyond obtaining his degree, i.e., the awareness of what it means to be a researcher, otherwise, finding high demands in his research skills, which he perceives he is not able to have, becomes a triggering factor for a possible dropout from the program.

The second refers to the management of autonomous work, to assume with rigor and discipline the dedication of time to meet the academic commitments that must be fulfilled, in addition to others related to their work, professional and the family world; under this logic, postgraduate programs, to the extent that they strengthen curricular flexibility, hybrid methodologies, with greater tendencies to virtualization of seminars, academic activities, and other academic activities. In addition, the fact that they have qualified teachers whose hiring and pedagogical and research strategies allow them to allocate quality time to accompany and advise students' research becomes a factor that enhances the program's permanence.

The third refers to the economic investment that Latin American students must make to pursue a high-quality graduate degree, which is the main cause of desertion due to the lack of support from both the IES and the companies where they work; remembering that a high percentage of them carry out their studies and, at the same time, work activities to subsist, even full time.

Nor have clear, favorable and comprehensive public educational policies been found for the financing and investment in studies at this level, given that, on the one hand, they imply high levels of indebtedness at the end of the courses and, on the other hand, the fulfillment of requirements and administrative procedures that are exhausting and sometimes difficult to comply with, in order to be a candidate for scholarships or remissions. This is a factor that harms students

and has a significant impact, given that postgraduate education, along with science and research organizations, is considered the most important factor in nations' economic and social development.

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