

Managing the Process of Formation of Caribbean Cultural Identity in Higher Education Institutions

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Abstract

In nowadays society, the importance of knowing who we are and where we go is essential to face the globalisation. It is in the teaching and learning process that professors can contribute to the formation of values, beliefs, customs which are a part of the cultural identity that allows self recognition and recognizing the cultural identity of the world we live in. The cultural identity is seeing as a social necessity that goes beyond educational process and the formation of professionals. According to this basis, the investigation is focused on the process of formation of the Caribbean cultural identity in students of the Foreign Languages career. To carry out this investigation several methods were applied, the document analysis, the observation and interview to get to know the core of the management in forming the Caribbean cultural identity. The investigation in progress favors the correct management of the Caribbean cultural identity taking into account the four dimensions of educative management: institutional, administrative, pedagogical and community. As a result of this investigation the content of the Caribbean cultural identity is incorporated in the strategy of the career as well as in the academic year. Putting into practice a correct management of the Caribbean cultural identity allows to provide a high quality education, supports the students with a solid identity to face the digital era and globalization.

Keywords: Caribbean Cultural Identity, Formation, Higher Education Institutions, Management, Educative Management.

Introduction

One of the trends in the world today is to achieve the objectives of the 2030 agenda and the objectives for sustainable development “to guarantee inclusive, equitable and quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” [1]. The comprehensive formation of a professional with a high level of skills that allows them to enter this new era of knowledge, an era of advances in digital technology and that allows them to coexist in social and labor contexts is necessary.

Faced with the new needs caused by the current economic, social and technological context, the application of process management should be aimed at both the internal reorganization of processes, as well as the improvement of teaching, extension activities and research, with the objective to facilitate the development of a competitive university adapted to the new demands of society. At present, power societies have a great influence on identity processes, these power societies and their conditions are usually identified with the term globalization, which has enormous influence

on the political, social, and cultural aspects. Facing globalization, identity: knowing who we are, where we are going to, stands as a weapon of resistance without which society tends to become extinct. In this regard [2]. expresses that « in the current times and immersed in globalization, it becomes more complex than ever to address issues related to identity, that has greater academic interest »

Education plays an important role in the process of identity formation, since it locates the cultural historical individual within the educational teaching process, which allows educating each generation in the values that make up the identity that it has inherited, assumed and enriched. To the extent that an individual, in this case the student, appropriates the elements that make up their cultural identity, they will be able to assume a certain attitude and develop feelings of belonging, not only towards the objects themselves, but also towards what they mean, in the cognitive, affective and behavioral spheres.

The school curriculum must be characterized by its open and contextualized spirit, given the fact that society and its influences penetrate more and more the educational field, so that cultural identity stands as a fundamental support in the integral formation of adolescents. From the above, it can be inferred that cultural identity acts as a civic value in line with the social and cultural environment in which the individual develops, favoring the formation of important personality traits of the adolescent. In this sense, cultural identity is considered as a macro value, which synthesizes others: responsibility, solidarity, etc., and for the positive social significance that the sense of belonging to the locality, to the nation and the social project that is carried on in the country.

In order to accomplish the mission of forming the new generation allowing his insertion in society, the management of the university processes has an important role. To [3] : « At present, higher education institutions require a close attention to the fundamental role played by the process management to organize, plan and control the university processes taking place in its development, so it is fundamental as a strategy to coordinate the work to achieve the expected goals and to reinforce the professional formation at a local level .

To guarantee the formation and education of the new generation in the values part of his identity, Caribbean cultural identity includes the identity of a whole region, starting from the Bahamas to Trinidad and Tobago and the continental enclaves of Colombia, Belize, Guyana, Suriname, the coastal region of Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica, and Venezuela. The physical, social socioeconomic complexes common to the Caribbean has culture as an integrating factor.

Methods

The management of the process of formation of the Caribbean cultural identity in Higher Education Institutions serves to enrich the process of formation of the individual, the accomplishment of institutions' mission of graduating a highly qualified professional and it is a tool to face the information broadcast by the social media. The searching, obtaining and processing of information were based on theoretical and empirical methods, techniques and procedures, namely: the Google search engine with the use of keywords on the subject, in high visibility databases. The methods of document analysis, scientific observation and interviews were also used to search for information.

Results

The formation of a professional capable of inserting himself in the social context with a development on his competences constitutes one of the professional problems of the Higher Education Institutions and of the career of Foreign Languages in particular, for this reason in its formation as an intercultural communicator the Caribbean cultural identity is a tool for their performance.

Management, Educative Management and University Management

Management has been tried to be defined since Plato's Republic but its existence as a set of structured ideas dates back to the first half of the XXth century [4]. There are various ways of defining management considering the object it deals with and the processes it involves. There have been several investigations related to management: [5-10]. Pulido, Pérez y Bravo carried out a

systematization in relation to the subject, which is considered for the development of this article [11]. Based on that it is agreed that management:

- is a dynamic process,
- is made up of conscious, systemic and planned actions,
- is carried out by a pedagogical group under the leadership of a leader,
- is led by effective leadership in decision-making,
- In order to meet the objectives and goals proposed in the educational project of the school institution.

When looking inside the institution, it can be seen that educative management raises a systemic and global view of the institution; it provides the tools to organize, analyze, criticize and interpret the daily functioning of the educational institution. Therefore, in this systemic organization there are interactions between the aspects and elements that make up the daily life of an educational institution. The relationship established between the members contains rules, methods, principles that generate learning conditions for students. UNESCO-Peru establishes four dimensions for educational management: institutional, administrative, pedagogical and community.

Institutional: identifies "the ways in which the members of the educational community are organized for the proper functioning of the institution... It offers a framework for the systematization and analysis of the actions related to those structural aspects that in each educational center account for an operating style" [4].

Administrative: "Includes actions and strategies for conducting human, material, economic resources, technical processes, time, safety and hygiene, and control of information related to all members of the educational institution; as well as compliance with regulations and supervision of functions, with the sole purpose of promoting teaching-learning processes". Pedagogical: "It refers to the fundamental process of the work of the educational institution and the members that make it up. The conception includes the approach of the teaching-learning process, curricular diversification, systematized programming in the curricular project, methodological and didactic strategies, learning evaluation, use of didactic materials and resources". Community: Refers to "the way in which the institution relates to the social community, of which it is a part, knowing and understanding its conditions, needs and demands. Likewise, how it integrates and participates in the community culture".

Management and educative management pave the way to university management, being the university the scenario where it takes place. De Vries e Ibarra, Lopera, Padilla, Botero, Veliz, Rodríguez, Artiles y Pulido, Pulido, Pérez y Bravo are important references in this subject matter. As a result, university management is regarded as a global integrated process that is based on a set of principles making use of technical, financial and human resources to achieve the goals of higher education institutions, under an effective leadership.

Almuíñas highlights the necessity of transforming the models of management by building a different way of thinking and putting it into practice with new approaches. To get to achieve the management, define the strategic management « as a holistic process of planning, execution and control of the strategy, that guarantee a

proactive sharing between the institution and the community with efficiency and effectiveness in accomplishing the social mission » [12].

This approach privileges :

- A look at the community ;
- strategic alliances ;
- relationship with the users and the recipients of the university results ;
- à commitment towards the vision of the institutional future and progress ;
- establishing priorities ;
- Contribution to the improving the quality of process results.

Managing the interactions based on the rules, methods and principles of the process itself, through the four university management dimensions : institutional, administrative, pedagogical and community constitutes the way of developing the daily institutional life generating the needed conditions for the students to acquire the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in the formation process.

The Formation Process

Formation is a social and cultural process that obeys to the character of the integrity of the development of the human transformative capacity. An objective process, with its own existence, that enhances the transformation and behavior of the subject in knowing, doing, being and living together, therefore it leads to a process of appropriation of culture and, in this sense, refers to the professionalizing formative activity. Formation is understood as an integrating and totalizing pedagogical process, where the instructional process, the educational process and the development process are integrated and dialectically related [13-15].

According to Álvarez, "... the process in which man acquires his fullness, both from the educational, instructional and developing point of view, is the so-called formation process, which is projected in three dimensions and in three processes for different purposes: the educational process, the developing process and the instructional process". (2000, p.17)

The article 3.1 of Resolution 47 of 2022 of the Ministry of Higher Education states that the formation of higher-level professionals is: the process that, consciously and on scientific grounds, is developed in Higher Education Institutions to guarantee the comprehensive preparation of university students, which materializes in a solid scientific, technical, humanistic formation and high ideological, political, ethical and aesthetic values, in order to achieve revolutionary, cultured, competent, independent and creative professionals, so that they can perform successfully in the various sectors of the economy and society in general [16].

In order to guarantee the formation of professionals, fulfilling the mission of Higher Education Institutions to transform and develop society, it is necessary to develop an adequate management that integrates the teaching, research and extension processes. For the management of the formation of the cultural identity, university management is analyzed in its four dimensions: institutional, administrative, pedagogical and community in the management cycle of planning, executing, evaluating and monitoring. Emphasis is placed on the pedagogical dimension of university management

with its three fundamental aspects: formation, curriculum, and the teaching-learning process.

The Identity

Identity is analyzed from different disciplines, philosophy, sociology, psychology, anthropology; from different levels of structuring of the phenomenon: personality, family, ethnicity, social group, nation, continent, etc., and from different spheres of reality: cultural, economic. In this sense, the terms cultural, national, personal, and continental identity are used, and each one is approached from different angles [17].

From philosophical thought, the definitions of Aristotle, Schelling and Hegel are remarkable. In this sense, Lenin continued the Hegelian analysis but on materialist-dialectical bases. The tendency of Western philosophical thought is to use the concept of identity with the meanings of equality (or unity) or difference (the specific); an issue that, under new circumstances, continues to this day. From the field of sociology, it is found characteristics such as: different from others, own or differentiated character and therefore, carries specificity. The contributions of Esteban Emilio Mosonyi and Roberto Hernández Biosca are significant [18]. From psychological science, individual (personal), group, peoples or national identity is analyzed from two main angles: from the objective side, what stable psychological traits characterize certain peoples and from the subjective side, how do they think they are how people perceive themselves as compared to other people.

De la Torre proposes the following definition of identity: "When we talk about the identity of an individual and collective person, we refer to processes that allow us to assume that this person, at a certain moment and context, is and is aware of being himself, and that this self-awareness is expressed (with more or less elaboration) in his ability to differentiate himself from others, identify with certain categories, develop feelings of belonging, reflectively look at himself and establish his continuity through transformations and changes (...)... identity is the awareness of sameness, whether it is a person or a group".

From anthropological point of view, social, cultural anthropology or ethnology studies human behavior, the culture and the structures of social relationships. It is noticeable the work of Darcy Ribeiro in Brazil, that of Guillermo Bonfil Batalla and Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán in Mexico. Depending on whether it arises from the Anglo-Saxon tradition, it is known as cultural anthropology and, if it stems from the French school, then it is called ethnology.

Though analyzed from different disciplines, identity is seeing as equality in the difference, difference from the other, self perception as compared to other people, symbols, values, attitudes shared by a social group. The process of construction of the identity of a human being, materializes with birth, begins to be prepared long before it. Beyond the will of those who conceive and accompany the child, it can be said that personal identity begins to be built under the influence of much more mediate historical and cultural factors that achieve their expression during the mediated activity of the child with those around him [19].

Identity is formed in activity. Leontiev, Galperin of Soviet psychology see it as a product of historical and social development, and of the relationships that people establish in their activity. Vy-

gotsky (1979) laid the foundations for the understanding of higher psychic functions not as a cause of interactive behavior but as a cultural-historical result. His main thesis states that the human psyche has its origin and develops in society, through activity practice culturally mediated and in constant historical development [19]. Thus, the concepts of activity, mediation and historical development will be basic pillars for the development of identity for the approach of the Cultural Historical School.

Cultural Identity

The concept of cultural identity is closely linked to the definition of culture, which began to originate in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Molano carries out an analysis of the evolution of cultural identity and for this she focuses on Kuper A [20]. When talking about identity it is impossible to leave culture aside and viceversa; both are inseparable categories.

UNESCO (2005) defines culture as “the set of distinctive, spiritual, material and affective features that characterize a society or social group. It encompasses, in addition to arts and letters, ways of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, beliefs and traditions” [21]. Defines it as « the set of symbols, values, attitudes, skills, knowledge, social meanings, forms of communication and organization, and goods materials, which make life possible in a given society and allow them to transform and reproduce as such, from one generation to the next » [22].

Cultural identity contains within itself a sense of belonging to a social group with which customs, cultural traits, beliefs, and value systems are shared. Cultural identity is a social fact since it is a necessity as an individual being or as a social or collective being to affirm oneself in front of the other, to identify oneself, which contemplates an expression of sociocultural, economic, linguistic, territorial aspects, historical awareness integrated into the national identity that exists through cultural identity.

Systematized the different definitions of cultural identity addressed by authors such as: Maritza García Alonso and Cristina Baeza Martín, María Arias, Rigoberto Pupo and generally agree in analyzing it as [23-26]:

- a totality, which includes both the moment of selfhood and the moment of otherness and in itself presupposes the difference,
- a human group that defines itself, but at the same time it is necessary for it to be recognized by others. A process of formation and transformation, open, unfinished,
- a process of personal growth, which gradually expands until it reaches the connotation of cultural identity when it manifests itself through a social group, when one becomes aware of a way of conceiving the world, when one is already part of a world and not just one a specific person or a family or small social group,
- the one that characterizes a certain region or area of the world, with its own, common and specific features. It also reflects the dynamic differences of one people with respect to another.
- contains a sense of belonging to a social group with which cultural traits such as customs, values and beliefs are shared.

In these definitions, cultural identity is addressed from the angle of communication between cultures, based on the sameness

or systemic integrity of the subject of culture, its activity and its material and spiritual products. At this point this communication between cultures it is really important to get to know the culture of its own and the culture of the people whose language is studied and develop the skill as intercultural communicator.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), establishes the « knowledge of the society and culture of the community or communities in which a language is spoken is one aspect of knowledge of the world. It is, however, of sufficient importance to the language learner to merit special attention, especially since unlike many other aspects of knowledge it is likely to lie outside the learner's previous experience and may well be distorted by stereotypes. The features distinctively characteristic of a particular European society and its culture may relate to [27]:

- Everyday living
- Living conditions
- Interpersonal relations (including relations of power and solidarity)
- Values, beliefs and attitudes in relation to such factors as
- Body language
- Social conventions, e.g. with regard to giving and receiving hospitality
- Ritual behaviour

The above mentioned document also expresses that « knowledge, awareness and understanding of the relation (similarities and distinctive differences) between the ‘world of origin’ and the ‘world of the target community’ produce an intercultural awareness ». (CEFR, 2002, ps.102-103)

Considerations in Relation to the Caribbean Space

For the development of the Caribbean cultural identity, it is necessary to define the Caribbean space, since “it is extremely controversial from any point that is analyzed. The Caribbean can be defined from the geographical, ethno-historical, geopolitical, Third World, point of view” [28]. From a geographical point of view, the most conventional definition of the Caribbean space covers from the Bahamas to Trinidad and the continental enclaves of Colombia, Belize, Guyana, Suriname, the coastal region of Nicaragua, Panama, Costa Rica, and Venezuela.

Many researchers, writers have carried out several investigations about the Caribbean region Mori, Santana, Lopez, R., Casañas, P. (29-31). The author Casañas, P. takes up in this work elements addressed in previous articles in relation to the Caribbean space and its identity based on the bibliographic analysis from other authors.

In this complex framework of geographies and with a diversity of existing names to designate the same territory, names appeared and became more frequent, such as the Antilles, Mar de las Antillas, Caribby, Caribbean Sea and the English translation of the Spanish name: West Indies. The generalization of the term Caribbean can be seen in 1944 when a magazine with the name of "Gaceta del Caribe" began to be published in Cuba, of which Nicolás Guillen was one of its main editors. La Gaceta already showed a relationship and exchange between writers and intellectuals from different regions of the Caribbean that had been fostered since the end of the previous century. In the first issue of the "Caribbean Gazette", in March 1944, Jacques Roumain published his well-known article "Poetry as a weapon" in which he synthesized his poetic creed.

The decolonization process that began in the 1960s and 1970s was a factor in favor of the acceptance and generalization of the term Caribbean, by the mainly English-speaking intellectual and political elites of the Antilles. The West Indies are ceasing to be so, to become increasingly Caribbean, with the independence processes of Jamaica, Trinidad Tobago, Guyana, Barbados, Grenada and Suriname. In this way, and as part of this process and an awareness of the integration needs, the Caribbean Free Trade Association, known by the acronym CARIFTA, emerged in 1968, which would constitute the starting point for the creation in 1973 of the Caribbean Economic Community (CARICOM).

Regardless of the differences, contrasts, and heterogeneity in the definition of the Caribbean, it is valid to consider the common factors and elements that can be found in independent nations and dependent territories. We can then speak of a Caribbean cultural identity, affirming the existence of a homogeneity in the heterogeneous ethnic groups, races, languages and cultures existing in the Caribbean. All this leads us to the problem of identity, understood in terms of cultural identity.

Caribbean Cultural Identity

The identity problem of a sociocultural nature is closely related to the being of a nation, a region or a continent: In the Caribbean, the most complex Latin, African, Anglo-Saxon, and Asian cultural influences come together and are juxtaposed in a geographical space marked by clashes, encounters, and mutual transculturations that gave rise to a new identity element for the entire region and where existing differences, such as the language barrier, have not been an impediment for the diversity of cultures that make up our cultural universe, at the same time to shape our identity.

Caribbean cultural identity cannot be reduced to national identity, since culture is not a subset of nation. Conversely, culture may be a more far-reaching category than nation [28] The Caribbean cultural identity is a historical result achieved by the common evolution of socioeconomic complexes that are also common, according to Moreno Fraguas [32] The Caribbean cultural identity is the result of the symbiosis of three races in the Caribbean space and that goes beyond the national identity of the countries that comprise it.

And within this extraordinary diversity there is a common denominator that is culture. In the Caribbean everything has music; the term “sounding islands” could be applied to it, expressed by the French writer Rabelais who used it to name other islands. It can be Cuban music, the Dominican plena, the calypso from Barbados and Trinidad, the steel band, the Jamaican orchestras, the beguines from Fort-de-France. The process of formation of a Caribbean cultural identity transcends the barriers of language, ethnicity, and unique cultures.

Alejo Carpentier in “The culture of the people who live in the Caribbean Sea” in Carifesta 1979 talks about the common socioeconomic complexes as the plural uniqueness of the Caribbean expressed through its diversity, originality [33]. This diversity brings about writers as Nicolás Guillén in the Spanish speaking Caribbean, Aimé Césaire, Jacques Roumain, in the French speaking Caribbean, Thomas H. McDermot under the nickname of Tom Redcam and who starts the Caribbean English speaking novel with Becka’s Buckra Baby (1903). In this first period there are some other writers like De Lisser (1878-1944) Claude McKay (1890-1948)

from Jamaica; Theophilus Albert Marryshow (1887-1958) from Grenade; A.R.F. Webber from Guyana; Alfred Mendes y C.L.R. James from Trinidad and Tobago, Roger Mais, Jean Carew, Louise Bennet, V. S. Reid.

Conclusions

In present days where technologies, the access to Internet and all the social media, are globalizing the whole society, education plays an important role in the formation of the new generation. A proper management of the process of formation considering the cultural identity, particularly the Caribbean cultural identity, allows educating the individual with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that make up their identity, letting them to appropriate of the values, symbols and to assume an attitude and developing feelings of belonging which it is a tool of facing the power societies. The cultural identity allows the intercultural communication, starting from the systemic integration of the person to his culture, his activity and the material and spiritual products.

Ethics Statement

The author confirms that this manuscript adheres to the APA ethical guidelines and the author’s national ethics guidelines

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest

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