

Professional orientation, a view from the High School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas

Deysi Bárbara Remón Fonseca¹ * <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8128-9103>

Yakelín Gómez Morales² <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5560-5352>

Yosdany González Hernández² <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0474-5459>

¹Universidad Central “Marta Abreu” de Las Villas, Santa Clara. Cuba

²Centro de Capacitación del Turismo, Santa Clara. Cuba

*Autor para la correspondencia: dremon@uclv.cu

ABSTRACT

The professional orientation constitutes a process that one conceives by means of the specialized pedagogic help on the different professions and of there its importance. It is assumed as objective to value the positive discoveries that allowed to build an educational strategy in the School of High school of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of The Villages. starting from roads educational contextualized and half-filled, during the period of sensitization with the pedagogic profession, as well as a group of methodological requirements for their concretion in the practice, basing their actions on the appropriate application from the educational work.

Keywords: Professional orientation; Preparatory School; Profession; Image

Introduction

Career Counseling has developed remarkably worldwide, presenting significant contributions oriented to the development of principles, objectives, functions and

strategies, among others, to direct the counseling action to an adequate choice of university career by its aspirants.

All these elements mentioned above are key to a more efficient transition process from high school to university for the student and to guide him/her to a more responsible and solid choice. Undoubtedly, this transition has implications of change that can favor, but if they do not have an efficient Professional Orientation (OP), it can lead them to indecision and frustration at the time of selecting a career.

Career guidance is conceived as a process of help and pedagogical influences, aimed at providing adolescents and young people with general and specialized information on the different professions, linking social needs with the vocational interests of the subjects, which will allow them to select their future profession at the right time.

In the general and specialized scientific literature, in most cases vocational orientation is approached as a process prior to the selection, by the students, of their future profession; however, it is also recognized as a process inherent to the stage of carrying out the studies of the selected profession.

According to the criteria of Arango and Ramos (2021), adequate professional orientation favors the development of professional motivation and reaffirmation, as inclinations of the subject towards a specific professional activity, expressed in interests, positive feelings and professional projects, which adequately guide and regulate their behavior towards the tasks that are inherent to them.

Considerations by Almarales, García, and Santiesteban (2020) assert that professional orientation is an aspect of the teaching-educational process that is still controversial; so much so that it is an unresolved problem in the current Cuban school, where efforts are made, and where only discrete results are achieved.

There are several reasons and sources of influence that contribute to the fact that students with better grades do not access pedagogical careers. In the first place, the negative family influence towards children with good academic records regarding the choice of a teaching career. This shows that families sometimes discourage their bright children - despite their interests - from pursuing a career that they consider to be of little prestige.

The considerations lead the authors to reveal the main inadequacies in this field of research based on their professional practice for more than twenty years of experience in working with adolescents and young people in high school and in the High School of the

Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas. These inadequacies are systematized in publications by the author and collected in the research project “Professional orientation for university careers with selected 12th grade students”, directed by Lara Perez from 2015-2023 mostly associated with:

- The poor professional preparation of teachers in relation to the subject to develop the work of OPP as the starting theory points out.
- -Insufficient projection of extracurricular and extracurricular actions from the educational process itself.
- -The classroom does not always constitute the fundamental educational scenario to develop and stimulate the OPP to students, being characterized by traditional lectures where important topics related to the image of the profession are not taken advantage of.
- It is reduced to providing information, illustrating the contents of the classes with examples of their possible application in the pedagogical profession.
- -The potential of the curricula to integrate the vocational concepts contained in the normative documents is still not identified and exploited.
- -The cognitive sphere is fundamentally diagnosed, to the detriment of the affective-motivational sphere, which hinders the establishment of a differentiated and systematic assistance relationship in this area to the students, without giving a relevant place to the affective experiences linked to the profession.
- -OPP activities are organized mainly for informative purposes and do not take into account the real level of professional motivation of the student and his/her group, as well as the educational influences of other mediating agents.
- The activities are not always structured in a system and cause boredom to the student.
- -The students do not come from the preceding education with a systematized and orienting work towards the future profession and in turn the image of the profession.

Valuable international, national and local research has been carried out on the subject, directed towards the Professional Orientation of notable transcendence and obligatory consultation of the last five and ten years of updating, Reyes and Segura (2019) and Arango and Ramos (2021) who direct their studies towards the work of professional orientation by the psychoeducationalist from basic secondary school, Professional Orientation and the importance of the group addressed by Cancio, Cueto, and Padilla

(2018) and Delgado and García (2018) and Professional Orientation from the potentialities of the content by Nocito, *et al.* (2022), among others.

As it has been possible to verify the state of the art points out that despite the existence of a starting theory supported fundamentally from the educational and psychological sciences, still the educational practice directed to the OPP demands the constant and integrated effort of the educational agents. Therefore, based on the problems described, the general objective of this work is to evaluate the positive findings that allowed the construction of an educational strategy in the High School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas.

The general method that guides the proposed research is the Dialectical Materialist method from a qualitative approach of the educational sciences accompanied by theoretical and empirical methods.

Theoretical methods transit at the level of thought and made possible Historical-logical analysis: It is used in the treatment made to the basic literature related to the theoretical positions regarding the OPP, in the logic of the research process, which is adapted to the proposed scientific result.

Analytical-synthetic: It is used in the study of the bibliography and normative documents of the pre-university, as well as for the study of the behavior of each of the parts of the problem under study and to define the aspects that have the greatest influence.

Inductive-deductive: Data are used to corroborate the theory and its explanation through its particular analysis in order to reach the generalization of common features that allow arriving at conclusions of the aspects that characterize the phenomenon to the pedagogical practice and from there to elaborate the proposal of solution to this problem.

Systemic-structural: It allows the organization of the research report as a whole from the determination of its components and the establishment of new relationships, as well as to organize the single case study and the construction of the scientific result.

Modeling: It is used with the purpose of establishing the fundamental characteristics and relationships of the methodology as an emerging scientific result, its functioning from its components and contributing to the resolution of the scientific problem posed, as well as the graphing of its components.

The empirical collection methods and techniques used made possible the collection of precise data in the research during the different stages, they were the analysis of documents, participant observation, interview and in-depth interview, the researcher's diary and data triangulation, the latter very effective to contrast different methods and sources of data or strategies of information collection at each moment, this constitutes a technique of great significance in the research, as a criterion of methodological rigor of this and for the determination of detected regularities and the informal discussion group to evaluate the progress and scientific validity of the emerged data.

For the development of the research, a study group represented by 186 students opting for pedagogical careers of the Preparatory School of the UCLV "Marta Abreu" of Las Villas was selected.

Development

The data that emerged during the research derived from three stages: familiarization, implementation of actions and evaluation, corroborated the effectiveness of the educational strategy built from practice as a criterion for assessing the truth.

In the first stage constructed, the presence of the group guides was determined for this work and each one was assigned their responsibilities and the individual and collective fulfillment and commitment in the achievement of the educational strategy that would be implemented.

It is important to emphasize the need to prepare first the teaching staff of the educational institution and for this purpose a postgraduate course was implemented with all the teachers of the Preparatory School of the Central University "Marta Abreu" of Las Villas.

This course had a total duration of 96 class hours.

It was also specified the determination of the knowledge system and specific topics to be addressed during the professional orientation process in the students of the High School of the Central University "Marta Abreu" of Las Villas.

It was necessary to make the proposal of adjustments, which the teachers and members of the Research Project considered necessary for the elaboration and improvement of the

implementation stage of the educational strategy, where the advances in the application would be evaluated from science, as well as the actions and their positive or not effects would be outlined on the practice.

In addition to the approval of the educational strategy of pedagogical professional orientation for the students of the High School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas, the projection of cloisters, methodological meetings, meetings of the department of the High School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas and meetings of the research project related to it were carried out, to analyze and discuss the insufficiencies revealed in the diagnosis with the same purpose.

It also became necessary to design a system of methodological activities for the teachers of the High School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas on the management of the OPP process.

It occurred the assessment of the general disposition of the participants in the statement of the responsibilities of each one in its fulfillment and the individual and collective commitment in the achievement of the educational strategy, in this case each group is different and it becomes pertinent to readjust the actions to be undertaken according to the group diagnosis.

The knowledge system and specific topics to be addressed during the professional orientation process in the students of the High School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas were determined.

Finally, the approval of the educational strategy of pedagogical professional orientation for the students of this school, this process is consensual with the entire faculty where everyone has the right to raise and discuss the criteria.

These designed steps lead to the second stage of the educational strategy built in the research process.

Stage II. Execution of the planned actions

The objective of this stage was to execute the system of OPP actions for the students of the High School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas.

It is intended in a staggered way from the educational process itself, the development of a system of visits to museums of the locality, monuments and historical sites not only of Villa Clara province, but of Sancti Spíritus because there are students from that province,

emphasizing on those related to education and it is explained with historical character of each place to provide a necessary approach to the student not only from the cognitive, but on the experiential in order to propitiate a group of necessary knowledge in front of the historical fact in question in tune with the topic that is intended to be strengthened.

From this point of view, the role of social and historical institutions is reinforced, which are responsible in one way or another for the educational work, playing a determining role in the process of construction and development of the OPP.

Another activity that was developed was a conference on the process of Literacy in the central region of Cuba in coordination with the Association of Pedagogues of Cuba of the province of Villa Clara, this conference was also interesting participatory, from a system of spontaneous questions from students to the speaker where he expressed in a pleasant way: “All professions have many things in common, they serve for “something”, but not all of them serve “someone”, always understanding that this someone refers to the being as a personality, with its biological, psychological, social, cultural and spiritual components” as a closing of the activity, a phrase that left the students motivated.

As can be seen here, a concept that is also central to the proposal being made stands out, the “link with the profession”; it allows framing from a sociological, psychological and pedagogical point of view the interrelationship between the participating subjects and the different mediations that converge.

The morning newspapers also took on a new look where the intention was essentially to emphasize important events and relevant personalities in education according to the most important anniversaries.

It should be noted that the visits, the activities of conferences with living treasures of education, the processes of open doors, radio, elections and others allowed the socialization of the student, and the appropriation by them of the valid social contents and their objectification, expressed in forms of acceptable behaviors by the educational community.

But parallel to this socialization, the individualization of the subject in his context takes place, since the objectification of the social contents apprehended is a purely individualized process, of a personal nature, in which each subject processes reality in a very particular way, contributing the results of his own re-creation, as an active social entity that grows.

Furthermore, from these actions, social participation itself is built, in the articulation of the “we”, by the social recognition that is realized by fulfilling their duties and exercising their rights, assuming their responsibilities at micro and macro-social level integrated in everyday life both in educational scenarios and outside them.

In this research, it is interesting to see how the narrative used in each of the actions described above reveals the representations that each student elaborates to give meaning to life experiences through his own image, while at the same time it favors the identification of the meanings and patterns associated with each context that are privileged and elaborated by the participants.

In addition, it is evident how the student sees his future profession and the feeling that it generates that influences his way of thinking, acting and his feeling of belonging and how this influences his way of thinking and acting, in how he develops his relationships with his educational environment.

All the above emerged from the practice is corroborated from the consultation to the starting theory where authors such as González, Mitjans, and Bezerra (2016) in their studies assert that when the profession becomes a subjective configuration, in it are expressed general dynamic elements of personality, becoming, as any personological configuration, which gives a marked weight to the experiences of realization, recognition and personal security that the student may experience, highlighting the role of the first years of university training in that development. Its personological position on professional development is emphasized, based on categories such as identity, configuration and subject (differentiated from personality).

These considerations give rise to the third stage

Stage III: Evaluation of the executed actions

The objective of this stage was to evaluate the results of the practical application of the educational strategy to enhance the pedagogical professional orientation in the High School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas.

In order to achieve the objectives of this stage, the execution of the following actions was required:

The results of the research are evidenced in the opening of pedagogical careers that had not been able to open for some time, such as Bachelor's Degree in Education: Physics and

Bachelor's Degree in Education: Mathematics with a total enrollment in almost all careers of up to 20 students. The results show the effectiveness of the activities implemented.

It was possible to verify, during the foreseen stages, the consolidation of interests and professional motivations towards the careers in 98.3%. Those who manifested a remarkable degree of satisfaction for the choice of the career, their images towards the selected profession and preliminary knowledge about the profession affectively linked to the career, as well as gratitude for what they learned in a whole academic course mediated by diverse educational influences, meaning the following expressions:

(...) "I loved it here".

(...) "I took the course that I liked the most and I thank the professors for that"

(...) "I wish people knew how much fun the pre-semester is here"

In addition, students reflected on the importance of the teacher's work in the current Cuban society characterized by the exodus, the continuous changes of profession or, in most cases, abandonment, a change of perception about the chosen profession and new professional expectations expressed by the students:

(...) "people have a wrong idea of what a teacher is; here one learns to communicate better, to have new friendships, the teachers who taught us the classes were the best people I have ever met"

(...) "if our pre-school classmates would have had these activities and all the good things here, they would have taken the career they really like".

The fourth stage of the educational strategy consisted of its evaluation, which was carried out by transversalizing the previous stages.

The satisfactory results achieved with the implementation of the educational strategy allowed to corroborate according to Velázquez (2020) that the strategy as a scientific result that emerges from the systematized practice constitutes the set of actions and procedures, which the teacher uses to plan, apply and evaluate intentionally, with the purpose of effectively achieving the educational process in an optimal way.

Therefore, in this case it was also possible to specify that Pedagogical Professional Guidance is a systematic and planned process of specialized help, through different techniques and ways mediated by diverse educational influences, aimed at helping students learn to know themselves, to explore pedagogical opportunities and to make

professional decisions that support their pedagogical professional projects based on the image of the profession they can make of the career they will perform.

Conclusions

The study made it possible to clarify the main findings derived from the professional orientation process carried out with the students of the Preparatory School of the Central University “Marta Abreu” of Las Villas, emerging from the detailed, descriptive and in-depth study a pedagogical strategy that contributes to the development of the OPP in this interventional context.