

Family orientation, its theoretical positioning and impact on the school-family-community relationship

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ABSTRACTS

The article presents the result of a study whose objective was to characterize the historical evolution of the management of the process of permanent training of the directors of early childhood educational institutions in Cuba. The revolutionary period (1959 to the present) was taken as a reference. For the characterization, the following indicators were taken into account: a) facts that favor the continuing education process, b) the objectives and contents of continuing education, c) the organizational forms, and d) the conception of continuing education management.

Keywords: Management; Continuing education; Early childhood directors.

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Introduction

This paper presents a brief characterization of the management of the process of permanent training of the directors of early childhood educational institutions in the

revolutionary stage, since 1959, which constitutes one of the fundamental knowledge of the management of this specific category of human resources.

A periodization of the main stages and characteristics through which the permanent training of early childhood directors in Cuba has gone through is presented and elements referring to the facts that favor the permanent training process, the objectives and contents of permanent training, the organizational forms and the conception of permanent training management are highlighted.

Development

In Cuba before 1959 there were no trained personnel to direct early childhood educational institutions; the activity was developed by preschool teachers who had some preparation or were graduates of the Kindergarten Normal Schools, created since 1902 and whose exclusivity limited the number of them.

In 1952, there were only four Kindergarten Normal Schools in the country. There were no higher studies in this specialty, since the Pedagogy School of the University of Havana only dealt with some psychological and pedagogical elements of the preschool child.

For the above stated, two periods were determined, based on the main socio-political events in the country, education in general and early childhood education in particular, which have an influence on this training.

The first period was from 1959 to 1989 and the second from 1990 to the present. For the characterization, the following indicators were taken into account: a) facts that favor the process of continuing education, b) the objectives and contents of continuing education, c) the organizational forms, and d) the conception of the management of continuing education.

The sources that made it possible to obtain data and subsequent information on the indicators mentioned above were the studies carried out by: Casassus (2000); Doimeadios (2010); Delors (1996); Valiente (2014) and ICCP (2017); López (2017). The following is the historical characterization of the process of ongoing training of directors of early childhood educational institutions.

First period: between 1959 and 1989.

a) Facts that favor the continuing education process.

From the political point of view, this period is framed within the stage of institutionalization of the country, initiated in the decade of the 70's of the last century, in which took place the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Congresses of the Communist Party of Cuba held in 1975, 1980 and 1986, respectively, and the promulgation of the Socialist Constitution in 1976.

In the educational field, it corresponds to the beginning of the deep and radical transformation of education undertaken after the revolutionary triumph of January 1, 1959, which had as an emblematic event the Literacy Campaign (1961), educational services were massively expanded to all the confines of the country, the Integral Reform of Education was established (Law 680 of December 23, 1959) and it was nationalized (June 6, 1961), which implied the institution of its public and free character under the direction of the State; The guidelines for the Improvement of the National Education System were defined, which began in 1975 and were sustained in the programmatic documents derived from the first Congress of the Communist Party of Cuba held that same year.

Based on the political and educational events mentioned above, the process of creating the conditions for the opening of the first children's centers began, where the need to train the personnel who would work in them became evident, so that in the 1960s, various alternatives for the training and qualification of teachers and directors were assumed and the first regular training plans were put into practice.

The permanent training of the directors of these institutions received a boost in 1960, when the Ministry of Education created, through Ministerial Resolution 10349 of April 20, 1960, the Higher Institutes of Education, later converted into Institutes of Educational Improvement (ISE) and later into Institutes of Educational Improvement (IPE).

In January 1961, the first school for directors of children's circles was founded. In the same year, in the midst of a combative national campaign to raise funds for the construction of these institutions, the first three children's centers were created on April 10, 1961, all in the Cuban capital.

An action that created the conditions for the training of future directors materialized in 1970 when the Training Schools for Educators of children's centers (EFECI) were

created, which offered specialized theoretical and practical preparation and which, since 1971, were under the direction of the recently created Institute of Childhood.

In 1971, the training of directors was consolidated, since another important institution dedicated to this purpose was created: the "Fe del Valle" school for directors of children's centers. During this period, the level of demands increased, so that a greater technical and methodological preparation was required for this position.

In 1975, all the training for preschool education leaders was unified in a single plan, organized by the Training Department of the Institute of Childhood, which shows the concern for the improvement of this personnel, with emphasis on the directors.

b) The objectives and contents of continuing education and training.

The objectives of continuing education gradually became more oriented towards consolidating the preparation of early childhood directors as educational policy was consolidated and the infrastructure of the training institutions mentioned above was created.

If in the early stages of the period spontaneity and empiricism prevailed in the projection of objectives, limited in scope to the mastery of the specific functions required to perform the position of director of children's circles, this transitioned towards a more comprehensive formative vision in which formative dimensions linked to the preparation for directing the different processes in these institutions were integrated.

Accordingly, the content of the training programs, which in the early years of this period were focused on preparing for the performance of an eminently operative task, focused on administrative work and political activism as the institution's top figure, was gradually expanded to achieve a greater role in the management of pedagogical, methodological and organizational processes.

The programs of contents of centralized national courses of basic level for directors of children's circles in the school of directors "Fe del Valle", was one of those that had transcendence in the permanent formation and included in its study plan as disciplines: Preschool Pedagogy, Psychology, Organization of the children's centers, Techniques of Direction, Philosophy, Feeding and the Marxist Leninist Party. The plan included practical activity in children's circles for 15 days.

In the 1980s, as part of the implementation process of Decree Law 82 and Decree 125, the Ministry of Education (MINED) established basic and advanced training courses for

the preparation for the position, one of the subtypes of which were courses designed for principals, specialized by teaching. The content of the program of these courses was aimed at updating and deepening the pedagogical and methodological problems of the moment and at specialization in the position.

Another important event in the 1980s was the establishment, starting in 1985, of the development of provincial and municipal courses, which marked the beginning of the decentralization of continuing education, where Preschool Education, together with the then Higher Pedagogical Institutes, designed programs adapted to the needs of directors of early childhood institutions, complying as part of the content with the centralized guidelines of including three fundamental disciplines: Marxism-Leninism, Pedagogy and Scientific Management.

Organizational forms of continuing education

In this period, linked to the participation of principals in the "Fe del Valle" school, it is important to highlight their inclusion in the organizational forms of the training process in this school: conferences, seminars, practical classes, practices in children's centers.

The course as an organizational form, had a transcendent place in the permanent formation of the directors. These courses in the different variants described above: training or basic courses to prepare for the position (lasting 22 weeks), advanced courses for graduates of the basic course (lasting up to three months), courses at the territorial level (provincial or municipal with the inclusion of topics according to the needs of preschool education or directors).

The national seminars for education leaders, which began to be held in 1977 until 1989 and then multiplied at the provincial and municipal levels, constituted during these years another of the most important ways for the training and improvement of directors in general and early childhood directors in particular.

Self-improvement, based on the needs felt by directors to meet the demands of managing early childhood institutions, was another of the prevailing methods during this period.

a) The conception of lifelong learning management.

In this first period, the management of continuing education for directors of early childhood institutions went from spontaneity in the early stages, to centralization of the planning, organization, execution and control of training activities by the Ministry of Education, and later to a partial decentralization of this process, where preschool education in the provincial and municipal education directorates together with the

department of the same name in the higher pedagogical institutes began to manage the training process from a more territorial vision.

Even though the number and variety of continuing education actions planned are greater, their conception is still asystemic. Collective actions prevail over individualized ones, limiting the effectiveness of the formative influences by not addressing the needs derived from the personalized diagnosis of each director.

The control and evaluation of the formative process is limited by the lack of a coherent projection of this function in the conception of the management of the process. Rather than assessing the level of progress of the directors in their training and the quality of the permanent training process, the control and evaluation is reduced to the traditional reports issued by the structures that plan the actions.

As a regularity of this period, it should be noted that the management of the permanent training of early childhood educational institutions' directors has been favored by socio-political facts that have progressively influenced a better precision of its objectives and content, a greater participation of the institutions responsible for the process and a greater variety of organizational forms, however, there is no coherence in the management of its conception and the level of specificity to meet the needs that are proper to the professional activity of these directors.

Second period (from 1990 to the present).

This section presents the characterization of the second period, considering the established indicators.

a) Facts that favor the lifelong learning process.

The 1990s marked a turning point in the conception and implementation of the training and improvement of principals in Cuba as a formalized practice, due to the influence, among other factors, of the process of deepening and perfecting the system of work with cadres, of which the approval of the "National Strategy for the Preparation and Improvement of State and Government Cadres" (1995) was a part.

Valiente (2014) identified a set of characteristics that impact the process of permanent training of school principals in Cuba. In this regard he points out the following:

- The decentralization of the responsibility for its direction and implementation to provincial and municipal structures.
- The understanding of the need to increasingly adapt the content of training to the requirements and problems of school principals.

- The priority given to the development of on-the-job training and improvement actions, the greater role of the universities of pedagogical sciences (UCP) in the process of training and improvement of school principals, with the establishment of the Departments of Educational Scientific Direction.
- The importance to the development of collective improvement actions based on the educational needs of principals expressed as regularities; the use, for the materialization of collective actions, of the forms established for Postgraduate Education in its two aspects: professional improvement and postgraduate academic training.
- The emphasis on the preparation of school principals in topics related to Educational Scientific Direction.
- The development, since 1993, of preparatory meetings prior to the beginning of the school year by the municipal directorates of education, as an important way for the improvement of school principals.

b) The objectives and contents of continuing education and training.

In correspondence with the social and educational demands placed on preschool education in this period and the level of decentralization that is being achieved with the responsibilities assigned to the territories, the objectives and content of continuing education programs are increasingly oriented to meet the demands arising from the priorities established by the Ministry of Education in general and for preschool education in particular. Also the programs of the different organizational forms when projected jointly by the structures of Pre-school Education at the municipal and provincial level under the auspices of the University of Pedagogical Sciences, the objectives and contents are closer to the needs of the directors of the institutions of this education at the territorial level.

Some of the most transcendental contents projected in the collective organizational forms of professional improvement have been: educational policy and its contextualization in Preschool Education, the work system in early childhood educational institutions, the direction of methodological work and internal control in these institutions, basic elements for the use of informatics as a tool to direct the processes, the regulations of preventive work, topics of educational scientific direction.

c) Organizational forms of lifelong training.

In relation to organizational forms, this period saw the incorporation as something new of the school for directors in the municipalities, in which general topics are programmed, grouped with other education and specific topics that meet the needs of preschool education directors.

Mention should also be made of the widely accessible Master's Degree in Educational Sciences, which although it did not have a mention in management, many directors of early childhood educational institutions had access to it and consolidated their training in the content of these sciences that have an impact on psychological and pedagogical aspects to perform the position.

The universities of pedagogical sciences, with their department of Preschool Education project and execute specific forms for the training of the directors of this education, among them the courses and Diplomas.

They maintain their presence as organizational forms, the theoretical and practical workshops convened by education in the municipalities and provinces, direct work in the processes of early childhood educational institutions, self-improvement and methodological aids.

d) The conception of lifelong learning management.

Although the first indicator of this characterization pointed out a set of facts that are related to the progress made in elements related to the management of the ongoing training of principals of early childhood educational institutions, this does not mean that the management of this process has been addressed in a particular way.

In the decade of the 1990s and the elapsed years of the current century, research has been developed (mainly doctoral and master's theses) that have offered scientific results aimed at improving the management of school principal training in different educations, none of them has dealt with the management of the ongoing training of principals of early childhood educational institutions Santiesteban (2011); Valle (2001); González (2006); Maldonado (2011).

As a regularity of this second period, it should be noted that the management of the permanent training of early childhood educational institution principals has a more consolidated support in the legal-normative, in the level of decentralization of training actions adjusted to the collective needs and in the results of research on the topic of principal's training. However, the existing lack of a model that represents the particularities of the permanent training of the director of early childhood educational institutions cannot be satisfied.

Conclusions

The systematization made it possible to identify the essential theoretical underpinnings for the elaboration of the theoretical and methodological conception of the management of the process of permanent training of directors of early childhood educational institutions, among them: the essential characteristics through which the formation of the permanent training of early childhood directors in Cuba has gone through and the elements that particularize this process in the stages of the national historical development that were considered, following the established indicators, it is identified as a fundamental tendency that Cuban education went from spontaneity in the initial moments, to a greater centralization of the projection, organization, execution and control of the formative actions of these directors.

As a result of these studies, it was possible to point out that there is evidence of an intention to meet the needs of the professional activity of these directors with the participation of the institutions responsible for the process through a variety of organizational forms; however, there is no coherence to satisfy the existing lack of a model that represents the particularities of the permanent training of the director of early childhood educational institutions.