

## **Methodological approach for a relevant curricular management in the training of Basic Education teachers**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The insufficient use of methodological work for the preparation of teachers limits the relevance of curricular management in the training process of the Basic Education career. Accordingly, this article aims to propose a system of methodological work actions to assist in the preparation of teachers of said career. Methods such as analysis-synthesis, content analysis and document review were used. The results serve as a tool for the preparation of teachers and for curricular management to be consistent with the social demands of the Technical University “Luis Vargas Torres”.

**Keywords:** Methodological approach; Training; Teacher training; Curricular management; Basic education

### **Introduction**

The Technical University “Luis Vargas Torres” of Esmeraldas, Ecuador, committed to achieving educational quality and being more pertinent with society, especially with the educational institutions that incorporate graduates of pedagogical careers each year, endorses the approach that its researchers can increase the link with these educational centers, their teachers and students. “...Participatory assessment, collaborative research,

youth-led research, and practitioner inquiry are among the many methodological traditions that can be drawn upon to further systematize learning...” (National Institute of Educational Technologies and Teacher Training, 2021, p. 3).

This high house of studies, has as its institutional mission the “comprehensive training of critical, proactive and humanistic professionals, through a current educational process, articulated between teaching, research and linkage with society, for sustainable development based on the proper construction of universal and ancestral Ecuadorian culture, science and technology” and with the aspiration, expressed in the institutional Vision of “Being a reference at national and international level of academic, scientific, technological and cultural excellence, which positively affects the equitable and comprehensive development of society” (Technical University “Luis Vargas Torres” of Esmeraldas, 2018, p. 27).

On the other hand, such educational quality should impact the results of the learners who are served by graduates of their careers, which has been affected in the results of the Ser Estudiante Tests in the performance levels of students in the Elementary, Middle and Higher sub-levels of General Basic Education (EGB), applied by the National Institute of Educational Evaluation (INEVAL) during the period 2022-2023; which are intended to assess knowledge, skills and abilities in key areas such as Mathematics, Language and Literature, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences (INEVAL, 2023).

These results pointed to the need to study the possible causes that contribute to the decrease in academic results, among which the poor use of methodological work for the preparation of teachers at the Technical University “Luis Vargas Torres” stands out as a problem, which limits the relevance of curricular management in the training process of future educators of the Basic Education career, who will work, once graduated, in the educational units of Esmeraldas. In this sense, the objective of this article is to propose a system of methodological work actions to contribute to the preparation of teachers of this career, from the study and systematization of proposals of authors who address the issue, especially in works published in articles referenced in recognized databases in the last five years, as well as regulations on this issue. In line with the **objective** of the article, materials were identified that address the background of the object of research related to methodological work as a fundamental approach in curriculum management in university careers, as well as others related to teacher training, as a premise for the use of

documentary review and the theoretical methods of analysis-synthesis, induction-deduction and content analysis.

The work presented is part of the results obtained from the research project (of which the authors are part), entitled: Study of learning strategies and teaching methodological work, in the development of thinking skills in Educational Units and in the Basic Education Career of the referred institution.

This research project has among its specific objectives: To identify the effectiveness of methodological teaching work with the impact on the academic performance of students of General Basic Education and Basic Education Career of the Technical University Luis Vargas Torres and contributes to the fulfillment of one of the objectives of the institutional strategic plan (PEI), which is aimed at “Promoting scientific research and technological innovation through teacher training and student training that contribute to the sustainable development of society (Technical University “Luis Vargas Torres” de Esmeraldas, 2018, p. 57).

Similarly, the project is inserted among the research policies of the PEI, by responding to the: “Integration of substantive processes: research-linkage-teaching in terms of quality, rationality and social relevance.” (Technical University “Luis Vargas Torres” de Esmeraldas, 2018, p. 59). In addition, it tributes to objective 7 of the Plan for the Creation of Opportunities 2021-2025 “To enhance the capacities of citizenship and promote innovative, inclusive and quality education at all levels” (National Secretariat of Planning, 2021, p. 69).

## **Development**

A conceptual analysis of the methodological work for a pertinent curricular management in the training of Basic Education teachers requires the definition of more general categories, from the formal logic, which are associated to the object of research of this work, such as: methodological work, management, curricular management, training and university teacher training. The assumptions made, together with the systematization of the proposals of the authors consulted, made it possible to synthesize a system of

methodological work actions that help to provide greater relevance to the curricular management carried out in the training of Basic Education teachers.

### **Methodological work**

For the Ministry of Higher Education (MES) (2022) the methodological work is

the work that, supported by didactics, is carried out by the subjects involved in the educational teaching process with the purpose of achieving optimal results in said process, prioritizing the educational work from the instruction to fully satisfy the objectives formulated in the study plans. (p. 3768)

The aforementioned regulations specify that the content of the methodological work is basically based on the categories, principles and laws of didactics and is oriented towards the preparation of academic managers, teachers and support staff, so that they are in a position to adequately develop the training process. In addition, its main functions are the planning, organization, regulation and control of the educational teaching process. The adequate performance of these functions contributes to the integral preparation of future professionals. (Ministry of Higher Education, 2022)

Among the fundamental forms of methodological work are recognized the teaching-methodological work and the scientific-methodological work, which are closely linked, and “in the realization of methodological work must be integrated to respond to the proposed objectives” (Ministry of Higher Education, 2022, p. 3786).

The teaching-methodological work is the activity carried out in order to continuously improve the teaching-educational process; based fundamentally on the didactic preparation that teachers possess, as well as on the accumulated experience, while the scientific-methodological is the activity carried out by teachers in the field of didactics, in order to improve the teaching-educational process, developing research or using the results of research carried out, which contribute to the comprehensive training of future professionals. (Tapia & Reyes, 2020 and Ministry of Higher Education, 2022)

Regarding the content of the methodological work, it should be noted that “it has had an important theoretical-methodological resource in the competency approach, widely used in recent decades in human capital management” (Morales *et al.*, 2023, p. 409). Likewise, with regard to the didactic-methodological conception with which the training actions are to be developed, the following are adopted for the management of this process

- a) the convenience of collaborative work, b) the need to conceive the teaching-learning process as a process of teacher reflection on their own teaching practice and professional performance, c) the approach to training in terms of research-action, based on teaching innovation projects and inquiry processes on teaching, d) the consideration of training actions as a space for the construction of new knowledge on strategies, methodologies and didactic criteria that allow improving the quality of the training process under their responsibility; e) the conception of the training process considering the individual differences in the professional development of teachers, and f) the use of specialized ways and forms of organization to favor research, teaching and management training. (Valiente *et al.*, 2013, as cited in Morales *et al.*, 2023, p. 410)

### **Management and curricular management**

In the case of the concept of management, although there is some terminological confusion in relation to other associated terms, perhaps due to dissimilar translations of the concept of management, it is assumed “...as a concept that has a similar content to that of direction, administration and management, as general processes and not as specific functions of these that are usually denominated with the same terms” (Pérez *et al.*, 2023, p. 208).

In this sense, management is assumed as

a social activity that has a concrete historical conditioning; as a system of interpersonal relationships (of cooperation and subordination); a strategic process that has a conscious character, inasmuch as it is directed towards the attainment of rational objectives and is guided by philosophical and political conceptions of a general nature. It assumes that such objectives are achieved with maximum effectiveness (“systematic achievement of effective and efficient results”) and implies, for this purpose, the influence on people to ensure the coordination of actions and individual efforts (...) it is aimed at ensuring the stability and change of the system (the organization) in which it is carried out, and its own condition of system implies its structuring in subsystems that can be identified from different perspectives. One of these perspectives is to consider planning, organization, direction and control as its subsystems, recognized as its general functions. It has two main dimensions: the management of processes and the management of people. (Pérez *et al.*, 2023, p. 208)

Similarly, curriculum management, which, from the formal logic, is a limited concept of the concept of management, has been defined by researchers such as Crespo-Cabuto *et al.* (2021); Villegas and Valderrama (2021); among others.

Crespo-Cabuto *et al.* (2021) highlight in their studies on curriculum management the fact that “...some ministries or secretariats of education have implemented the competency-based approach in their curriculum designs...” (p. 4). Likewise, several authors that they systematized allow them to propose that it is necessary to “...define clear principles that guide the curriculum design process, which should be known by all stakeholders...” since it favors communication, and they also insist that the curriculum “...consider the approach to real problems during the training process, since this favors the development of competencies linked to the real needs of the context and the relevance of the curriculum...” (p. 4).

Thus, Villegas and Valderrama (2021) assume management in the curricular teaching activity as a concept that integrates a set of commitments and actions that take place both inside and outside the classroom.

It is aimed at favoring student learning in terms of the achievement of learning outcomes and competencies defined in the graduate profile, in a given institutional context. Thus, it is possible to indicate that the teaching-curricular activity involves, among other aspects: 1) the coordination, management and planning of teaching; 2) the deployment of teaching methods; 3) learning and evaluation activities; 4) the subsequent review and improvement of the actions carried out; 5) the quality of what is offered to the students, and 6) the involvement of curricular orientation, which assumes its value for what it contributes to good university teaching. (pp. 160 and 161)

### **Training as a general concept and the training of university teachers**

The concept of training, assumed by the authors of this work, is the one that defines it as a process and as a result, which is distinguished by its systematic (continuous) character, which is oriented to the acquisition, structuring and restructuring of behaviors from knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, under the guidance of previously set objectives and involves all dimensions of human development. (Del Toro, 2016, as cited in Morales *et al.*, 2023, p. 403)

Consequently, the management of university teacher training is assumed as “...an articulating process, of a strategic nature, whose functional content involves the planning of goals, policies and strategies related to training, its assurance through organizational actions, and its regulation, control and evaluation” (Morales *et al.*, 2023, p. 412).

Such university teacher training is characterized because:

(a) it is a process inserted in professional training; (b) it has as its essence the continuous training of university teachers, in terms of personal improvement and constant growth of their professionalism and performance; (c) it is a teaching-learning process guided by objectives that are oriented towards the contents of the training, it takes the form of teaching-learning activities, and in which the results obtained are checked through evaluation. (Morales *et al.*, 2023, p. 408)

As a culmination of the study carried out, a proposal of methodological work actions is made below, with a systemic approach, which can contribute to the continuing education of teachers in the Basic Education career, as a condition for a pertinent curricular management, which affects the preparation of future teachers. This proposal is based on the systematization of experiences included in the literature consulted, namely:

1. **Identification of the causes of difficulties in the learning of GBS students, associated with difficulties in the formation of the competencies of future teachers of the Basic Education career.** (This action ensures the necessary coherence between changes in the curricular management of methodological work and the training needs of future teachers, an expression of the social relevance of the curriculum (Crespo-Cabuto *et al.*, 2021).
2. **Preparation of management teams, teachers and high performance students in training, for the process of curricular redesign.** (This is a preventive action, since the processes of change go primarily through awareness of the need, here methodological meetings may be held in which the results of the Ser Estudiante tests are presented and the discussion of proposals for curricular and extracurricular changes to be implemented gradually in the current curricula).
3. **Preparation for the process of curricular redesign, at the organizational levels of the educational teaching process (Career Collective; academic year collectives; discipline collectives and subject collectives).** (Likewise, no new action should be taken, due to the system approach of the actions, until these

organizational levels are sensitized to the change to be implemented and the role that each one plays in the process of curricular management).

4. **Revision of the teaching process plan for each year up to the subject level for the redesign of the study plan, as well as, the organization of the subjects by teaching periods in each academic year.** (Once the objectives and contents of each subject are analyzed and contrasted, in which the didactic treatment of those elements of knowledge that most difficulties were presented by the students of the educational units of the city of Esmeraldas and that were revealed in the applied tests).
5. **Planning in system of different types of teaching-methodological work** (The fundamental types are: a) methodological teaching meeting; b) methodological class; c) open class; d) verification class and; e) methodological teaching workshop. In this sense, it is advisable to develop the work starting from the same system of objectives and contents, until approaching the greatest amount of methodological orientations on the treatment of the same. Once the last one has been completed, a new cycle of activities should be started. (Ministry of Higher Education, 2022)
6. **Design of integrative tasks** (to be focused by the professor assigned to the integrative subject and the direction of the pre-professional teaching practice) in which, in an interdisciplinary way, the future teacher will carry them out in the scenarios of such practice, as a way to “...detect organizational insufficiencies (planning and control) as well as in the development of the teaching activity and in the preparation of the teachers, particularly the new ones that are hired each semester” (Tapia & Reyes, 2020).
7. **System planning of different types of scientific-methodological work** (In this case, the fundamental ones are: a) scientific-methodological work of the teacher and methodological groups; b) scientific-methodological meeting; c) scientific-methodological workshop; d) scientific-methodological seminar and; e) scientific-methodological conference. (Ministry of Higher Education, 2022)
8. **Analysis and approval, in the career collectives, of the so-called curricular strategies** (these address “...certain knowledge, skills, values and modes of professional action (...) that are key to the integral formation of students. These



are contents that it is not possible to address them with due depth from a single discipline and require the competition of several” (MES, 2016, as cited in Del Toro & Valiente, 2019, p. 9). Those that contribute to improving the results of the subjects that are the object of the Ser Estudiante tests should be weighted, as is the case of work with the mother tongue, or the use of new information and communication technologies, the use of artificial intelligence, among others).

**Inclusion, among the contents of methodological work, of elements (dimensions, components, fields or areas) that should be focused on** (such as pedagogical and didactic training; research training; management training; and personal development, based on the recognition of the teacher as a social subject) (Morales *et al.*, 2023).

## Conclusions

Higher education institutions are called upon to raise the quality standards of the competencies of their graduates. This is not possible without an adequate continuing education of their professors, increasingly relevant to social demands. In the case of the Basic Education career, the methodological approach of its actions in curricular management should not disregard under any circumstances the results achieved in the learning of schoolchildren served by the graduates of this career, which is the most urgent demand of the people of Esmeraldas.

The logic of the methodological approach of a pertinent curricular management, in function of the preparation of the teaching staff and in all the management teams of the Basic Education career of the Technical University “Luis Vargas Torres”, must be deployed in correspondence with the purposes foreseen in the curriculum and with respect to its system character. For the definition of the proposed actions, the priorities defined by the University, the diagnosis of the teachers and the problems detected in the evaluations of the subjects faced by the students of Basic Education, as well as new themes that arise as a result of their continuous improvement must be taken as fundamental referents of orientation.