

# THEORETICAL-CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS NECESSARY FOR THE ANALYSIS OF THE LABOR INSERTION OF UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

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**Abstract** – *In a socioeconomic context of crisis such as the current one in Latin America and the world, it is more necessary than ever to understand the University-World of Work Linkage, and more specifically, the process of Labor Insertion of graduates by their corresponding university centers.*

*Therefore, when preparing students, Universities must train them not only by offering the degrees demanded by society, but by developing those skills with which each student will be able, throughout their life and work trajectory, to seek and remain in the field best possible job, achieving the realization of a work project that allows them to achieve personal stability and social satisfaction in their work life.*

*This article presents the theoretical-conceptual foundations for the analysis of the Labor Insertion of university graduates considering the fundamental Challenges of the contemporary university and the Training-World of work relationship, which includes its Link, which considers the principles of Quality and Relevance in addition to the Social Responsibility of the University and the Monitoring of graduates.*

*Additionally, the Labor Insertion itself is analyzed, which considers Background, Employability and Occupancy. Through a documentary analysis that includes the socioeconomic (graduates and entrepreneurs), institutional (authorities and teachers) and personal (students) contexts in an integral way on Labor Insertion, a Conceptual Framework is presented that will allow to analyze Labor Insertion as Objective of the Latin American University committed to their interests.*

## **Key Words:**

Key word1, LABOR INSERTION,

Key word2, BONDING,

Key word3, RELEVANCE,

Key word4, COMPETENCE,

Key word5, UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITY.

## **1.INTRODUCTION**

In a socioeconomic context of crisis such as the current one in Latin America, an understanding of the University-World of Work Linkage is more necessary than ever, and more

specifically, the process of job placement of graduates by their corresponding university centers.

To achieve the strengthening of the relationship between universities and the world of work, many universities have assumed an important role in the increasing professionalization of work and in the process of converting scientific activity into an activity in the world of business, of the industry and administration.

Specifically, the training of professionals, as one of the basic tasks of higher education, is at the center of this problem, which is subject to permanent tensions that drive it to advance towards new paradigms and goals that involve the need and the desire to reach ever higher and more relevant levels.

Thus, as stated by Inigo (2016), the link between education, knowledge, social development, training of highly competent human resources and scientific-technical progress has become closer.

Therefore, when preparing students, Universities must train them not only by offering the degrees demanded by society, but by developing those skills with which each student will be able, throughout their life and work trajectory, to seek and remain in the field. best possible job, achieving the realization of a work project that allows you to achieve stability and personal, work, and social satisfaction in your work.

At present it is estimated that the social function of the university finds its best concretion when it is assumed as the fulfillment of its Social Responsibility. Hence, today the topic of Social Responsibility of universities occupies a prominent place in the international debate. In the case of our region, according to Tunnermann (2011), we think that the university in Latin America has the historical and inescapable duty to rethink itself, to redefine its mission at the present time and to assume its Social Responsibility, for which it needs to be fully integrated into its society and promote a constructive dialogue with all its sectors.

Regarding the analysis of university quality, it is necessary to include both internal and external aspects, where the treatment of external quality is seen in the education-world of work relationship and the internal one in University Social Responsibility to comply properly Responsible for the requirements of the Substantive Functions of the University,

Academic, Research and Bonding (Extension in Cuba), in favor of Student Training.

Another aspect to consider is the concept of Relevance of Higher Education which has evolved towards a broad conception of it and its close relationship with quality, equity, social responsibility, diversity, intercultural dialogue, and the contexts in which Tunnerman unfolds (2011).

Considering that the labor scene is immersed in profound changes and transformations, and that, for several years now, they constitute the central axis of different types of studies and analyzes that recognize the need to systematize some of its characteristics and fundamental features in order to achieve the adequacy of a workforce in accordance with these new conditions, as Vega (2005), referred to by Hernández (2006), finds justification for the fact that the work performance of graduates based on the training received, must respond to the demands of society, adapting this to constant development, serving in turn, feedback to the university as an important factor for quality management.

The importance of an effective insertion of the graduate in the labor market finds a concrete expression in its inclusion as an indicator of quality in the accountability of universities to their societies without this meaning abandoning their social mission of achieving student-centered training as a social individual.

Systematically studying the processes of socio-labor insertion of university graduates, both for the improvement of education and to respond to social and labor demands is an obvious need, considering:

- The importance it has in the personal, work and social life of the graduate and his family.
- For the interest of the University to improve the training of its graduates, which must respond, on the one hand, to the demands of society based on the constant development, improvement and application of science and technology, and on the other, to the requirements of the world of work, always providing feedback as an essential element in its quality management.
- For the impact that graduates offer on socioeconomic development in their area of influence, and
- For the interest of entrepreneurs who hire these graduates to meet the needs of their companies.

This article determines the theoretical foundations for the analysis of the Labor Insertion of university graduates considering the fundamental Challenges of the contemporary university and the Training-World of Work relationship, which considers the principles of Quality and Relevance in addition to Responsibility University Social and Graduate

Monitoring; Additionally, the Labor Insertion itself is analyzed, considering its antecedents, employability, and ocupability.

What is analyzed in this article allowed the authors to elaborate a new concept of Labor Insertion and to propose the necessary foundations for its analysis in an integral way.

## **1. FUNDAMENTAL CHALLENGES OF THE CONTEMPORARY UNIVERSITY AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF TRAINING-WORLD OF WORK.**

The life of Latin American universities has changed radically in recent decades. A scenario that used to be stable and predictable turned into a dynamic environment of growing uncertainty. While the demands grow and multiply, the university institutions have been becoming aware of a lesser capacity to influence their environment and, above all, increasing the asymmetry with the world of work and with the governments themselves, in the same way, it should be noted that not all countries are in the same situation regarding these changes (López Segrera, 2016).

These Challenges are so complex that the University must understand that it needs to change, have an Attitude for Change, it must reinvent itself, become a new university, therefore, to meet these Challenges, that Attitude must be reflected in its University Social Responsibility, which means you must change your Quality.

Analyzing the, the Authors considers that the Graduate's Training supposes the Internal aspects and the World of Work the external aspects of the University. Both considerations must respond with Relevance to the needs of society, with a Quality Training of its graduates, for which the university must have a Proactive position that is reflected in its University Social Responsibility, which must respond to the demands of the Labor Insertion of its graduates.

### **1.1 TRAINING-WORLD OF WORK LINK**

The concept of bonding is defined as the activity that allows us to sustain a relationship. It is part of the jargon of higher education specialists to refer with a new nuance to the same dimension denoted by the term's diffusion and extension. However, the frequent and restricted use of the term limits it to the relationships of educational institutions with industries or other companies in the so-called productive sector of society. Martínez, F. (2000)

On the other hand, the concept is broadened by considering the link with the community as the substantive function of higher education institutions whose purpose is to establish a dialogic communication-action, that is, a level of communication and action, between the university. and the community, through intra- and extra-university processes mediated by praxis, focused on the preservation and / or

creation of valid and valuable cultural assets, guided by values that imply fostering and generating the common good, and promoting quality with equity. of life in a historically determined society. These processes are related to the application of knowledge typical of a discipline, profession, or technique, and considers popular knowledge, which will guide the detection of social needs and the generation of solutions to the problems raised. (Torres & Trápaga 2010).

The application and strengthening of the link between the university and the world of work have become one of the central issues in the world and in Latin America.

The link between the university and the world of work Hernández (2006) considers it a necessity in the vision of the university for its internal and external projection and in this sense, as explained above, the analysis of the work performance of young professionals in their Labor Insertion constitutes an important element of quality analysis, which is why it becomes a projection to the external perspective of quality of university processes.

In turn, Sosa (2002) expresses that in the historical evolution of the university, the participation, and relations of higher education with certain political, ideological, accumulation and development of knowledge has been defined with greater precision and scope. general and in response to growing economic needs, with a broad, and immediate impact on social development.

Higher education has not escaped the effects of globalization and in transforming itself into a tradable good, with which it is traded more and more freely. For Passarini (2013), knowledge acquires greater value and Higher Education Institutions have a significant importance as a generator and diffuser of this

Specifically, the training of professionals, their preparation for an adequate Job Placement, as one of the basic tasks of higher education, is at the center of this problem. It is subject to permanent tensions that drive it to move towards new paradigms and goals that involve the need and desire to reach higher and more relevant levels.

As the demands have grown, it is necessary to periodically review the institutional model adopted, its strategic plans and the frequency with which institutional evaluations are carried out, and with it the updating of professional profiles and changes in business plans. studies, where graduate follow-up studies have an essential space (Passarini, 2013).

On the other hand, Iñigo (2000), considers that the training of professionals constitutes one of the fundamental functions in the development of the contemporary university, and is highlighted by all authors and scholars of university problems in various ways, some at the time from defining university tasks, one or the other can be highlighted,

but none excludes the training of professionals prepared with relevance, quality, and Social Responsibility for their Labor Insertion.

## 1.2 FOLLOW-UP OF GRADUATES

In a context where social and cultural relations and political interests on scientific and technological development have a preponderant role, the opportunity arises to print a new approach to the follow-up of graduates Iñigo et al. (2015). It is the occasion for universities to position themselves at the center of this discussion and promote a new season of studies on graduate follow-up, which transcends studies of job success, taking advantage of the discussion on professional competencies and the demands of evaluation and accreditation mechanisms.

On the other hand, following Iñigo et al. (2015), we have that graduate follow-up studies are an alternative to understand the relationship between professional training and the world of work, as well as the satisfaction of external and internal demands, understanding that they encompass individual, collective, institutional needs and social.

Among the most relevant contributions that have been produced in recent years in this area both from a macroeconomic and a microeconomic perspective, firstly reference is made to the main international works on this matter, describing the methodology and criteria based on the which deals with the analysis of the transition from the university to the labor market and secondly, the research carried out in Europe is mentioned, synthesizing the main conclusions (Freire, 2009).

Among the international studies on the incorporation of university students into the labor market, it is worth mentioning the CHEERS project promoted by the European Union, which analyzes the situation of graduates in the 1994/1995 academic year, four years after graduation. This study covers a dozen European countries, including Spain and later joined by Japan.

The survey comprises a sample of 40,000 university graduates and a questionnaire is used on common topics in this type of survey. These surveys were in some cases complemented by in-depth individual case studies, through interviews with graduates and employers. Secondly, it is worth mentioning the REFLEX project and that it is a continuation of the CHEERS project to the extent that the same experts from the previous project participate in its development. The REFLEX report provides a more up-to-date picture of the trajectory of European graduates after obtaining a university degree.

The REFLEX methodology is based on a macro-survey of 40,000 university graduates from a set of 17 European countries, and essentially focuses on the cohort of graduates

from the 1999 to 2000 academic years who were surveyed five years after completing their studies.

Freire, M. (2009, 15), indicates that among the most outstanding reports it is worth mentioning those carried out by the ANECA (Labor Insertion Survey, 2004; The flexible professional in the knowledge society, 2007); The VII Study of Labor Insertion, Fundación Universidad Carlos II, 2004; The contribution of Spanish universities to development, Fundación C y D, 2006 and the Reports on Labor Insertion of the University of A Coruña 2003-2004, 2004/2005, 2005/2006.

## 2. THE LABOR INSERTION OF UNIVERSITY GRADUATES

### 2.1 BACKGROUND

The labor insertion of young people in the labor market is an issue that has strongly attracted the attention of researchers from different social disciplines, especially in recent years, due to the employment difficulties faced by the university community, the increasing complexity in its incorporation into the world of work and the importance it represents in people's lives.

For any individual regardless of their socioeconomic stratum and level of education, getting their first job is a big step, some call it Job Placement.

This article transcends the concept of considering Labor Insertion as the specific case of achieving the first job, to consider it as a continuous, iterative, and holistic Process where the University works to achieve stability and personal, work and social satisfaction of its graduates.

The profitability of education is one of the most debated topics in educational economics. Most of the existing theories coincide in considering education as an investment good that increases the probability that the individuals who possess it will receive higher salaries. However, there is no consensus in the literature on the reasons why companies are willing to pay more to workers with a higher level of education.

Freire (2008) states that the Human Capital theory maintains that education increases the productivity of the individuals who possess it. The higher productivity of workers based on educational level justifies that companies compete to attract workers with a higher educational level or better trained, with the consequent increase in the wages they receive.

On the other hand, the Filter Theory could also be mentioned, which indicates that education is used as a form of selection of the most productive individuals.

Freire (2008) continues in his analysis stating that, in any case, both for the Human Capital theory and for the Filter

theory there is a strong positive relationship between salary and the education acquired when expressed in average terms.

The review of the main contributions of these models suggests that education is a fundamental variable in determining wages and in increasing the probability of finding a job among young people through adequate labor insertion. However, the scientific literature points out that other characteristics such as sex, age, experience, innate ability, as well as the young person's own attitude towards work (their predisposition to learn, innovate content, etc.) may be crucial to get a job that is stable and allows you to achieve stability and personal, work, and social satisfaction.

Studies on job placement for graduates coincide in pointing out that the transition from the higher education system to the world of employment is a complex and time-consuming process (García-Montalvo et al., 2003).

On the one hand, it is important to consider the economic situation and labor market conditions; On the other hand, it is necessary to know the job requirements and job search behavior of university students, unfortunately one of the problems of Higher Education in Latin America in some cases, is the lack of official information on graduates since There is no updated information to evaluate its results, also limiting the Quality management of the University.

On the other hand, when analyzing studies related to Labor Insertion, it is found that the human capital endowment of everyone is a factor that determines their decision to participate in the labor market and their probability of finding a job. In the current educational context, in which young people, on average, have higher levels of education than their parents, analyzing in detail the marginal contribution of education with respect to other variables is increasingly important.

Therefore, it is necessary to consider the economic situation and the conditions of the labor market; in addition to knowing the job requirements and job search behavior of university students.

The socioeconomic environment of university graduates has changed substantially in recent years, directly affecting the employment framework in Latin America. The increase in underemployment, unemployment rates, the lack of flexibility in labor relations, the modification of employment structures, the incorporation of women into the labor market and business management methods, among others, constitute some of the great problems that have occurred in the present, to which we must consider the increase in corruption in the allocation of new jobs in the public sector where Meritocracy practically does not exist.

Faced with the completion of formal studies, university students thus face a much more complex work environment



but one that is necessary to know, to address a quality job placement with more guarantees of success.

On the other hand, contemporary society is subject to constant and accelerated transformations that affect the World of Work, these changes generate new patterns of operation and demands around labor dynamics. Blanco (2005) considers that these changes have transformed the labor market into one that could be considered as a globalized, differentiated, and specialized labor market in which eventuality, precariousness and unemployment are constant problems, preventing stability and full employment of young people in the world of

Likewise, Romero et al (2004) add that the ability to know how to maintain a job should be considered to consider a full Job Insertion: "Job Insertion includes both the incorporation of the person to a job and its maintenance. Currently, within the problem of unemployment and insertion, both factors must be considered, since, in addition to the difficulty of finding a job, the other major problem lies in the ability to keep it.

## 2.2 EMPLOYABILITY, OCCUPABILITY, EMPLOYMENT AND COMPETENCES.

Employability refers to the probability of Labor Insertion through the characteristics of people seeking a vacancy. Another definition describes employability as "the opportunity for the worker to access a job that meets their expectations, with their training and with their professional career" (Orgemer, 2002).

On the other hand, ocupability refers to the possibility of Labor Insertion depending on the opportunities in the world of work. In summary, employability is focused on the person and their learning, and ocupability is context-focused (Blanco, 2005).

It is worth mentioning that the ocupability factor is not the focus of analysis of this article, but it develops as a decisive factor in the functionality of the employability elements.

For Renteria (2004), as cited in Martínez (2011), the term "employability" is broken down from the English word employability, which is related to the employment construct. Considering this simplified version of employability, being employable is having the ability to have a job, the opposite is not being employable which means the opposite.

Campos (2003) indicates that the concept of employability does not exist within the Spanish language, therefore it is formed from a synthesis of the word employ that focuses on the construct of employment to this is added the word ability, which is translated as ability. Considering this, the literal concept will be the ability to find or obtain a job, keep it while avoiding unemployment.

Over time, employability has continued to be considered as a skill, later more content was added to this term, in such a way that it was called that aptitude or capacity that a person possesses to have a job which motivates them to satisfy their needs. own professional, economic, development and promotion need during his life, which implied the change to other types or modalities of work, designing a career plan.

This new definition of employability, approaching the construct of competence, as indicated by Brunner (2001) and Goleman (1999), constructing a greater content regarding what is defined and implies obtaining a job, for Renteria (as cited in Martínez, 2011) where employability is emphasized as a matter of an individual nature, as a skill that allowed the person to remain within the labor market. Despite this, it was not yet considered as a competence, until a few years ago, employability was not related to social responsibility as a real concern, since it was only linked to those issues related to supply and demand in the market for job.

So, for a decade employability has been considered as a question of responsibility that is shared between people, companies or organizations and Higher Education Institutions, which is coherent, since it is related to a personal competence, that the student must develop for life.

Considering this, Renteria (2001) maintains that the tendency to indicate that the responsibility of being employable falls on the individual is undeniable. This conclusion is supported in empirical terms in the research results obtained in the studies by Renteria (2006) and Álvarez et al (2004).

The cited authors coincide in giving greater relevance to the personal elements that are associated with employability (especially flexibility, initiative, and the power to adapt) than with those factors that are related to the social and environment (specifically business generation, reduction of salary, job offer, etc.). However, the researchers indicate that these aspects are used in the selection and dismissal process

According to Renteria and Andrade (as cited in Martínez, 2011) they indicate that employability is a competence possessed by individuals that is built in society, as is also stated by the Foundation for the development of the Human Resources Function (FUNDIPE, 1999). Individuals have the responsibility to educate themselves and accept all the consequences of the decisions they make; On the other hand, companies and institutions implicitly form various factors, such as the skills, competencies, knowledge, and different characteristics that determine a person as employable, in addition to this, they oversee promoting an environment and environment suitable for generate a process of socialization.

On the other hand and following what is expressed by Álvarez et al (2004), they indicate that employability, being

related to the process of socialization and individuation, forms the necessary competence to face both immediate and future demands in a labor market, for which Various professional objectives are drawn, with flexible characteristics, on the other hand, the need to learn is created, which fosters social and human development through work. Therefore, employability becomes a dynamically evolving social construction that loses its isolation in individuals, which generates a required requirement: quality of life and work.

For Campos (2003), employability includes the subjects' competences to get and keep a job, to improve their job, to adapt to change, to choose another job when they want it and to integrate more easily into the job market in different periods of their life. The competence for employability is closely linked to the individual's self-development, that is, to the individual assuming the commitment to plan their own professional life, having a proactive attitude when looking for opportunities that make them more employable, inside, or outside. of the organization to which it belongs.

Renteria and Andrade (2007) insist that people should not only incorporate concepts and specific content of their profession or trade into their lives, but they should develop sufficient and necessary strategies and competencies to face their entry and permanence in the labor market.

In this sense, we can affirm that, following Rivera (2004) and Rodríguez (2010), the competence for employability includes two large areas or sections: competence for employability related to career design and access to employment; and job retention and improvement skills. This second group could include the competence to adequately integrate professional experience at the end of working life.

As mentioned above, employability is no longer considered as a means that serves as a regulator between supply and demand in a labor market, then it was indicated that employability was that capacity or personal ability that people use to obtain a job and at the same time keep it. Later it was stated that employability was a personal skill, currently this is considered as a personal competence linked to social responsibility (Martínez, 2011).

For all these reasons, according to Iñigo (2016), the study of competences today occupies a space of the first order and is treated for its importance by various institutions and authors, among which we can recognize certain trends in its treatment and definition, which allows us to identify that the notion of competence admits at least three degrees of complexity.

In the most complete and basic instance, we could understand by competence the knowledge, capacities and values associated with a certain area of human endeavor. On the other hand, from a more explicit perspective, competences would be equivalent to knowing (associated

with knowledge), being able to do and knowing how to do (linked to abilities), knowing why to do it, wanting to know, and doing, to which it could be added knowing how to be (related to values).

Thus, the study of professional competence as a form of labor competence, goes beyond the mere economic-labor significance of the term to project itself as an important component in the integral development of professionals, based on the assumption of learning where the human capacities, efficient and responsible performance is guaranteed and the individual's possibilities for personal and social fulfillment are increased, as an expression of the most contemporary trends in the world of work that presents man as the focal point of labor processes (Hernández, 2006)

### 3. CONCLUSIONS

What is stated in the current article allows us to affirm that the work performance of graduates from the acquired preparation must respond, both to the demands of society based on the constant development and application of science and technology, as well as to the requirements of the world of work, which should be the subject of continuous analysis and projection by the University in the process of improving the training of professionals.

There is a consensus among the authors consulted, of the recognition of the importance and repercussion of the process of Labor Insertion of the graduates of higher education and of the need to have adequate training in this regard to achieve positive and adequate results at the beginning of any type of work or professional work, which also has a significant impact on their personal, work, and social life.

An effective job placement process leads them to have an ever more efficient impact on socioeconomic development in their area of influence and respond correctly to the interest of the employers who employ them to meet the needs of their companies.

Based on the study carried out and in accordance with the objectives and premises of this article, Labor Insertion is defined as:

“A continuous, Iterative and holistic process, which includes the socioeconomic contexts (graduates and entrepreneurs), institutional (authorities and teachers) and personal (students) in an integral way, being a competence that the graduate must develop during their training and is constituted as an objective and responsibility of the University, so that the graduate achieves stability and personal, labor and social satisfaction in their occupation / employment as a professional”.

From the exposed concept we have:

• Labor insertion is not only the responsibility of the University, nor of the Business World, nor of the graduate, it cannot be partially analyzed, it must be seen in an integral way.

• The exposed Labor insertion gives an answer to the correspondence between training and job performance, or job development of the graduate.

From the concept of Labor Insertion proposed, the process is derived which is characterized from the professional point of view with the experiences of graduates and entrepreneurs; from the Institutional point of view with the authorities and university teachers and finally from the personal point of view with the students, having to be comprehensively analyzed.

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