



Original article

The training of students as cultural promoters at the university: Main regularities

La formación de estudiantes como promotores culturales en la universidad: Principales regularidades

A formação de estudantes como promotores culturais na universidade: Principais regularidades

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ABSTRACT

The article addresses the university extension and its relationship with the training of student promoters. The objective was aimed at socializing the main results of an investigation about the training of students as cultural promoters at the University of Pinar del Río. The general method was the Dialectical-Materialist along with others, theoretical and empirical, among them the logical history, the synthesis analysis, the induction deduction, the Documentary Analysis, the In-depth Interview, the Participant Observation and the Discussion Group. The main results were in the regularities about the object of investigation. The conclusions point to the need to emphasize the role of these students and the importance of a training process based on the sociocultural development of the intra- and extra-university community.

Keywords: Hobbyists; culture; College extension; training; promotion.

RESUMEN

El artículo aborda la extensión universitaria y su relación con la formación de promotores estudiantiles. El objetivo estuvo dirigido a socializar los principales resultados de una investigación acerca de la formación de estudiantes como promotores culturales en la Universidad de Pinar del Río. El método general fue el Dialéctico-Materialista junto a otros, teóricos y empíricos, dentro de ellos el histórico-lógico, el análisis síntesis, la inducción deducción, el Análisis documental, la Entrevista en profundidad, la Observación participante y el Grupo de discusión. Los principales resultados estuvieron en las regularidades acerca del objeto de investigación. Las conclusiones apuntan a la necesidad de poner énfasis en el protagonismo de dichos estudiantes y la importancia de un proceso formativo en función del desarrollo sociocultural de la comunidad intra y extrauniversitaria.

Palabras clave: Aficionados; cultura; extensión universitaria; formación; promoción.

SUMMARY

O artigo aborda a extensão universitária e sua relação com a formação de estudantes promotores. O objetivo foi socializar os principais resultados de uma investigação sobre a formação de estudantes como promotores culturais na Universidade de Pinar del Río. O método geral foi o Dialético-Materialista juntamente com outros, teóricos e empíricos, entre eles o histórico-lógico, a análise de síntese, a dedução por indução, a Análise Documental, a Entrevista em Profundidade, a Observação Participante e o Grupo de Discussão. Os principais resultados foram nas regularidades sobre o objeto de investigação. As conclusões apontam para a necessidade de enfatizar o papel desses alunos e a importância de um processo de formação baseado no desenvolvimento sociocultural da comunidade intra e extra-universitária.

Palavras-chave: Hobistas; cultura; Extensão universitária; Treinamento; promoção.

actors of social transformation, with participation and identity and with a final objective in the benefit of society, in the understanding and dialogue of knowledge, necessarily implies an active position as actors of transformation. (Rovira and López, 2017, p.83)

The background of the research is framed in the National University Extension Program (2004), which contains the main guidelines of said process in Cuba. For its part, the University of Pinar del Río (UPR), has achieved achievements that support the results of its work; specifically in the field of university extension, it has promoted the development of the university community from the operation of social projects, which have become an important part of the educational project, as a tool for student participation and self-development and have propitiated complementing the integral formation of students.

The initial exploratory study allowed detecting theoretical and practical strengths and weaknesses related to the training of students as cultural promoters at the University of Pinar del Río, which was confirmed in the analysis of the governing documents of the university extension, the observation of different activities extensionists and participation in exchange workshops with teachers and amateur artists.

The main strengths were reflected in the existence of a University Extension Department with experience in working with the training of student promoters, the University Extension Program of the UPR and the different faculties, as documents that direct the process, at different levels. of university life. There are also agreements with cultural institutions in the province and a group of art instructors with great experience in each of the artistic manifestations.

INTRODUCTION

Today's society is increasingly diverse and complex, in which there are profound changes and transformations in the economic order, social and cultural relations, the Cuban university plays a fundamental role in each of them, creating actions that contribute to improve the processes that are promoted: teaching, research and extension.

The social function of the Cuban university, to train citizens capable of promoting culture in any environment where they interact as

The weaknesses detected were that the extracurricular options oriented to the development of hobbies in students are not increased, based on conceptualizing the fan as one who, in a systematic way, is capable of appreciating, enjoying and promoting the cultural, artistic and literature and the healthy and cultured use of free time, as established by the National University Extension Program, in addition, in the problem bank of university extension, insufficiencies related to the training of its members as cultural promoters are not considered.

The FEU Amateur Artists Festival is the pinnacle of this movement. A National Festival is held every two years and an annual festival in the rest of the organizational structures, say at the level of faculties, center and province. (Martinez *et al.*, 2018).

It is referred to as an artistic movement within the universities, which is integrated according to tastes and interests, in some cases constituting cultural institutions, but despite the fact that some have recognized work, this does not always have the importance it deserves within the universities. (Jimenez *et al.*, 2017)

Undoubtedly, student promoters constitute a potential in universities, which can favor, to a great extent, the sociocultural development of the rest of the students, since what is expected of their passage through this movement is that they prepare, study and carry out extension activities, achieving their comprehensive training. What characterizes student promoters is not simply a certain artistic manifestation, but the power to promote that cultural heritage, in the university and the territory.

A first approach to the study showed the following problematic situation: The training of students as cultural promoters is largely limited to presentations related to artistic

manifestations, taking advantage of the potential of these students as cultural promoters. The objective of the research was aimed at substantiating the process of training students as cultural promoters at the University of Pinar del Río.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research was carried out with the use of qualitative methodology, which allowed, in a general way, to understand the object of study of the research, starting from the inquiry for its description, with flexibility and trying to achieve a holistic vision of the studied context. Individualities are explored to generalize and generate theories, cases are studied as they happen without manipulating reality, it is interpretive as it tries to explain phenomena from the opinions of the subjects and the researcher who were part of the investigative process.

To substantiate the problem that gave rise to this research, it was essential to consult and analyze different guiding or normative documents regarding extension work, as well as the application of interviews and the observation of activities, to verify the current state of this situation and starting point of the investigation.

Taking into account that the focus of the research was predominantly qualitative, the selected participating subjects were 50 members of the Amateur Artists Movement, with an outstanding career (participation in festivals at the faculty level, university, provincial and national festivals, clubs, events, extension workshops), as well as 6 teachers who attend each of the artistic manifestations and 3 directors

The development of the research was based in a general way on the Dialectical-Materialist method as a generalizing method, allowing

to determine the contradictions, the links and the solutions to the investigated problem.

The Historical-Logical was used for the recognition of the stages and trends through which university extension and the training of students as cultural promoters in Higher Education have passed, that is, to reflect the different stages, periods and events that set guidelines in said process.

The Analysis - Synthesis and the Induction Deduction, allowed to decompose the studied process into its various parts and qualities and mentally establish the union between the previously analyzed parts, making it possible to discover the essential relationships and general characteristics existing in them and discover their essential link, to determine the antecedents and tendencies that characterize the behavior of said process and establish the theoretical foundation of the investigation.

The documentary analysis, from the qualitative approach, allowed the review of all the documents referring to the training of students as cultural promoters, in this sense reference is made to the Technical-Organizational Program of the National Festival of Amateur Artists of the University Student Federation, National University Extension Program, the ABC of the University Student Federation, which is the document that governs the operation of this organization, among others.

The in-depth interview, which had a structured guide of previously prepared topics, with the aim of achieving greater wealth of qualitative data, and made it possible to obtain information on the treatment given to the training of students as cultural promoters and their relationship with sociocultural development, delving into the subject and knowing criteria and assessments in this regard. This type of interview takes a shorter time and was easier to process.

The participant observation, which allowed the researcher to locate himself in time and space, based mainly on experiential training, to delve into the information related to the subject under study, through which it was possible to verify the level of participation of cultural promoters in the University of Pinar del Rio. Finally, the discussion group to verify the existing problem and investigate their motivations, needs, interests, in addition, generate debates and establish the pertinent actions for the solution that was proposed.

RESULTS

With the use of the different methods and techniques applied, a detailed analysis of the situation of the training of students as cultural promoters at the University of Pinar del Río was achieved.

In-Depth Interview Analysis

The same was applied to a sample made up of 6 professors who are the ones who attend each of the artistic manifestations and 3 direct from the Vice -Rector for University Extension and International Relations with a recognized work with fans.

All of the interviewees reported knowing the existence of the National University Extension Program as a document that governs the extension process.

Not all interviewees were clear about the guidelines reflected in the National University Extension Program.

They mentioned that the participation of amateur artists is largely focused on cultural activities and festivals at different levels, but not on other extension tasks, they agreed that the exercise of artistic manifestations can be organized more appropriately, in such

a way that allows them to contribute as cultural promoters in different spaces.

Most art instructors are not aware that Cultural Promotion is the method of university extension.

In the inquiry about the knowledge, they have about the organizational forms of extension, the less experienced instructors do not have mastery of them, unlike the instructors with more experience in the training of amateurs and the directors of the Vice -Rectory of University Extension.

The interviewees mentioned the characteristics of the cultural promoter and what their role should be in the university context, as well as the need to promote culture in the communities.

They addressed the need to develop a strong movement of cultural promoters in the student mass and with a leading role in the UPR, as well as their integration with other students.

They valued as a necessary process the training of students as cultural promoters at the UPR.

Participant observation analysis

The participant observation was carried out to several activities developed by the students as cultural promoters of the UPR, during which the insufficient participation of the professors of the Department of University Extension was noted, in most of the activities the same fans coincided and insufficient organization by the directors and professors of the Department.

In the university extension workshops, topics related to the training of cultural promoters are not reflected, greater attention is given to health promoters, the participation of the members of the students is developed in a leading way in the festivals that range from

the faculty to the national level, there are currently difficulties because most grassroots festivals involve fans from other faculties to achieve the quality that this type of event requires since the necessary potential does not exist in each one of them.

The most representative artistic manifestations in the cultural activities carried out at the UPR and in the different communities were music, dance and speech, and plastic arts at national festivals and protocol actions.

Despite the fact that many students are also athletes who actively participate in the sports games held at the UPR, there is no integration of these fans, so they are not capable, from their actions as fans, of leading projects, developing extensionist activities and actions that aim to promote culture.

Discussion Group Analysis

The discussion group was one of the most important techniques applied in the research, since it made it possible to know the opinions of the protagonists, in this case the amateur students with an outstanding career as cultural promoters, to verify the existing problem, generate debates and establish the relevant actions.

In general, they expressed ignorance of the existence of a Technical-Organizational Program of the National Festival of Amateur Artists of the FEU, which lays out the bases of the national festival and which is held every two years.

Their development as amateurs has been based, in their opinion, on the participation in cultural activities, accreditation galas for the different races and events, morning shows, participation in the creation workshops, given by the arts instructors and advisers from the different events. artistic and its peak moment has been the festivals of amateur artists, at different levels.

They carry out impact tasks in the communities and prisons periodically that are activities planned by the department of extracurricular activities and the pertinent entities.

Not all the fans knew the characteristics that the cultural promoter must have and the functions that it must fulfill.

They expressed the need to be trained on the extension process and their development as cultural promoters in the university context.

They also stated that they feel supported by the vice deans of university extension and professors of the Department of University Extension.

They valued as necessary and pertinent a training process as cultural promoters that prepares them, in an integral way, within the movement beyond its artistic manifestations.

Main regularities

- Limited knowledge on the part of the amateurs and some of the professors of the Department of University Extension about the guidelines that reflect in the National Program of University Extension, the work with the amateur students.
- Active participation in cultural activities and impact tasks carried out in the intra- and extra-university community.
- Presence of arts instructors and professors of artistic manifestations in the different UPR venues.
- Creation workshops by the arts instructors and teachers who attend each of the artistic manifestations.
- The work of the students is restricted, to a large extent, to the development of artistic manifestations, leaving aside the promotion of culture.
- Need to train amateurs on the extension process and their

development as cultural promoters in the university and territorial context.

- Insufficient treatment given in the university extension workshops to the training of cultural promoters.
- They value the process of training students as cultural promoters as necessary and pertinent.

DISCUSSION

When an analysis of university extension at the international level is made, it is evident that there have been multiple forms of implementation and these have been in accordance with the circumstances of each country. In Latin America, the social commitment of the university lies in being a critical instance, which promotes transformative actions for which it must grasp the national reality through direct praxis, the democratization of the university through structural and functional changes that become a community that exemplifies, that shows what the general relationships and organizations of society should be, as well as propose development models. (Rojas *et al.* 2020)

An important coincidence is the one that expresses that assuming the development of integrality in all its terms implies the transformation of the pedagogical model and of the relationships established with knowledge. (Tommasino & Stevenazzi, 2016)

The training of professionals in the university context is an integrating and systematic process. In this, the general culture and the profession are preserved, enriched and developed. The diversity of positions shows the need to resignify the university extension, which must be allowed to rethink the characteristics and relevance that participation in projects with the community

acquires in the training processes of university students. (Rafaghelli, 2016)

This process is called to transform the social reality, commit to the environment, from the assumption of a bidirectional relationship and the active commitment of the student with society, as well as to propose and implement initiatives that respond to the social development of the communities. In this sense, Higher Education Institutions project their daily work to promote learning and academic performance of their students, in which training, research and extension constitute a triad in which culture is preserved, developed and promoted. (Wind and Ordaz, 2019)

The research intended that the student trained as a promoter by the art instructors beyond the exercise of his artistic manifestation, would be able to promote it, develop skills that allow him to lead projects, work in teams, participate in actions, activities and tasks, skills that coincide with those of the extension process.

The training of student promoters corresponds to the educational goals set for the training of the young generations because it systematically influences the knowledge, conceptions, values and behaviors of the actors and contributes to their preparation for the creation of favorable environments, the reinforcement of community actions and the development of personal attitudes. (Jiménez *et al.*, 2017, p.2)

The foregoing shows that, in Higher Education, university extension plays a fundamental role, through which the university interacts with the social environment, promoting the fulfillment of its social function, for which its responsibility is centered on the training and preparation of students.

For Martínez *et al.* (2018) should also be an objective of this training process, the development of a playful culture, practices directly related to leisure, fun, recreation and games, sports, as an expression of cultural attitudes and behaviors. According to this, an interesting perspective that agrees with the results of the study is the one that maintains that "any reflection on university extension can be banal given the need to prioritize an incessant pragmatics that can respond to the problems that arise everywhere". Later on, the aforementioned authors define, in a synthetic and resounding way "Here, "university extension" is nothing other than the articulation of the complete task of the University to turn it to the social response to the disaster (Cano & Ingol, 2020)

Vocational and comprehensive training is a transversal axis that, as it guides all moments of the student's life, is not something that is acquired once and for all, that is the possession of a few, that is achieved only with a professional degree or with the study of a career, or that man is the subject of training only insofar as he has to be prepared for a professional performance; it is a kind of function of the human being, which is cultivated and can be developed throughout life, hence it is important that the university provides the necessary tools to students so that they are able to manage it. That is why much emphasis is placed on the potential offered by university extension to promote these goals. (Rojas *et al.*, 2020). Similarly, it provides the student with skills that allow them to multiply knowledge (Rovira *et al.*, 2021), as well as foster relationships (Rovira *et al.*, 2022), between the student promoters and the university community, in general.

Such approaches are consistent with the perspective of training students as promoters, for the promotion and development of cultural life, its dynamics and the cultural development of the educational institution itself.

In general, the study carried out is in correspondence with the demands of today's society, in which Higher Education Institutions pursue the goal of a professional future with a comprehensive general culture, prepared for life in society (Ulloa *et al.*, 2018).

Cultural promotion as an active process, aimed at stimulating and organizing the various actors and social agents in the university context, favors the transformation of the intra- and extra-university community, in addition to stimulating the protagonism of the subjects, with a participation that implies being seen in three fundamental meanings: to form part, to have part and to take part, in order to fulfill the objective of extension as a substantive process.

The theoretical systematization allowed to base the process in the university context at an international and national level, as well as the considerations of the university extension and its relationship with the training of students as cultural promoters.

The diagnosis allowed to characterize the current state of the research object, as well as made it possible to synthesize a group of regularities about the training of university students as cultural promoters at the UPR

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The authors have participated in the design and writing of the work, and analysis of the documents.



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