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Original article

The direction of preprofessional internships. Perspective from a new quality of the tutor

La dirección de las prácticas preprofesionales. Perspectiva desde una nueva cualidad del tutor

A direção das práticas préprofissionais. Perspectiva de uma nova qualidade do tutor

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ABSTRACT

The training of future production and service professionals in the workplace is a complex process. The company tutor is responsible for directina pre-professional practices demonstrating the technological procedure of the processes, from the academy. The results of the diagnosis carried out demonstrated the need to pedagogically prepare company tutors in the direction of pre-professional practices and to justify the construction of a new quality. The objective of this article was to propose a new quality of the company tutor in the direction of pre-professional practices, as well as the description of the relationships university-polytechnic school-companycommunity and their particularities. Theoretical and empirical methods were used, such as: historical-logical, analytical-synthetic, inductivedeductive, system approach, observation, modeling, expert criteria and group interview, which allowed to approach the subject in a scientific way. It is proposed as a new quality of the tutor in companies that the production and/or services professional is directly linked to the production and/or services process and that he should be selected to direct the preprofessional practices of the students, related to the specialties of Technical and Professional Education , promoting a better performance of their tutoring functions and, consequently, an adequate direction of the pre-professional practices of fourth-year students of Industrial Mechanics specialty consequent impact on the training of middle technicians.

Keywords: pre-professional internships; new quality of tutors in companies; university-polytechnic school-company-community relations.

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RESUMEN

La formación del futuro profesional de la producción y los servicios en la entidad laboral es un proceso complejo. El tutor de la empresa tiene la responsabilidad de dirigir las prácticas preprofesionales y demostrar el proceder tecnológico de los procesos, desde la academia. resultados del diagnóstico Los realizado necesidad demostraron la preparar pedagógicamente a los tutores en las empresas en la dirección de las prácticas preprofesionales v iustifican la construcción de una nueva cualidad. El objetivo de este artículo consistió en proponer una nueva cualidad del tutor en las empresas en la dirección de las prácticas preprofesionales, así como la descripción de las relaciones entre universidad-escuela politécnicaempresa-comunidad y sus particularidades. Se utilizaron métodos teóricos y empíricos, tales histórico-lógico, analítico-sintético, como: sistema, inductivo-deductivo, enfoque de observación, modelación, criterio de expertos y la entrevista grupal, que permitieron abordar con cientificidad el tema tratado. Se propone como nueva cualidad del tutor en las empresas que el profesional de la producción y/o los servicios se encuentre vinculado directamente al proceso de producción y/o los servicios y sea seleccionado para dirigir las prácticas preprofesionales de los estudiantes, afín a las especialidades de la Educación Técnica y Profesional, propiciando un mejor desempeño de sus funciones de tutoría y, por consiguiente, una adecuada dirección de las prácticas preprofesionales de los estudiantes de cuarto año de la especialidad Mecánica Industrial y su consecuente impacto en la formación de los técnicos medios.

Palabras clave: prácticas preprofesionales; nueva cualidad del tutor en las empresas; relaciones universidad-escuela politécnica-empresa-comunidad.

RESUMO

A formação do futuro profissional da produção e serviços na entidade trabalhista é um processo complexo. 0 tutor da empresa tem a responsabilidade de orientar as práticas préprofissionais e demonstrar o procedimento tecnológico dos processos, desde a academia. Os resultados do diagnóstico realizado demonstraram a necessidade de preparar pedagogicamente os tutores nas empresas no sentido das práticas pré-profissionais justificam a construção de uma nova qualidade. O objetivo deste artigo foi propor uma nova qualidade do tutor nas empresas no sentido das práticas pré-profissionais, bem como a descrição das relacões entre universidade-escola politécnica-empresa-comunidade 0 particularidades. Foram utilizados métodos teóricos e empíricos, tais como: histórico-lógico, analítico-sintético, indutivo-dedutivo, abordagem sistêmica, observação, modelagem, avaliação de especialistas e entrevista em grupo, que permitiram a abordagem científica do tema. Propõe-se como uma nova qualidade do tutor nas empresas que o profissional de produção e/ou serviços esteja diretamente ligado ao processo produtivo e/ou de serviços e seja selecionado para direcionar as práticas préprofissionais dos alunos, relacionadas especialidades, do Ensino Técnico e Profissional, promovendo um melhor desempenho das suas funções de tutoria e, consequentemente, um adequado direcionamento das práticas préprofissionais dos alunos do quarto ano da especialidade Mecânica Industrial e o seu consequente impacto na formação dos técnicos médios.

Palavras-chave: práticas pré-profissionais; nova qualidade do tutor nas empresas; relações universidade-politécnico-empresa-comunidade.

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INTRODUCTION

The need to train the average technician in production and services with the desired quality promotes the essential task of pedagogically preparing the tutor responsible for directing preprofessional practices in companies, in a way that allows him to transform the society in which he lives. This has been one of the main approaches of contemporary pedagogy.

Authors of topics related to the management process of pre-professional practices have developed different approaches, such as management as the best means to ensure that both parties (employer and employee) put into action all their faculties and then make an equitable distribution of the benefits obtained by the common effort (Filmus, 1994). Management, in its executive function, must guide and control subordinates (Abreu, J., 2012). The process consists of maintaining activity among the organization's staff; therefore, staff must be motivated and stimulated.

Therefore, the authors of the research, based on the theoretical study and analysis carried out, conclude that the direction of pre-professional practices in companies is assumed to be the systemic and orderly process that is developed in companies, through the stages of planning and organization, orientation, execution, control and evaluation of all the activities carried out by the students, guided by tutors, with the essential objective of contributing to the development of the system of knowledge, skills related to their profession and values in accordance with the mission of the company social and contribution to the productive and service progress (Quincoses Genis, 2024).

On the other hand, according to Ministerial Resolution 119/2022, belonging to the Ministry of Education of Cuba, in its Article 313, preprofessional internships constitute the modality of practical teaching that consists of linking full-time students of mid-level technical specialties to production or service centers that meet the technical-organizational and technological

conditions necessary to carry out a comprehensive practice aimed at deepening the knowledge, skills, habits and work values acquired during the professional's training period, supported by tutors from the companies and the professors of the Polytechnic Institutes responsible for such activity.

In Article 314, the Ministerial Resolution itself establishes that pre-professional practices serve as a basis for students at the technical medium level to consolidate the application of knowledge and the mastery of practical skills, based on the occupational profile and the expected job placement, as well as to face the final state exam. These are based on the training guides prepared based on the study programs of the specialties they study and the specific conditions for the planning, organization and development of activities.

The tutor is a highly qualified person to provide advice to students who turn to the company to their pre-professional internship. company tutor is an employee of the company, who will be responsible for the qualification through the work activity carried out by the student; he is in charge of supervising the work carried out by the student throughout the internship period, and is in charge of its direction. The objective of this article was to propose a new quality of the tutor in companies in the direction of pre-professional internships, as well as the description of the relationships between the university-polytechnic schoolcompany-community and their particularities.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The general methodological conception of the research was based on materialist dialectics as a general method of scientific knowledge and as a logic for the application of particular methods of research at the theoretical and empirical level. Part of the results of the PhD of the main author of the article is presented.

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This is part of the contribution to the theory of Educational Sciences, with a qualitatively theoretical character.

The above-mentioned limitations show the need to pedagogically prepare the tutor in companies, from the determination of a new quality in the direction of pre-professional practices, which transforms the alternatives implemented until now. The historical-logical method was used in the study of the foundations of the research to know the different moments through which the direction of pre-professional practices in companies has passed, its antecedents and its manifestations in practice.

The analytical-synthetic method enabled the processing of information and the interpretation of qualitative data and the determination of the new quality of the tutor in companies during the direction of pre-professional practices.

The inductive-deductive approach was used in the process of characterizing the problematic situation and in the results of the pedagogical diagnosis, when evaluating the level of direction of pre-professional practices by the company tutors. The structural-functional systemic approach allowed the order with which the relationships established in the direction of pre-professional practices are conceived.

The modeling allowed the graphic representation of the new quality of the tutor in the direction of pre-professional practices and the relationships established between university-polytechnic school-company-community. The documentary analysis was used in the determination of the problems of the pedagogical preparation of company tutors, in the direction of preprofessional practices of students of the Industrial Mechanics specialty, in the search and analysis of specialized information on the subject under investigation. The documents analyzed were: Ministerial Resolution 119/2022 belonging to the Ministry of Education of Cuba, the Training System of the Morón Railway Workshops and the guide of training of the students and the

Methodological Work System of the Polytechnic Schools included in the sample.

Observation was used from the identification of the problem to verify the pedagogical preparation of the company tutors in the direction of the pre-professional practices of the students of the Industrial Mechanics specialty. The survey was used to explore the problematic situation. The group interview was applied to know the criteria of the company tutors, public servants, about the organization, planning, execution and control of the direction of the pre-professional practices.

The universe of the research was composed of: five directors of the provincial department of ETP, five directors of polytechnic institutes, three professors of the Faculty of Technical Sciences of the University of Ciego de Ávila, three directors of the "Enrique Varona González" railway workshop of the municipality of Morón; in addition to the 30 tutors of the railway workshops of Morón, the students of the three polytechnic institutes who were doing preprofessional practices and 15 specialists in the subject.

The population was assumed to be: the 30 tutors of the "Enrique Varona González" railway workshop, who have training in various specialties at that educational level; the 15 specialists in the subject, to assess the relevance of the scientific results obtained. For the research, a non-probabilistic and intentional sample was selected, consisting of 15 tutors from companies belonging to the specialty of Industrial Mechanics; such sample represents 5% of the population of tutors and 15 specialists in the subject. The main results are presented below.

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RESULTS

Technical and Vocational Education in Cuba has achieved important successes; however, weaknesses have been identified that limit the comprehensive training of future middle technicians from the integration among universities, polytechnic schools, companies and the community. The use of theoretical and empirical methods made it possible to identify the weaknesses related to the object of study.

The use of the system of methods used in the exploratory study made it possible to identify the following limitations:

- The selection of tutors in companies is not conditioned by their direct link to production and/or services.
- Few pedagogical training actions for company tutors to direct pre-professional practices.
- Little synergy between universitypolytechnic school-business-community.

In the training guide is not conceived the planning and organization, orientation, execution, control and evaluation of preprofessional practices as a process and result. Therefore, the direction of this process is not conceived in an integral manner.

As a rule, many tutors in companies are not directly linked to the production process and services (they are managers or employees). The training system designed by the company does not include topics related to the pedagogical preparation of tutors. Pedagogical preparation of tutors in companies is indicated; however, practical actions to achieve this are limited.

Inefficiency in the differentiated attention to students, according to their specialty. Deficiencies in the determination of the parameters to be evaluated according to the demonstrated activity and its evaluation standard and key; poor relationship between the technical demonstrations and their explanation in correspondence with the theory received by

the students during the development of the subjects related to the content of the activity.

It was noted that, of the fifteen tutors, eleven claimed to have no experience in tutoring students of the Industrial Mechanics specialty during pre-professional internships. The 15 tutors responded that all the training they have received has been technical in content. Regarding the methods used in their preparation to direct pre-professional internships, the 15 company tutors stated that it is through textbooks of the specialty.

The results of the diagnosis carried out demonstrated the need to pedagogically prepare company tutors in the direction of preprofessional internships and justifies the construction of a new quality. A synthesis of the above allowed the authors to determine a new quality of the company tutor for the direction of pre-professional internships.

The country needs a mid-level technician with open, flexible, participatory professional training in technological innovation to contribute to the social and economic development of the Island. It is necessary that this technician be capable, with his theoretical and practical preparation, of being able to face the changes that occur in the economy of the country. In addition, he must work objectively on the social, ideological and cultural aspects, to have a solid general, comprehensive, business preparation in the different processes of the economy, which allows him to face the problems of his profession, to analyze the solution and to carry out the activities with independence and creativity.

To do this, they need the guidance of a professional within the institutional organization, from the perspective of tutoring. These professionals have the role of being tutors in companies. From their position as specialists, they must ensure that students can face the processes, through the mastery and application of advanced technologies, a solid knowledge that allows them to face accelerated technical development, changes in the environment, the

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challenges of the XXI century and the changes that arise in the system of the business sector in Cuba, demonstrating the ability to use science and technology in function of economic, political and social development (figure 1).

The three causal temporal relationships mentioned above are materialized in the three functional relationships that are built for the direction of pre-professional practices by the company tutor. They are:

- University-polytechnic school relationship.
- Polytechnic school-company-university relationship.
- Company-polytechnic school-community relationship.

Hierarchy

The guiding character of the polytechnic school is the planning and organization, execution, control and evaluation of the pre-professional practices of the students; it consists of the capacity of integration of the polytechnic school to involve the company, the university and the community to jointly expand the possibilities to systematize the professional training process.

The company is the employer and host agent, where the tutor for the pre-professional internships is based. The tutors constitute the directing character of the companies during the pre-professional internships and their selection, from their direct link to the production process and/or services, related to the specialty of the assigned students, from the demonstration, how to do and act in professional situations.

The university is the socio-educational institution which social responsibilities include scientific improvement, training and innovation, through the actions of the Faculty of Technical Sciences and the Department of Applied Mechanics. The university is responsible for meeting the demands of the polytechnic schools and companies in this regard.

The community is a space for social development, where the polytechnic school, the company and the university are inserted; it is the recipient of the transformations produced, starting from the labor insertion of the graduates of this technical specialty.

The below are the three relationships from the functional actions that are established in the dynamics of the activities to be carried out during pre-professional practices:

University-polytechnic school relationship (coordination and complementarity)

The integration of universities, polytechnic schools and companies is of great importance for the training of middle-level technicians in technical science courses from the polytechnic school, where the university plays a key role, based on the influence it has on the transformation of the community and society in general. That is why managers and teachers have to be aware of the need to achieve unity between the different agents in charge of influencing the comprehensive training of these professionals.

The social mandate arises from the development needs of society, in which Higher Education institutions offer responses from their substantial development processes: teaching, research and extension. Through the integration of the substantive processes of universities, the social mandate becomes objective and the academic, research and extension practices and the committed appropriation of the mandates of their professional field are revitalized.

The fulfillment of the social mission of the university is embodied in the functions of preservation, development and promotion of culture; directly related to the maturity and significance that the university achieves as a sociocultural institution in its interrelation with society and, in particular, with polytechnic schools.

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By efficiently integrating these institutions, the components of the educational teaching process are enriched: academic, work, research and extension, where the latter is strengthened by the direct influence of the agents involved in it, as well as by the orientation of future professionals, according to the occupational profile included in the professional model. In addition, this component familiarizes students with the object and field of action of their profession, achieving insertion into the new conditions required by the polytechnic school and productive entities.

In the integration with the production center, the future professional interacts with the workers and their organizations, influencing their technical training. During the development of the components of the process, the student integrates into the student group and the collective work, both of teachers and of the productive company.

Polytechnic school-company-university relationship (coordination and complementarity)

In this work dynamic, relationships are established among these three social and economic actors, which must promote progress and contribute to the transformations, both individually and collectively, of all those involved. When these institutions are efficiently integrated, they enrich each other and the processes they share are more effective and upto-date, as is the case with the pre-professional practices of students in technical specialties.

The relationship among the technical school, the company and the university is important for the comprehensive and ongoing training of future intermediate technicians in the field of Industrial Mechanics during their pre-professional internships. This is where the technical school plays a key role, where students spend most of their time and where they are trained in accordance with the yearly objectives of their study plan and the development of professional skills related to their specialty; based on the

collective work agreements they establish with the universities in charge of the scientific and technical development and training of the staff and with the production and/or service companies, in charge of meeting the needs of the territory for local development. The relationship among the technical school, the company and the university foster the principle of the studywork link and allows the direct insertion of students into the world of work where they are influenced by the business environment.

The pre-professional internships carried out by students in the Industrial Mechanics specialty must meet a series of requirements.

Integration with the company during the development of pre-professional practices provides the future medium-level technician in the specialty of Industrial Mechanics with the workers, their organizations and influences their technical training; the student develops professional skills related to their specialty, based on the integration with the company and the polytechnic school. In the pre-professional practices, the relationship between polytechnic school, the company and the university is made effective, based on the technical training. It is in the company where the student applies the knowledge acquired at the school, which allows him to assimilate new challenges and procedures; he learns from the experiences of the working group and the relationship between the company and the polytechnic school is strengthened, which favors communication between them, always prevailing the leading and active role of the student.

Company-polytechnic school-community relationship (coordination, subordination and complementarity)

During the development of pre-professional internships, an emotional and empathetic relationship is established between the company tutor and the student.

It is the tutor who interacts directly with the student in the company. The relationship

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between them is one of subordination, if it is taken into account that the company tutor is the one who directs the processes in which the student is inserted. Both, the company tutor and the student must master the training guide, which facilitates the development of professional skills. The company tutor must treat the student as his disciple, since his comprehensive training depends on the objectives achieved in the development of his functions and in the development of skills, from the orientations and levels of help provided by the tutor in the company.

The relationship between the professor in charge of the pre-professional internships and the company tutor is important, since the support of a professional from the polytechnic institute is required, who has sufficient knowledge, skills and pedagogical experience to guide them towards full and comprehensive development. It is important that during the development of the pre-professional internships there is a professor from the Polytechnic Institute with the capacity to supervise the performance of the student and the company tutor and generate suggestions.

Company-polytechnic school-community relationship (subordination-coordination-complementation)

A company is an economic organisation with legal personality, independent financial balance sheet and independent economic, financial, organisational and contractual management, which is created for the technical, economic and commercial management of the processes of production of products and/or services. All companies have a social mission and are located in a community, thus responding to the needs of the community. It is the company that is responsible for satisfying the needs of the community in which it is located.

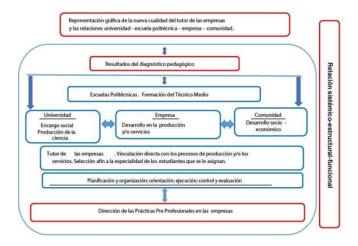


Fig. 1- Graphic representation of the new quality of the business tutor and the university-polytechnic school-business-community relationships

DISCUSSION

In Technical and Vocational Education, the polytechnic institute, together with company, must achieve the training of a competent worker, prepared to offer responses to the technological demands of companies, society and to continue higher education. To do this, this institution must develop a process that considers the various factors that influence the performance of future middle technicians, with a view to the formation of personality qualities that guide the subject towards obtaining products of social utility and need in their preparation throughout life; that is, that contribute to their vocational training.

Despite the multiplicity of elements to be taken into account in order to achieve vocational training, the author of the research considers that, in the bibliographic works of the authors analysed, an integrated and complete vision of such a complex process and of the relationships that influence the performance of the polytechnic school-university-company is not offered, which must be considered in a labour insertion process

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to respond to the needs of society and the territory.

In three relationships this sense, are constructed, delimiting the levels of hierarchy, subordination, coordination and complementarity, which become the core of the company tutor's pedagogical preparation during the pre-professional practices of the students of the Industrial Mechanics specialty. For a better understanding, it was necessary to delimit that the "relations" constitute the correspondence that is established in two or more element objects, categories that are linked by some property (Mendoza Moreira, 2020).

The field of educational research has been addressed by several authors from different points of view. Pérez García (2021) considers that the relationships between categories aim to find links, connections and associations between them, which can be temporary when one category always or almost always precedes another, although the first is not necessarily the cause of the second; causal, when a category is the cause of the other and set and subset when a category is contained among others (Gallardo, 2021).

From the above criteria, it can be highlighted that the relationships, depending on the role played by their parts, can be of subordination or coordination. In the first one, there dependence of an element of the system on the other and in the second there are levels of mutual relationships between its components, through a harmonious connection that does not limit the relationships between two elements, nor the relationships of subordination. Other researchers such as Aguilar and Mena Lorenzo (2019), Miari (1982), Thompson (2022) and Abreu (2012) have used and established "relationships" to explain and demonstrate links among: objects, subjects, elements categories in scientific results derived from educational research.

The term quality comes from the Latin *qualitas* and allows us to refer to someone's way of being.

A quality is a distinctive element or character of the nature of someone or something. It is synonymous with faculty, attribute, condition, character, essence, nature, among others. A quality is everything that is considered positive or at least fundamental in someone, they are innate properties or characteristics of someone or something; that is, the features that make up part of their nature. A quality is a distinctive feature of a person, thing or concept or something that makes it different from others (Filmus, 1994).

Other authors suggest that one of the qualities of a tutor in companies must be the ability to adapt to the professional context of the future middle technician and to the development of his professional skills (Thompson Zulueta, DT & García Díaz, J. 2022). A quality can be an innate characteristic or acquired over time, which distinguishes it from the rest; they are behavioral characteristics that cultivate a good. Quincoses (2024) argues that a new quality of the business tutor is his direct link to the production process and/or services to efficiently direct the pre-professional practices of students, related to their specialty in Technical and Professional Education (p. 25)

The essence of the new quality is when the tutor selected in the company is directly linked to the production process and/or services; and tutors students who are in the specialty of which he graduated.

Quincoses (2024) states that:

This new quality is based on the role of advisor and guide of the tutor to the student in the development of preprofessional practices: demonstration of the integral functioning of the company; in the supervision of its monitoring performance, difficulties and potentialities detected; in the demonstration of the technological procedure of a process that enhances the development of skills related to his profession; in the planning and

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organization, orientation, execution, control and evaluation of pre-professional practices (p. 26).

The new quality requires that the tutor modernize the way he/she should work with the student during the pre-professional practices and in his/her functions, such as: developing with quality the content of the student's training guide; characterizing the personality of the students he/she tutors; having mastery of the professional skills of the specialty; feeling motivated by the work he/she performs; possessing communication skills that allow him/her to exchange his/her experiences with the students; advising and controlling the progress of the integrative work of the students; planning, guiding, controlling and evaluating the independent study of the student; carrying out actions that guarantee that the students study efficiently.

In addition, spaces for joint preparation between the tutor and his students must be guaranteed, their comprehensive results must be systematically advised and monitored, the student's evaluation must be systematically recorded and the evaluation must be dispatched monthly with the professor responsible for the pre-professional practices of the polytechnic institute (Quincoses, 2024, p. 27).

The community is a social unit; they share a territory, interests and needs, interacting with each other and promoting collective actions in favor of personal and social growth, both individual and collective, where feelings of belonging are manifested as an expression of their community identity. Once graduated, the student will enter the working life of a company in their community and thus can contribute to its progress and transformation (Quincoses, 2024).

The subordinate, coordinated and mediating nature of the professor responsible for preprofessional internships belonging to polytechnic schools, to the demands of the company and to the needs of the community is found in a reciprocal relationship, where each one complements the other based on their contributions. The professor responsible for preprofessional internships is the professor in charge of establishing in a direct and planned way the coordination between the polytechnic school-university-company, before, during and after the pre-professional internship period.

In summary, the results of the diagnosis carried out and the theoretical and methodological foundation on the pedagogical preparation of tutors in companies for the direction of preprofessional practices in students of the Industrial Mechanics specialty allowed to assume in the research as a new quality of the tutor in companies the professional who is directly linked to the production process and/or services and is selected to direct the pre-professional practices of the students, related to the specialties of Technical and Professional Education. It allowed the description and justification of the levels of hierarchization of the relations of subordination, coordination and complementarity between university-polytechnic school-companycommunity.

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